

THE ANNUAL MEETING MONDAY 2 JUNE 2025

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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ON
MONDAY 2 JUNE 2025 AT 7.00PM**

- In the Chair** : Councillor McQuillan, Outgoing Mayor (Items 1 – 5.1)
Councillor McMullan, The Mayor (Items 5.2– 10)
- Present** : Alderman Boyle, Callan, Coyle, Fielding, Hunter,
Knight-McQuillan, McAuley, S McKillop, Scott, Stewart

Councillors Anderson, C Archibald, N Archibald,
Bateson, Callaghan, Holmes, Huggins, Kane, Kennedy,
Kyle, Mairs, McCully, McGurk, MA McKillop, McShane,
Schenning, Stirling, Storey, Wallace, Watson, Watton,
Wilson, Wisener
- Officers Present** : D Jackson, Chief Executive {Items 1-7, 9-10}
M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services {Item 8}
A Hamilton, Democratic & Central Services Manager
S Duggan, Civic Support & Committee & Member Services Officer

L Irwin, Acting Corporate Communications and Public Relations
Manager

M Kennedy, ICT Officer
A Lennox, ICT Officer
- In Attendance** : Press 3no. (R)

Key – R Attended remotely

The Mayor opened the meeting and provided guidance in relation to the audio recording of the meeting.

The Mayor invited Elected Members to watch a screening of the Year in Office

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for Councillors Chivers, Jonathan McAuley, McGlinchey, Peacock, Nicholl, Wisener and Holmes¹. It was advised that Alderman Knight-McQuillan and McAuley would be late to the meeting.

¹ Councillors Holmes and Wisener later joined the meeting.

2. OUTGOING MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Outgoing Mayor, Councillor McQuillan addressed Council:

"Well, as I bring my term as Mayor to a close this evening, I want to begin by saying what an immense privilege it has been to serve in this role over the past year. It has been an experience I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

When I was given the chance to take up Office, we set out with a clear goal: to amplify the voices and achievements of our young people right across the Causeway Coast and Glens council area. I've had the honour of hosting countless receptions recognising their sporting triumphs, artistic talents, and contributions to community life. It has been a constant reminder of the potential that exists in our council area and of the responsibility we all share to support and nurture it.

But I also felt strongly that we couldn't ignore the struggles our young people face — especially around mental health. That's why I was particularly proud of the focus placed on this issue throughout the year, including events like the Men's Mental Health Night in Dunloy in November, which brought together voices and experiences that deserve to be heard.

Visiting our local secondary schools gave me insight into the concerns, hopes, and frustrations of a generation that wants to see real change. It reaffirmed for me just how important it is that their views are reflected in the work we do.

Throughout this year, I've also made it my aim to represent every corner of our council area, and to celebrate the diversity and strength of all our communities. From the coastlines of Rathlin to rural towns and villages, I've been proud to engage with individuals and groups working day in and day out to make life better for others.

Together with the Deputy Mayor, we raised over £5,000 this year for two exceptional charities — MindWise and NIKPA — causes that do vital work for people across the North of Ireland. I want to put on record my sincere thanks to the Deputy Mayor — not just for your partnership in those efforts, but for your constant support throughout the year: from organising events and standing in for me at receptions, to the occasional reminder to straighten my tie before a photo! Your help, good humour, and reliability have been greatly appreciated.

I also want to take a moment to thank the council staff, who have guided and supported me every step of the way. Their professionalism and commitment often go unseen, but they are the backbone of what we do. In particular, I want to express heartfelt thanks to Eithne in the Mayor's Office

— your advice, organisation, and support have been outstanding, and I truly would have been lost without you.

I would also like to thank my family for continued support throughout the year especially regarding the charity coffee morning. I wouldn't have been able to do it without their support.

To my party colleagues, thank you once again for the trust you placed in me. This opportunity has been life changing, and I hope I have done it justice.

It's been a significant year for this council area. We've seen the reinstatement of the £110 million Growth Deal and the Launch of the Co-Designed local community PeacePlus Action Plan. We've hosted fantastic events like the first ever Red Bull Cliff Diving competition, the North West 200, the incredibly moving Joey 25 celebration in Ballymoney, the historic Lammas Fair and many more.

We've also been privileged to welcome countless visitors to our council area throughout the year — from near and far — helping to showcase all we have to offer. It was a pleasure to officially open numerous new playparks that will serve our children and families for years to come, and to take part in some truly outstanding seasonal events that brought communities together and created lasting memories.

And what has stood out the most for me this year has been the people — the volunteers, business owners, educators and carers who quietly get on with making our council area better. Travelling across the Causeway Coast and Glens and meeting them has been a genuine privilege.

