

**LISBURN CITY COUNCIL/CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL
TRANSITION COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of the Lisburn City Council/Castlereagh Borough Council Transition Committee held in the Council Chamber, Castlereagh Civic Centre, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Belfast, on Thursday 19 November 2009 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Lisburn City Council

Deputy Mayor
Alderman S P Porter

Councillors D J Craig and J Tinsley

Castlereagh Borough Council

Councillor L Walker, Mayor

Aldermen J White and G Rice

Councillors J Beattie and J Spratt

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisburn City Council

Chief Executive
Director of Leisure Services
Assistant Director Corporate Services
Director Environmental Services

Castlereagh Borough Council

Acting Chief Executive (Director of Technical & Environmental Services)
Director Administration & Community Services
Acting Director of Leisure Services

1. Apologies

It was agreed to accept apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of the Right Worshipful the Mayor Councillor A G Ewart, Alderman W J Dillon, Councillors R Crawford, T J Lunn (Lisburn City Council) and Alderman M Henderson, Councillors B Hanvey, G Robinson (Castlereagh Borough Council)

2. Support for Change Manager

Councillor Craig reported that there were a number of issues to be considered “in committee”.

It was proposed by Alderman Rice, seconded by Alderman White and agreed that this item to be discussed “in committee”. All Officers left the meeting.

It was proposed by Alderman Rice, seconded by Alderman White and agreed to move out of “in committee” and resume normal business.

All Officers returned to the meeting. Alderman Porter left the meeting.

On resumption of normal business, it was proposed by Alderman Rice, seconded by Councillor Tinsley and unanimously agreed that all Transition Committee and Sub Committee meetings will be organised and serviced by the Change Manager, and he will receive whatever support and assistance necessary from the senior officers of both councils.

Councillor Tinsley left the meeting.

3. Minutes

It was proposed by Alderman White, seconded by Councillor Beattie and agreed that the minutes of the meeting of the Transition Committee held on 15 October 2009 be accepted.

4. Report of the Chief Executive, Lisburn City Council and the Acting Chief Executive, Castlereagh Borough Council

4.1 Committee Secretary Post

The Change Manager reported that the successful applicant had accepted the post and would commence employment on 30 November 2009, on a secondment basis.

4.1.1 Requirement for an additional Committee Secretary Position / Funding for Additional Committee Secretary

The Change Manager detailed for Members’ information the number of meetings that the new Committee Secretary would be required to service totalling at least 10 meetings per month. He outlined the urgency of recruiting an additional Committee Secretary.

It was suggested by Alderman White that Belfast City Council should be asked to service the Joint Belfast Transition Committee and the Joint Belfast Transition Management Team.

Discussion ensued in relation to the feasibility of funding a second committee secretary up to the end of March 2010. In response to a query from Councillor Spratt, the Chief Executive, Lisburn City Council advised that £150,000.00 had been provided to each cluster council to cover Councillors' attendance allowances, staff salaries, and all other expenses associated with the transition process.

It was agreed that a breakdown of expenditure be tabled at the next Transition Committee meeting.

The Chief Executive, Lisburn City Council reported that the DOE had written requesting each cluster council to submit a claim in respect of the £150,000.00. He asked Members to note that a number of cluster councils had not submitted their claims and an overall underspend was anticipated.

Members agreed that the special circumstances associated with Lisburn/Castlereagh cluster should be recognised, and that there would be a case for seeking additional funding, not just in this financial year but also in 2010/2011 year.

It was noted that the DOE had already been approached with regard to additional funding and a letter had been forwarded requesting financial support for an additional committee secretary, but a response had not been received. Members agreed that the DOE should be written to again.

The Chief Executive, Lisburn City Council stated that it may be beneficial if the correspondence was endorsed by the Transition Committee.

Whilst recognising the heavy workload, and the goodwill shown to date by the committee clerks within both councils, Members agreed the following:

- (a) until clarification had been received from the DOE in respect of additional funding, a temporary measure be put in place whereby the new committee secretary would be supported by the committee clerks within both councils
- (b) the Change Manager be authorised to write to the DOE, on behalf of the Transition Committee, to ascertain why a response had not yet been received, the correspondence to reiterate the special circumstances of the Castlereagh/Lisburn cluster and the requirement for additional funding

- (c) the Change Manager to write to Belfast City Council requesting that it service the Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh Joint Transition Management Team meetings and the Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh Transition Committee meetings
- (d) the Change Manager to table a breakdown of expenditure to date in respect of the £150,000.00

4.2 Minutes of Transition Meetings

It was agreed that in view of the significant workload involved in Committee Secretarial support that minutes would be in bullet form for future meetings, whilst allowing Committee members to request full text to be included on request at the relevant meeting.

