

**THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2025**

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<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b><i>Estimated Timescale for completion</i></b>
1.	Apologies	<b><i>Councillor McGlinchey</i></b>	
2.	The Mayors' Business	<b><i>Received</i></b>	
3.	Declaration of Members' Interests	<b><i>None</i></b>	
4.	Deputation – Gordon Lyons MLA, Minister for Communities, and David Polley Director of Housing Supply Policy	<b><i>Received</i></b>	
5.	Minutes of The Council Meeting held Tuesday 7 January 2025	<b><i>Confirmed as a correct record</i></b>	
6.	Minutes of Environmental Services Committee meeting held Tuesday 14 January 2025		
	<b>Matters Arising</b>		
6.1	Parking Consultations & Decision on Introduction of Charges	<p><b><i>Amendment Lost: That Council does not impose parking charges at either West Bay or Ballycastle sea front.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Amendment Lost: That Council officers will liaise with the ferry companies on the arrangements for those leaving Ballycastle by</i></b></p>	

		<i>ferry for a period running over two or more charging periods; and that Council will explore the feasibility of introducing a single carpark permit scheme for households in Causeway Coast and Glens, similar to that in operation at Forest Parks in Newry, Mourne and Down, and bring forward a report and proposal within two months.</i>	
<b>6.2</b>	Correspondence received	<b><i>Noted</i></b>	
<b>6.3</b>	Adoption of the Minutes	<b><i>Adopted and recommendations therein approved</i></b>	
<b>7.</b>	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 21 January 2025		
<b>7.1</b>	Local Economic Partnership (Item 6)	<b><i>Information</i></b>	
<b>7.2</b>	Adoption of the Minutes	<b><i>Adopted and recommendations therein approved, with the exception of Item 7 (Social Supermarket Support Fund).</i></b>	
<b>8.</b>	Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting held Thursday 23 January 2025	<b><i>Adopted and recommendations therein approved</i></b>	
<b>9.</b>	Minutes of Corporate Policy and Resource Committee Meeting held Tuesday 28 January 2025		
	<b>Matters Arising</b>		
<b>9.1</b>	Approval to use Procurement Framework to purchase Retail Consultancy Services to inform the	<b><i>Deferred for discussion 'In Committee'</i></b>	

	Local Development Plan preparation and provide expert advice on planning applications and input to related planning appeals		
<b>9.2</b>	Adoption of the Minutes	<b><i>Adopted and recommendations therein approved, including the resolution at Item 17.1 below</i></b>	
<b>10.</b>	Matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel	<b><i>None</i></b>	
<b>11.</b>	Conferences	<b><i>None</i></b>	
<b>12.</b>	Correspondence	<b><i>None</i></b>	
<b>13.</b>	Consultation Schedule	<b><i>Noted</i></b>	
<b>14.</b>	Seal Documents		
<b>(i)</b>	Grave Registry Certificates, No's 5912 to 5931 inclusive;	<b><i>Seal Affixed (Items i – ii)</i></b>	
<b>(ii)</b>	34C application (non-monetary) bond agreement between DFI and Council for works to be carried out on the road access for Ballycastle Leisure Centre (Ref L&D 241217/CM 250107)		
<b>15.</b>	Notice of Motion proposed by Alderman Boyle, seconded by Councillor McCully (abbrev Riverside Theatre Coleraine)	<b><i>Referred to the Leisure and Development Committee</i></b>	
	<b><i>'IN COMMITTEE' (Items 16 - 17 inclusive)</i></b>		
<b>16.</b>	Tender report Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme (CRSSRP) – Dernaflaw MUGA	<b><i>To accept this tender report and instruct staff to appoint Struell Contracts NI Ltd to deliver this project for the tender price of £227,930.18 (which</i></b>	<b><i>30 June 2025</i></b>

		<b>includes a 10% contingency).</b>	
<b>17.</b>	Minutes of Corporate Policy and Resource Committee Meeting held Tuesday 28 January 2025 ' <i>In Committee</i> '		
	<b>Matters Arising</b>		
<b>17.1</b>	Approval to use Procurement Framework to purchase Retail Consultancy Services to inform the Local Development Plan preparation and provide expert advice on planning applications and input to related planning appeals	<b><i>To agree to planning officials using the Bloom Services/NEPRO procurement framework to buy and manage future retail consultancy services to inform the Local Development Plan preparation and provide expert advice on planning applications and input to related planning appeals, as amended.</i></b>	<b><i>August 2025</i></b>

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER ON  
TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.02PM**