Finally, thank you to all members for your cooperation this year and your continued support. It has been an honour to work alongside you all."

3. OUTGOING DEPUTY MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Outgoing Deputy Mayor, Councillor Stirling addressed Council,

"It has been an honour to serve as the Borough's Deputy Mayor. This year has been truly incredible. The role has given me the opportunity to meet people in every corner of the borough, individuals working tirelessly to provide vital services such as mental health support, food banks, Veterans' projects, to name but a few, and the opportunity to visit schools, youth groups, girls' brigades and scouting groups. Their dedication and passion are truly inspiring.

There have been many highlights, including the Royal Visit and meeting King Charles, and I must admit, conversing with King Charles is beyond my

wildest expectation for this role in September. Despite the weather not being kind on the Sunday, the Air Show on the Saturday was absolutely spectacular. Meeting Army personnel and Service women and men who have served was one of the most humbling experience of my year. Their stories of bravery and sacrifice are unforgettable. The Christmas events calendar, of course, was packed and a real pleasure to attend, and I'd be available this year again, should anybody need me in the back of a sleigh. This year the Northwest 200 was a definite highlight and this event was certainly one of the best that I've ever been to. The recent Joey 25 event in Ballymoney was incredible and a credit to everybody involved. I had the honour of hosting many receptions for sporting groups of all ages, community groups borough wide and recognising groups and individuals who have achieved great things, meeting so many wonderful people who have selflessly given their time and expertise to the success of these groups, amongst them hosting 106 year old Norman Irwin, an incredible individual with a remarkable life, was a distinct pleasure. His stories and wisdom are something that I will cherish forever.

Thank you to the members of my Council Group for affording me the opportunity to carry out this role, your support has been invaluable. Thank you to my family for their unwavering support and patience, without you, none of this would be possible. Thank you of course, to Ethne for ensuring that I was where I was supposed to be, even if I wasn't very sure myself. Thank you to the endless Council staff for their guidance and their patience.

Thank you, Mayor, for your generosity and the opportunity to attend so many great events throughout the borough and I'd like to take this opportunity to wish the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor a successful year ahead. Thank you”.

Councillor McShane addressed Council

“Well done to both Ciarán and Tanya for your work throughout the year. First of all, on behalf of the Sinn Féin group I would like to thank you both, you had a great working relationship. I don't think in all the years that I've been in Council, I think it's 20, just past, I don't think I heard a raised voice in the 12 months that the meetings were chaired and very professionally done so and very fair and very transparent. And I don't know whether this maybe helps as well, you're the youngest Mayor I think ever on the island of Ireland and maybe just not having any kind of baggage as well it has been great just to have that kind of fresh approach, and I suppose maybe just turning a blind eye when you had to for maybe older seasoned ones just when it was needed and to keep that calm effect, it's been really welcomed.

I know you mentioned a number of those activities that took place and I think that's the first time we've seen a video of a collage of photographs to sum up the year and I think that was really nice to see and a great reminder

of the very challenging role for the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor, but when you work together, it definitely makes the role so much easier.

A number of those activities, that I saw, and particularly in The Glens and you mentioned it was the Cliff Diving the first time it was taken place in our Council area and in particular for Ballycastle was absolutely brilliant for the area in July last year. And also the cutting of the sod for the new Ballycastle Leisure Centre on Quay Road earlier this year, it was also brilliant and sharing in the Olympic success for Coleraine Rowing Club, for the Joey Dunlop event last weekend and also the launch of the Peace Plus Action Plan and, not least, the £110 million Growth Deal Heads of Terms that were also signed within your Term.

I know on a personal level, it's a great privilege for you and for your family, but also for our party. You have held yourself in such dignity throughout the year and also to see that photograph of your niece, who was also born in the last year and then with her in the chair and having the chains last weekend was a lovely personal touch. So thank you both very much and wishing the Incoming, Mayor and Deputy Mayor, all the best”.

Councillor MA McKillop addressed Council

“On behalf of our group, I would like to congratulate the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor on a very successful year in post. We appreciate the work that they have both done throughout the borough and the feedback has been really positive. Now it's time for a well earned rest. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish the Incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor, a successful and productive year”.

Councillor Kane addressed Council:

“On behalf of my group, I want to say a big thank you to you and to the Deputy Mayor for the way that you have carried out the roles over the past year. I think it hasn't been lost on any of us just how busy the two of you have been and how much you have given of yourselves and of your time to the role, particularly as two people who were also holding down their day jobs while they were doing it. I do hope that the both of you now have some time scheduled in for a well earned rest after this.