4.3 Transition Sub Committees and Officer Transition Project Teams (OPTS)

4.3.1 Officer Transition Project Teams

A supplementary report by the Acting Chief Executive, Castlereagh Borough Council and the Chief Executive, Lisburn City Council was tabled updating Members on the progression of the Officer Project Teams.

Members were provided with a report by the Change Manager detailing the key milestones and tasks which had been allocated to each of the project teams, together with required completion dates. A copy of the schedule of meetings for Transition Committees and Project Teams was also tabled for Members' information.

Councillor Spratt referred to the supplementary report and stated that he noted that each of the Project Teams would be co-chaired by an Officer from each council, and serviced by the Change Manager. He expressed concern at the term "serviced".

Councillor Craig stated that the issues discussed earlier in the meeting "in committee" had superseded some of the detail in the supplementary report.

4.3.2 Transition Sub Committees

Following discussion, it was agreed that in future, the Change Manager would liaise with Sub Committee Members and Chairmen in order to convene meetings at a date and time where a quorum could be achieved, and

also presenting all necessary reports to the Sub Committees.

Following consideration of a quorum, it was agreed that the quorum for Transition Sub Committees would be three which should include at least one Elected Representative from each council.

4.4 Transition Management Team

Members noted the content of the Minutes of the Transition Management Team meeting held on 3 November 2009.

4.5 Reappointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Councillor Spratt highlighted the need for continuity and advised that Castlereagh Borough Council would be satisfied with Councillor Craig continuing as chairman and Councillor Hanvey as vice-chairman in the 2010/2011 year. He added that this would be on the understanding that Lisburn City Council would not have a lead role.

Following discussion, it was agreed to defer this matter until the Transition Committee Annual General meeting being held in January 2010.

4.6 Away Day Event

Members noted the content of the report from Lisburn City Council/Castlereagh Borough Council Away Day event held on 23 October 2009.

The Change Manager reported that a draft short term vision for the transition period 2009-2012 had been prepared. He added that, once approved, the vision, aims and objectives would go forward to the three Sub Committees and Officer Project Teams to feed into the process of developing action plans and transition communication plans.

He recommended that a further Away Day be organised in January 2010 to consider specific objectives. Following discussion, it was agreed that:

- (a) approval be granted for the short term vision for the transition period 2009-2012, together with the high level aims and objectives, as outlined in the report arising from the Away Day event held on 23 October 2009
- (b) the Change Manager arrange another Away Day event, lasting a full day, to be internally facilitated

4.7 Meeting with Belfast City Council Transition Committee held on 27 October 2009

Members noted the content of the above Minutes.

The Change Manager reported that following the above meeting, a draft programme of work and a series of indicative deliverables had been developed. He advised that these had been forwarded onto the Project Teams to deliver as part of their overall action plans.

4.7.1. Transfer of Assets and Liabilities – Asset and Liability Audit

The Change Manager advised that Belfast City Council had produced an initial draft of Assets and Liabilities which were likely to fall within the new proposed Belfast Council boundary.

4.7.2 Joint Communications

He advised that when appropriate, a joint council communication would be issued.

4.7.3 Timelines

The Change Manager reported that timelines produced by Belfast City Council were too ambitious and unrealistic, given the priority Lisburn and Castlereagh Councils require to give to their own merger. He advised that this had been fed back to Belfast City Council and the minutes would be amended accordingly.

4.7.4 Future Meetings

The Change Manager advised that the next Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh Joint Transition Management Team meeting had taken place on Wednesday 18 November 2009. The next Joint Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh Transition Committee meeting would take place during January 2010.

Following discussion, it was agreed that until clarification had been received from the Department of the Environment, limited progress could be achieved with Belfast City Council in respect of transfer of assets and liabilities

4.8 Human Resource Update

4.8.1 Vacancy Control

Members noted the procedure for vacancy control which had been introduced on 1 October 2009. The Change Manager reported that no new vacancies had arisen to date necessitating implementation of the policy.