**In the Chair** : The Mayor, Councillor McQuillan

**Present** : Alderman Boyle, Callan, Coyle, Fielding, Hunter, Knight-McQuillan, John McAuley, S McKillop, Scott, Stewart

Councillors Anderson, C Archibald, N Archibald, Bateson, Callaghan, Chivers, Holmes, Huggins, Kane, Kennedy, Kyle, Mairs, Jonathan McAuley, McCully, McGurk, MA McKillop, McMullan, McShane, Nicholl, Peacock, Schenning, Stirling, Storey, Wallace, Watson, Watton, Wilson, Wisener

**Officers Present** : D Jackson, Chief Executive  
M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services  
A McPeake, Director of Environmental Services  
P Mulvenna, Director of Leisure and Development  
D Wright, Chief Finance Officer  
J Mills, Council Solicitor, Land and Property  
J Richardson, Head of Capital Works, Energy and Infrastructure (R)  
T Vauls, Car Parks and Concessionary Trading Manager (R)  
U Harper, Committee and Member Services Officer

**In attendance** : G Lyons, Minister for Communities (R)  
D Polley, Director of Housing Supply Policy, Department for Communities (R)

A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer  
M Kennedy, ICT Technical Support Officer

Press 4 no. (R), Public 1 no. (R)

**Key:** (R) Attended Remotely

The Mayor advised Council of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded.

## **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were recorded for Councillor McGlinchey.

## **2. THE MAYOR'S BUSINESS**

The Mayor stated:

*I'd like to start by expressing a heartfelt thank-you to our Council staff and emergency services for their incredible efforts following the storm. Your work in facilitating community calls was crucial and deeply appreciated by so many in our area.*

*I'd also like to highlight our engagement with secondary schools this month, starting important conversation with young people about the political process and the role we play as Council. I'd like to see this connection grow.*

*I'd also like to extend my thanks to Dungiven Library for hosting our charity coffee morning. All proceeds from the event are being donated to MindWise and NIKPA. I'm grateful for everyone who donated, assisted with PR, made pastries, and helped out on the day; it was truly a team effort.*

*I had the honour of speaking at the Horizons Graduation Event, where I had the privilege of seeing our future leaders and the incredible work they're doing in our community.*

*I'd like to thank the Deputy Mayor for her ongoing support. I'm looking forward to seeing you all next Saturday, 15 February, at the coffee morning in Coleraine Town Hall, which the Deputy Mayor and I will be hosting.*

Councillor Holmes expressed his thanks to Council staff and NIE for their hard work in response to the effects of the storm.

The Chief Executive expressed his gratitude to the Councillors, whose feedback and detailed knowledge of their constituencies helped NIE respond to the unprecedented level of power outages following the storm. He stated that it was a massive team effort that showed the value of Councillors' knowledge of the 40 wards within the seven District Electoral Areas.

## **3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

\* **Alderman Knight-McQuillan joined the meeting at 7.09pm.**

## **4. DEPUTATION – GORDON LYONS MLA, MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES, AND DAVID POLLEY DIRECTOR OF HOUSING SUPPLY POLICY**

The Mayor welcomed Gordon Lyons MLA, Minister for Communities, and David Polley, Director of Housing Supply Policy, Department for Communities (DfC) to the meeting. He invited Members to ask questions.

The Minister for Communities thanked Councillors for the opportunity to speak to Council. He echoed the thanks to everyone who worked so hard to get the residents of the Borough through the recent storm, and stated that he was pleased to be able to provide funding for some of the essential provisions to respond to it.

In response to a query from Alderman McAuley regarding how the housing supply could be funded, the Minister for Communities agreed that there is huge concern about the Housing Executive's stock and the condition of it. He stated that his Department is seeking confirmation from the UK Government that it is prepared to treat the Housing Executive in the same way as other housing associations across the UK and allow it to borrow against its assets. This would allow for investment in the current housing stock and allow for more social housing to be built in all parts of Northern Ireland. He stated that it is one of the Department's highest priorities and he welcomed any support that the Council can give to support it.

\* **Alderman Callan joined the meeting at 7.12pm.**

In response to a request from Councillor Watton, the Minister for Communities advised that the Department would provide up-to-date figures for the allocation of the social housing budget to the different Council areas. He agreed that housing need can be underreported in rural areas and advised that that was one of the reasons that the Department has developed the supply strategy. He stated that the prevalence of Airbnbs and second homes in Causeway Coast and Glens is twice the rate as the rest of Northern Ireland, and that he has asked the Department for the Economy to look into the matter, particularly in respect of the regulation of Airbnbs.

In response to a query from Councillor McCully, the Minister for Communities advised that wastewater infrastructure is a critical issue in respect of housing provision and he hoped that the new Infrastructure Minister will bring forward proposals to address this issue.