Others have highlighted some of the achievements and some of the highlights of the year but I think Ciarán, for me, the highlight was Ballymoney Christmas lights Switch On where you were absolutely drenched, you looked like a drowned rat. I am not surprised you were in bed with the cold for a couple of weeks afterwards, but you were still determined to be there and switch on the lights, so thank you. Thank you once again to both of you and for the year and for the example of working together that you've set for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the years to come”.

Councillor Huggins addressed Council,
“Congratulations on your tenure as Mayor. Despite claiming, though, you would be a Mayor for all, it was disappointing to note your absence from several significant events that obviously didn't suit the Sinn Féin narrative. However, we hope you have enjoyed your year meeting the many constituent's at events across the borough and wish you well.

To the Deputy Mayor, we would like to congratulate our colleague, Councillor Tanya Stirling, on the fantastic job you have done in your role as Deputy Mayor, you have been a great ambassador. You should be justifiably proud of your year in Office and what you have achieved attending such a wide range of functions and events, leaving a positive and lasting impression on everyone you met. Well done and thank you”.

Councillor Holmes addressed Council:

“I'd like to congratulate both yourself and the Deputy Mayor on your term of Office. It's been a very successful year and it's great to see a Mayor and Deputy Mayor working in such close partnerships throughout the year. So hopefully it's something that continues in the future. You're right when you say it, it is a once in a lifetime experience and you will carry those experiences for the rest of your life. So you had a very good year, both of you. So enjoy the memories and enjoy the rest.”

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY YEAR 3

5.1 Nomination of Mayor 2025 – 2026

The Chief Executive invited the Party lead of Sinn Féin to nominate the Mayor.

Councillor McShane, on behalf of Party Lead, Councillor Peacock, nominated Councillor Oliver McMullan, who was declared Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for the year 2025/2026.

- * Outgoing Mayor, Councillor McQuillan vacated the Chair at this point in the meeting and The Mayor, Councillor McMullan assumed the position of Chair for the remainder of the meeting.**

5.2 Nomination of Deputy Mayor 2025 – 2026

The Chief Executive invited the Party lead of Alliance to nominate the Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Kane nominated Alderman Richard Stewart, who was declared Deputy Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council for the year 2025/2026.

5.3 Nominations to remaining Positions of Responsibility Year 3 2025 – 2026

The Chief Executive invited Party Leads to nominate the Positions of Responsibility. These were in accordance with d'Hondt picks made at the Annual Meeting in 2023.

The nominations were confirmed by Nominating Officers as follows:-

Appointment/Committee	Elected Member	Party
Chair, Environmental Services	Alderman Sharon McKillop	DUP
Vice Chair, Environmental Services		SF
Chair, Leisure and Development	Councillor Philip Anderson	DUP
Vice Chair, Leisure and Development		SF
Chair, Corporate Policy and Resources Committee	Councillor Cara McShane	SF
Vice Chair, Corporate Policy and Resources Committee	Councillor Mervyn Storey	DUP
Chair, Planning Committee	Councillor Lee Kane	ALLIANCE
Vice Chair, Planning Committee	Alderman Michael Coyle	SDLP
Chair, Audit Committee	Councillor Ashleen Schenning	SDLP
Vice Chair, Audit Committee	Councillor Amy Mairs	ALLIANCE
Chair, Finance Committee	Councillor Allister Kyle	TUV
Vice Chair, Finance Committee		SF
Partnership Panel	Councillor Leanne Peacock	SF
NI Housing Council	Councillor Sean McGlinchey	SF
Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association / Veterans' Champion	Councillor Dawn Huggins	DUP

6. INCOMING MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor, Councillor McMullan addressed Council:

"I am extremely pleased to be appointed as the new Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens, and I take on the role with extreme pride.

I am sure you will all agree that Councillor Ciarán McQuillan and Councillor Tanya Stirling have delivered the roles of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for our Council area with extreme professionalism and grace.

I hope to build upon their work during my term, alongside the Deputy Mayor

I will continue to support all our residents from community groups, social enterprises, volunteers and everyone in between whose dedicated work goes on quietly in the background for all of us here in Causeway Coast and Glens.

As the first Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens representing The Glens I am extremely proud and privileged to be selected as Mayor by the party, Sinn Fein thank you to my colleagues for trusting me with this position and I look forward to showcasing The Glens alongside our Council area as a whole.

I am delighted during my term to be working with, my fellow Elected Members and Council Officers to highlight all that Causeway Coast and Glens has to offer and I will have an open-door policy for anyone that would like to talk.