4.8.2 Sharing of Vacancies

Members noted the content of the draft procedure for sharing of short-term temporary vacancies.

It was agreed that approval be granted for the procedure for sharing of short-term temporary vacancies, in advance of further appropriate consultation.

4.8.3 Negotiation Committee

The Change Manager reported that a draft model Terms of Reference for the Negotiation Committee was currently being developed. He advised that this would be tabled at the Transition Management Teams, prior to being tabled for approval by the Transition Committee.

4.9 Officers' Time on Transition Related Matters

The Change Manager reported that up to the end of September, Lisburn City Council had spent 1,950 hours on transition related matters and Castlereagh Borough Council had spent 1,784 hours up to the end of October.

4.10 Consideration of PwC Economic Appraisal Report

Members noted the content of the Interim Draft Report. The Change Manager reported that Lisburn City Council had considered the report, with their preferred position being Option 5 "Transformation with Regional Collaboration".

He reported that Castlereagh Borough Council had arranged a Special Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting on 24 November 2009 to consider the document, in advance of a final recommendation being made by the Council.

4.11 DOE Project Management Process

The Change Manager reported that PA Consulting and the DOE Project Management Office were planning to present the new programme management process to each cluster council.

Members agreed that the presentation be heard at the Transition Committee meeting being held on 21 January 2009, and that the meeting commence at 6.30 p.m.

4.12 Transition Insurance Arrangements

The Change Manager reported that insurance requirements would need to be considered in advance of the formation of the Statutory Transition Committees. He advised that by the next Transition Committee meeting, clarification may be forthcoming as to when Transition Committees would obtain statutory status. He asked Members to note the requirement for insurance cover, with a view to making a recommendation on the matter at the next Transition Committee meeting.

In response to a query from Councillor Spratt, the Director of Administration & Community Services, Castlereagh Borough Council advised that it was up to the Transition Committee to determine the level of cover required and the Insurance Brokers would quote accordingly.

4.13 Domain Names

Members noted that one domain name had already been successfully registered for the new council, at a cost of £60.00, as follows:

www.lisburncityandcastlereagh.gov.uk

Applications for registration of the following were also being progressed:

www.castlereaghandlisburncity.gov.uk

and

www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk

Councillor Craig reported the Minister had been in attendance at the last at the last Transition Committee when this matter was being considered. He added that the Minister had thought that the name agreed upon was Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, and this name was now in legislation. He advised that "city" would not be permitted in any of the new council names, including Belfast City Council. The name of the new council (and local government district) for Castlereagh and Lisburn proposed by Minister Poots was therefore Lisburn and Castlereagh.

4.14 Outcomes from Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) Meeting

Members noted the content of a summary of the key outcomes of the SLB meeting held on 16 October 2009, together with the revised Local Government Reform Implementation Framework.

4.15 Transition Committee Meeting due to be held on Thursday 17 December 2009

Councillor Walker reported that as Castlereagh Borough Council's December Council meeting fell on Christmas Eve, it was being brought forward to 17 December.

It was agreed that the Chairman would liaise with Members regarding a date for the next Transition Committee meeting.

5. Additional Report from the Acting Chief Executive, Castlereagh Borough Council and the Chief Executive, Lisburn City Council

5.1 Draft Guidance from the Department of the Environment – Financing of Council Expenditure

Members noted the content of the above document which the DOE considered should be used as a good practice guide in preparation of rates for the 2010/2011 financial year.

The Change Manager referred Members to the content of a joint Castlereagh/Lisburn response and he recommended that this be approved as the Transition Committee's submission to the DOE.

Councillor Beattie, Castlereagh Borough Council stated that it appeared that some Members in attendance did not have a copy of the documents. He expressed the view that given the serious implications, the matter needed further consideration.

It was agreed that consideration of the Draft Guidance from the Department of the Environment – Financing of Council Expenditure, together with the joint council response be deferred to the next Transition Committee meeting. The Change Manager to ensure that all Members have been provided with a copy of the relevant documents.

6.0 Any Other Business

The Chief Executive, Lisburn City Council referred to the lack of an announcement from the Executive in respect of the boundaries issue and the implications this would have on the transition process.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.25 p.m.

Chairman