\* **Councillor Nicholl joined the meeting at 7.20pm.**

In response to Councillor Schenning, the Minister for Communities advised that the work of the community and voluntary sector is valued and that a 5% uplift would be provided to the sector this year, along with £1,500 to support smaller organisations. He expressed his concern regarding this Government's approach to National Insurance contributions and the pressure that will put on those organisations, and stated that there was cross-party support for the Finance Minister in making sure there was support for those who need it.

In response to Councillor N Archibald, the Minister for Communities advised that the Housing Executive survey will aim to determine the areas of highest housing

need. He advised that, for the first time in Northern Ireland, the intermediate rent product will be coming to the market, which will allow for low interest borrowing that will enable developers to build more homes, on the condition that they will be rented to low-income households for a period of time.

Councillor McGurk asked how DfC intends to meet its targets in relation to provision in rural areas specifically, as the latent demand process is not working adequately to address the need in rural areas. The Minister for Communities advised that the Housing Executive has set up a rural steering group to explore the barriers to rural housing development. He stated that DfC has recently commissioned research that is currently being evaluated, and that he would let Council know when this will be published.

In response to Councillor MA McKillop, the Minister for Communities advised that the consultation on the points system will be a thorough review of how points will be provided and that he expects that it will be completed in mid-2026.

Alderman Knight-McQuillan stated that Section 96 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 involves a very outdated requirement for Council to contact DfC in respect of land acquisitions or leases if it is to be for less than best value. She stated that this process is costing Council money and that a common-sense approach should be taken when Council is supporting a community organisation, for example. The Minister for Communities stated that he would be happy to look at how this process could be simplified, but advised that it make take time if legislative change is required.

Councillor Peacock raised the issue of “hidden homeless”. She expressed concern regarding the housing growth indicators. She stated that the way that the Housing Executive calculates and collates the data has a massive impact on the development of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and that the current figures are not reflecting the true housing need. She asked what work is being done with the Department for Infrastructure and the planning process to ensure land is available for building homes. The Minister for Communities agreed on the importance of land availability and advised that there would be an announcement on that in the coming weeks.

The Director of Housing Supply Policy advised that Housing Executive uses the Strategic Housing Market Analysis reports (SHMAs), but a lot of the underlying data has since changed, so some work will be done on that. There will also be work done to take into account changes in demand due to events such as a new factory opening in a town or a university expansion. He also advised that there will be another conference in the summer with local place shapers, Housing Executive and Council Planners, to consider how to make the system work better.



Councillor Holmes raised the issue of the lack of wastewater infrastructure and the impact of second homes in this area. He stated that removing the rates cap could have a significant impact here. The Minister for Communities reiterated the need to look at the issue of Airbnbs, and stated that the rating system has a role to play in addressing housing availability, particularly in relation to derelict or empty properties.

In response to Alderman Callan's comments regarding the US/NI Cultural Working Group, the Minister for Communities agreed that DfC wants to promote NI as much as possible. He emphasised the cultural and heritage links with the US, which are good for both tourism and investment.

Councillor Anderson congratulated the Minister on opening the £36 million stadium funding. The Minister advised that the fund will open from Thursday, with all clubs having the opportunity to apply, and that he wants to see investment in grassroots sport.

Councillor Wilson noted the increase in remote working and queried whether unused public land could be utilised for housing development. The Minister advised that he has tasked officials to look at making the best use of public resources that are available.

\* **Councillor Storey joined the meeting at 7.49pm.**

In response to Councillor Kyle stating that there is no one-bed accommodation currently available in the Borough, the Minister advised that it is an issue across NI and that he hopes to make an announcement in relation to this very soon.

In response to Councillor McMullan, the Minister advised that the issue of tenancy fraud has been raised with the Housing Executive and that plans are being developed to address it. He advised that to tackle this issue, evidence needs to be provided, so he encouraged people to report instances of housing not being used as it should.

In response to Councillor Huggins, the Minister advised that DfC had considered the possibility of introducing a rent cap to curtail private rent increases, but research has shown that it has the opposite effect than hoped and actually results in increased rent costs overall.

Councillor Storey stated that allegations had been made against the Council that has resulted in costs to the Council of approximately £1 million. He asked when the Council will know the name of who reported Council to the Minister's predecessor. The Minister advised that he would have to come back to Council on that as he would need to check what can legally be said about it.



Councillor Peacock proposed that Council does not impose parking charges at either West Bay car park or Ballycastle sea front car park.

Councillor McShane seconded the proposal, and stated that that option was not given in the consultation.

