

ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Meeting No 060
MINUTES
Thursday 30 September 2021

Members Present:

Councillor A Bennington	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor R Kinnear	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Alderman R Gibson (<i>Chair</i>)	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Alderman A Carson	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Alderman D Drysdale	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor S Lee	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor M Gregg	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Councillor D Reid	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor H McKee	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Members' Apologies:

Councillor M Goodman	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
Councillor A McDowell	Ards & North Down Borough Council
Councillor F Ferguson	Belfast City Council
Councillor P McReynolds	Belfast City Council
Councillor JJ Magee	Belfast City Council
Alderman R Cherry	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor I Friary	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
Councillor W Clarke (<i>Deputy Chair</i>)	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Councillor W Walker	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers Present:

T Walker	arc21
G Craig (<i>Secretary</i>)	arc21
H Campbell	arc21
K Boal	arc21
M Lavery	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
D Lindsay	Ards & North Down Borough Council
N Martin	Ards & North Down Borough Council
C Mathews	Belfast City Council
J McConnell	Belfast City Council
H Moore	Lisburn & Castlereagh Borough Council
D Carey	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
J McBride	Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Officers' Apologies:

G Girvan	Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council
P Thompson	Mid & East Antrim Borough Council
J Green	arc21

The Chair was informed that Councillor Goodman had been unwell and unable to attend the meeting. It was agreed to forward a letter of best wishes to him on behalf of the Committee.

Action: The Chair

Item 1 - Update on Coronavirus Regulations

Mr Craig reported that the coronavirus regulations had been updated and, from 27th August 2021 to 25th March 2022, Members are now allowed again to make decisions at remote meetings.

Action: Noted

Item 2 - Conflicts of Interest Statement

The Chair read out the Conflicts of Interest Statement. There were no conflicts noted.

Action: Noted

Item 3 - Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 4 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 059 held on 26 August 2021

Following discussion, the Joint Committee approved the minutes of Joint Committee meeting 059 held on 26 August 2021.

Action: Agreed

Item 5 - Matters Arising

Mr Craig discussed the Declaration of Members Interests forms to be completed by Members and reported that to date he had still five outstanding and advised that he would send out another reminder along with the relevant form to ask those remaining five Members to complete and send back to him as soon as possible in order that he can update the Local Government Auditor accordingly.

Action: Mr Craig & Members

Mr Craig advised that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council had kindly offered their facility at Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn, in order to hold a joint physical and virtual hybrid meeting for October's Joint Committee meeting. Mr Craig advised that Members and Officers would be updated on the details in due course.

Action: Mr Craig

Item 6 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Ms Boal provided the Joint Committee with an overview of issues pertaining to contracts and operations.

She reported that contractors continue to provide services across the arc21 contracts with COVID-19 preventative measures in place. Whilst a number of contractors have had positive Covid cases, services related to arc21 contracts have been maintained.

She also provided an update on rejected loads delivered to NWP and Bryson Recycling, an overview of contract tonnages and supplies orders.

In response to a previous request for information a breakdown of rejected loads by council and contract for the period April 2019- August 2021 was presented for information. Ms Boal reiterated that the overall tonnages delivered through the contracts that were rejected were, as a proportion of total tonnage delivered, very small but did cause operational and administrative inconvenience.

Ms Boal highlighted that lead times for many of the supplies such as bins and caddy liners had been growing and price increases were also occurring. She advised that Council Officers had been asked to consider this when planning their orders.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report.

Action: Noted

IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would now move “in committee” for items 7 to 11 of the Agenda which was agreed.

Matters of a confidential and commercially sensitive nature were discussed under these agenda items.

Following discussion on the commercially sensitive matters, the Chair recommended that the meeting would now return to the main agenda, which was approved, but whilst “in committee” there were five matters discussed as follows:

Item 7 - Minutes of Meeting 059 held on 26 August 2021 ‘in committee’	Action: Agreed
Item 8 - Matters Arising	Action: Noted
Item 9 - Residual Waste Treatment Project	Action: Noted
Item 10 - Commercially Sensitive Contract & Procurement Issues	Action: Agreed
Item 11 - Council Covid-19 Waste Management Financial Losses	Action: Noted

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Members agreed to return to the main Agenda.

Item 12 - Revenue Estimates

Mr Craig presented the Joint Committee with the proposed Revenue Estimates of arc21 for the three-year period from 2022/23 to 2024/25, for approval, in order that partner councils can make appropriate Budgetary Provision within their own individual financial plans.