As Mayor I will do my utmost to ensure our Council area is shown in its best light and that we support and thank everyone who makes this a wonderful place to live and work in.

I would like to thank my wife, Sinead and my whole family. Without them, I wouldn't be able to do what I do and their support means everything to me, and I'm sure that goes for every councillor here without the support of their families, they couldn't do the job that they do".

7. INCOMING DEPUTY MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Deputy Mayor, Alderman Stewart addressed Council,

Firstly I would like to congratulate our new Mayor Councillor Oliver McMullan I have no doubt Oliver will perform his duties to the best of his ability and I look forward to working closely with him in the year ahead.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the outgoing Mayor Cllr Cieran McQuillan and Deputy Mayor Cllr Tanya Stirling for their dedicated service and leadership over the past year. Your commitment and hard work have made a lasting impact, and I look forward to continuing that legacy alongside Oliver in the year ahead.

It is with deep gratitude and a profound sense of honour as I take up the role of Deputy Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens.

To be entrusted with this position is a privilege I do not take lightly. Representing such a diverse, vibrant, and resilient borough is both humbling and inspiring. It is a role that comes with responsibility, and I promise to carry it out with integrity, openness, and a genuine desire to serve all who call this place home.

On a personal note, it is not lost on me that I am the first openly gay person to hold this post in our council's history. While I take pride in this milestone, I also recognise it as part of a wider journey—a journey towards greater inclusion, understanding, and acceptance. I hope my appointment sends a positive message to those who have ever felt unseen or unheard: that there is a place for everyone in public life, and that diversity strengthens, not divides, our communities.

So I want to take this opportunity to thank my wonderful husband Niall and our beautiful daughters and now as of today our beautiful new baby who we were overjoyed to meet for the very first time just this morning. Becoming a daddy again today has filled my heart and I'm so deeply grateful for the unwavering love and support my family and friends have given me since I was first elected in 2023.

I also give my thanks to the electorate in Causeway DEA who without their support I would not be in this privileged position. I would like to also thank my party colleagues for putting their trust in me.

As I look ahead to the year to come, my aspirations are clear. What matters most to me is getting out into our towns, villages, and rural communities across this beautiful borough —meeting residents, listening to their concerns, supporting local groups and organisations, and championing the incredible work already happening on the ground.

I want to promote wellbeing across our borough—not just in health, but in connection, opportunity, and belonging. I want to see our communities thrive, and I believe that prosperity doesn't just come from big ideas, but from the everyday dedication of volunteers, carers, small business owners, youth workers, and so many others who quietly make a difference.

Together, we have the chance to build something meaningful—an inclusive, forward-looking Causeway Coast and Glens that every person feels proud to be part of.

Thank you again for your trust and support. I'm honoured to serve, and I'm ready to get to work”.

- * The Chief Executive declared an interest and left the meeting.
- * The Director of Corporate Services assumed the top table at 7.29pm.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

The purpose of the report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

The following correspondence has been received:

8.1 Michael Murdoch MBE, Chief Executive Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association, correspondence dated 28 April 2025 (copy attached)

Extract

Re: Council Members Representation to The Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, Northern Ireland

Traditionally, RFCA NI, has been provided with one Council Member Representative who would have a dual role as the Veterans Champion (VC). However in June 2023 after consultation with the NI Veterans Support Office (as was) and the VCs, they agreed that the VC would benefit from having a Deputy. The funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has resulted in a significant rise in the VCs profile and veteran community engagement. The nomination of a Deputy VC could provide great outreach within the constituency and help the VC with the increased workload generated from within the veterans' community.

Although mandated to provide one representative, I would be very grateful if you could consider the additional request.

Below is a tabled request from RFCA NI.

Name of Committee/Body	Number of Councillors required	Annual nomination or full Council term	Any other specific requirements
RFCA NI	Veterans' Champion Deputy Veterans' Champion	Full Term	Ideally Councillors should come from different DEA(s)

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council considers the correspondence.

Councillor Huggins advised the Veterans Champion role and workload had grown and welcomed the role of Deputy Veteran's Champion in order to support the Veterans.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

RESOLVED – that Council nominate a Deputy Veterans' Champion Position of Responsibility.

- * The Chief Executive returned to the meeting at 7.32pm.
- * The Director of Corporate Services vacated the top table.

9. COMMITTEE ALLOCATIONS - APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

Circulated for information.

The Chief Executive invited Nominating Officers to inform him of any committee changes in due course.

10. APPOINTMENTS TO PARTNERSHIPS, EXTERNAL BODIES

Report, previously circulated for information.

There being no further business, the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.33pm.

Chair