### **Amendment**

Proposed by Councillor Peacock

Seconded by Councillor McShane

- That Council does not impose parking charges at either West Bay or Ballycastle sea front.

Councillor McShane requested a Recorded Vote.

The Mayor put the Amendment to the Council to Vote.

15 Members voted For; 23 Members voted Against; 1 Member abstained.

The Mayor declared the Amendment lost.

### Recorded Vote Table

<b>For (15)</b>	Alderman Coyle
	Councillors C Archibald, N Archibald, Bateson, Chivers, Kennedy, McGurk, MA McKillop, McMullan, McQuillan, McShane, Nicholl, Peacock, Schenning, Watson
<b>Against (23)</b>	Alderman Boyle, Callan, Fielding, Knight-McQuillan, John McAuley, S McKillop, Scott, Stewart
	Councillors Anderson, Callaghan, Holmes, Huggins, Kane, Kyle, Mairs, Jonathan McAuley, McCully, Stirling, Storey, Wallace, Watton, Wilson, Wisener
<b>Abstain (1)</b>	Alderman Hunter

Councillor Kane noted that there are some outstanding issues that need to be addressed: people travelling by ferry who will be parked over a period of charging days, and the matter of residents' parking. He advised that there is a system in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) whereby Council provides a free car parking permit to NMDDC residents for one forest park of their choice and suggested that an equivalent system could be introduced here.

### **Amendment**

Proposed by Councillor Kane

Seconded by Alderman Stewart

- That Council officers will liaise with the ferry companies on the arrangements for those leaving Ballycastle by ferry for a period running over two or more charging

periods; and that Council will explore the feasibility of introducing a single carpark permit scheme for households in Causeway Coast and Glens, similar to that in operation at Forest Parks in Newry, Mourne and Down, and bring forward a report and proposal within two months.

Councillor Peacock requested a recess.

\* **The Mayor called a recess at 8.19pm.**

\* **The meeting reconvened at 8:33pm.**

Councillor Kane repeated his amendment.

Councillor McShane stated that there are a lot of permeations and issues that could be discussed in more detail and that it was unfortunate that Councillors did not support the previous amendment.

The Mayor put the Amendment to the Council to vote.

17 Members voted For; 18 Members voted Against; 1 Member abstained.

The Mayor declared the Amendment lost.

## **6.2 Correspondence received**

The item of correspondence was presented as read by the Mayor for noting.

Councillor Peacock noted that the MP's own party members voted against the amendment that would have rectified the issue raised in the correspondence.

## **6.2 Adoption of the Minutes**

Proposed by Councillor Mairs

Seconded by Councillor Callaghan and

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of Environmental Services Committee meeting held Tuesday 14 January 2025 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

## **7. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2025**

Copy, previously circulated.

Councillor McGurk proposed the minutes for approval, with the exception of Item 7 (Social Supermarket Support Fund) which had been withdrawn.

### **Matters Arising**

## 7.1 Local Economic Partnership (Item 6)

In response to a query from Councillor Holmes regarding Item 6 in the minutes, the Local Economic Partnership (LEP), the Director of Leisure and Development advised that the d'Hondt nominations would run from a standing start, so the allocation would be: DUP, Sinn Féin, DUP.

## 7.2 Adoption of the Minutes

Proposed by Councillor McGurk  
Seconded by Councillor N Archibald and

**RESOLVED** – that the Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 21 January 2025 are adopted and recommendations therein approved, with the exception of Item 7 (Social Supermarket Support Fund).

## 8. MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY 23 JANUARY 2025

Copy, previously circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins  
Seconded by Councillor Wisener and

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting held Thursday 23 January 2025 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

## 9. MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 28 JANUARY 2025

### Matters Arising

### 9.1 Approval to use Procurement Framework to purchase Retail Consultancy Services to inform the Local Development Plan preparation and provide expert advice on planning applications and input to related planning appeals

The Mayor advised that Item 9.1 would be taken *In Committee* at the end of the meeting.

### 9.2 Adoption of the Minutes

Proposed by Councillor Knight-McQuillan  
Seconded by Councillor C Archibald and

**RESOLVED** – That Corporate Policy and Resource Committee Meeting held Tuesday 28 January 2025 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

## **10. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL**

The Chief Executive advised that the next meeting of the Partnership Panel would be held at the end of June.

## **11. CONFERENCES**

There were no conferences.

## **12. CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

## **13. CONSULTATION SCHEDULE**

Copy, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chief Executive.