The financial highlights are:

- Estimates for 2022/23 are £1.284m compared to £1.386 in 2021/22 (down by £102k)
- Further General Reserves have been applied to reduce the financial burden on councils with £315k applied in 2022/23 (£445k in 2021/22)
- Council contributions in 2022/23 are proposed at £960k compared with £941k in 2021/22 representing a 2% uplift year in year.
- As before, the costs are apportioned based on the mid-year population statistics as provided by NISRA.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee approved the Revenue Estimates.

Action: Agreed

Item 13 - Plastic Packaging Tax

Mr Craig presented the Joint Committee with guidance from HMRC regarding the introduction of the Plastic Packaging Tax which will come into effect on 1 April 2022.

He reported that the UK Plastic Packaging Tax (PPT) Policy is coming into force in April 2022 and HMRC has issued two useful guidance documents to assist organisations with determining if their activities in dealing with plastic packaging bring them into the scope of the tax and, if so, if they need to register for compliance.

He advised that PPT applies to public sector bodies too although it is unlikely that any NI Council would be involved in the type of activities that the tax regime would apply to.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the report and the HMRC publications attached.

Action: Noted

Item 14 - Annual Report for the Year to March 2021

Mr Walker presented the Joint Committee with the arc21 Annual Report for the year to March 2021 reflecting the progress made in the first year of the new Corporate Plan 2020-2024.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the Annual Report to March 2021.

The Chair congratulated the team at arc21 for all their hard work during a difficult year.

Action: Noted

Item 15 - Audit Committee Meeting 24 September 2021 Report

Mr Craig presented a report to update the Joint Committee on the issues presented to the Audit Committee at the meeting held on 24 September 2021.

One of the main issues for Members to note was the final Draft Statement of Accounts for the 2020/21 year which Mr Craig reported that the Local Government Auditor (LGA) had certified without qualification, at the Audit Committee meeting held on 24 September, confirming that the Statement of Accounts were fully compliant to enable them to signed off.

The only minor issue raised by the Auditor related to the fact that not all Members' Declarations of Interests had been submitted which was being addressed, as noted earlier in the minutes under matters arising.

Councillor Drysdale congratulated Mr Craig and the accounts team and all the staff at arc21 for achieving such an excellent result from the LGA once again.

He did however raise an issue regarding compliance with the CIPFA code and he asked that the meeting record that, *'arc21 comply with the CIPFA code except to the extent of the fact we have split accountability arrangements between the ACEO/DACEO. This arrangement is under review to ensure compliance with CIPFA and arc21 Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations'*.

Mr Craig advised that the Accounts would now be published on the arc21 website.

The Chair commended the work of the Audit Committee and Mr Craig and his team.

Following discussion the Joint Committee noted the report and the Executive Summary for the meeting held on 24 September 2021.

Action: Noted

Item 16 - Waste Management Plan

Mr Walker provided a verbal report on the ongoing review of the Waste Management Plan, including the role arc21 has provided to date in supporting the review of the current plan, and proposals to develop a new version which is based on an 11-council model.

He reported that the WMP Group, made up of Mr N Martin, Mr M Laverty and Mr T Walker as the arc21 representatives, had attended update sessions throughout the summer in order to keep to a tight timescale to complete the arc21 review by September 2021.

He reported that the arc21 Waste Management Plan had now been screened by WRAP and delivered on a chapter-by-chapter basis to the WMP Group, which had identified where there are gaps to be addressed.

In order to meet the WRAP timescale to return responses by week ending 24 September, Steering Group officers were asked to forward their comments to the WMP Group so that a collective response could be submitted by the deadline of Friday 24 September. Following receipt from these officers, the WMP Group developed a collective response and submitted it in accordance with the requested timescale and a copy of the proposed response was presented for Members' information.

As the work with WRAP had proceeded over the summer, and following discussions with DAERA, Mr Walker reported that it was now being considered that the preparation of a single Waste Management Plan was unlikely and, instead, an addendum for each of the former Plans to cover the next number of years may be the most appropriate outcome at this stage. Mr Walker advised that the next step would be to liaise with WRAP to produce an appropriate addendum for consideration by the Joint Committee and councils.

Following discussion, the Joint Committee noted the approach adopted by the NI WMP Group over the summer, and the subsequent submission of "our" comments on the finalised chapters.

Action: Noted

Item 17 - AOB

There was no further business discussed.

Action: Noted

Item 18 - Next Meeting

The Chair advised that the next Joint Committee meeting would be held as scheduled on Thursday 28th October and would take the form of a hybrid meeting with both physical and virtual attendance. He reported that Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council had kindly agreed to host the meeting in the Council Chamber, at Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn, and details will be circulated accordingly by Mr Craig.

Action: Mr Craig

At this point Alderman Drysdale asked that Members go in committee and requested that Officers leave the meeting.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____