### Open Consultations

- The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Just Transition Commission Consultation submission by 17 January 2025 (expired)
- Department for Communities Equality Impact Assessment Consultation on Anti-Social Behaviour Housing proposals submission by 3 February 2025
- Department of Health Consultation: Hospitals – Creating a Network for Better Outcomes submission by 28 February 2025
- Public Health Agency (PHA) Consultation for the draft PHA Corporate Plan 2025-2030 submission by 28 February 2025
- Northern Ireland Executive Review of Trust Ports, submission by 10 March 2025
- Department of Health Consultation for automatic support being provided under the Help with Health Costs scheme for Universal Credit recipients, submission by 10 March 2025
- Department for the Economy Notice of Intention to Award Mineral Prospecting Licences, submission by 4 April 2025
- Department for Infrastructure Living With Water in Derry Plan, submission by 7 April 2025
- Department of Finance Consultation on adjustments to employee contribution rates for the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pension Scheme, submission by 7 April 2025
- Department of Health Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the Draft 2025-26 Health Budget, submission by 9 April 2025
- Department for Infrastructure Consultation on changing the frequency of MOT testing, submission by 16 April 2025

- Northern Health and Social Care Trust Consultation on piloting the use of Body-worn Camera Devices within the Emergency Department, submission by 1 May 2025

Available to View

- Department for Communities, Section 75 Screening Report - 01 Oct - 31 Dec 2024
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Equality Policy Screening Report for period October - December 2024
- Department of Health, Equality Screening Report for October 2024 – December 2024.

Council NOTED the consultation items.

#### **14. SEAL DOCUMENTS**

Members were advised of the undernoted items for signing and sealing by Council, approval having been previously granted and all necessary legislative requirements being met.

- (i) Grave Registry Certificates, No's 5912 to 5931 inclusive;
- (ii) 34C application (non-monetary) bond agreement between DFI and Council for works to be carried out on the road access for Ballycastle Leisure Centre (Ref L&D 241217/CM 250107)

Proposed by Alderman Callan

Seconded by Alderman Hunter and

**RESOLVED** – that the Sealing of documents, as listed, be approved (Items i-ii).

#### **15. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY ALDERMAN BOYLE, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR MCCULLY**

*This council recognises the importance of the Riverside Theatre as vital for the local arts and community sector; reaffirms its position that the theatre should remain in operation as a valuable cultural asset in the Borough; and agrees to write to the Vice-Chancellor and the Minister for the Economy, affirming our position and seeking urgent clarity on the future of the theatre.*

The Notice of Motion was referred without discussion to the Leisure and Development Committee.

#### **MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'**

Proposed by Alderman Callan

Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council move ‘*In Committee*’.

- \* **Press and Public left the meeting at 8.43pm.**

***The information contained in the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.***

**16. TENDER REPORT COVID RECOVERY SMALL SETTLEMENTS REGENERATION PROGRAMME (CRSSRP) – DERNAFLAW MUGA**

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland), was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

**Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the outcome of the procurement process to appoint contractors to undertake the completion of construction of a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in the village of Dernaflaw as part of the Covid Recovery Small Settlement Regeneration Programme (CRSSRP).

Members are asked to consider the Capital Officers report attached and to agree with the recommendation to proceed to appoint the contractor with the lowest tender price.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that Council accepts this tender report and instructs staff to appoint Struell Contracts NI Ltd to deliver this project for the tender price of £227,930.18 (which includes a 10% contingency).

Councillor McGurk proposed the recommendation and thanked the Director of Leisure and Development for progressing this project.

Proposed by Councillor McGurk  
Seconded by Councillor C Archibald

**RESOLVED** – to accept this tender report and instruct staff to appoint Struell Contracts NI Ltd to deliver this project for the tender price of £227,930.18 (which includes a 10% contingency).

**17. MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY AND RESOURCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 28 JANUARY 2025 ‘IN COMMITTEE’**

**Matters Arising**



**17.1 Approval to use Procurement Framework to purchase Retail Consultancy Services to inform the Local Development Plan preparation and provide expert advice on planning applications and input to related planning appeals**

Confidential report, by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, was presented by the Head of Planning.

The Head of Planning advised Members of amendments to the report, as detailed in the minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources meeting dated 28 January 2025.

Proposed by Councillor McGurk  
Seconded by Alderman Hunter and

**RESOLVED** – to agree to planning officials using the Bloom Services/NEPRO procurement framework to buy and manage future retail consultancy services to inform the Local Development Plan preparation and provide expert advice on planning applications and input to related planning appeals, as amended.

**MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’**

Proposed by Councillor C Archibald  
Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

**AGREED** - to recommend that Council move ‘*In Public*’.

This being all the business the meeting closed at 8.49pm.

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Chair