

ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE
Virtual Meeting No 79
MINUTES
Thursday 29 June 2023

Members Present:

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Councillor M Goodman (<i>Acting Chair</i>) | Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council |
| Alderman P Michael | Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council |
| Councillor A Cathcart | Ards & North Down Borough Council |
| Councillor J Cochrane | Ards & North Down Borough Council |
| Councillor A Givan | Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council |
| Councillor P Kennedy | Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council |
| Councillor R Quigley | Mid & East Antrim Borough Council |
| Councillor G McKeen | Mid & East Antrim Borough Council |
| Councillor C Enright | Newry, Mourne & Down District Council |

Members' Apologies:

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Councillor E McLaughlin | Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council |
| Councillor C Blaney | Ards & North Down Borough Council |
| Alderman S Skillen | Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council |
| Alderman A Wilson | Mid & East Antrim Borough Council |
| Councillor T Andrews | Newry, Mourne & Down District Council |
| Councillor W Clarke | Newry, Mourne & Down District Council |

The representatives from Belfast City Council are still to be confirmed following the Local Government elections

Officers Present:

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|
| T Walker | arc21 |
| H Campbell | arc21 |
| G Craig | arc21 |
| J Green | arc21 |
| K Boal | arc21 |
| P Feeney | arc21 |
| L Daly | Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council |
| N Martin | Ards & North Down Borough Council |
| C Matthews | Belfast City Council |
| W Muldrew | Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council |
| P Thompson | Mid & East Antrim Borough Council |
| A Cassells | Newry, Mourne & Down District Council |

Officers' Apologies:

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| M Lavery | Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council |
| D Lindsay | Ards & North Down Borough Council |
| R Harvey | Lisburn & Castlereagh Borough Council |

In attendance:

William Curry, Arthur Cox Solicitors

Mr Walker welcomed all the Members to the first meeting of the new Joint Committee following the local government elections and he advised that as one council had not nominated their representatives, Members would need to appoint an Acting Chair for the purposes of discharging the business of the meeting.

He advised that there was an extra paper to be discussed at the end of the meeting and that due to its content, officers would be asked to leave the meeting.

Item 1 - Election of Chair to conduct the business of the meeting

Mr Craig advised that a lawful meeting must have a Chair and at the next Joint Committee meeting scheduled in August it was planned to hold the AGM to nominate a Chair and Deputy Chair, once all councils had nominated their representatives.

Members were asked to nominate a Member to chair the meeting and it was agreed that as Councillor Goodman was the only returning member from the former Committee, he would Chair the first meeting. Proposed by Councillor Enright and seconded by Councillor Kennedy and agreed by all.

Councillor Goodman took the Chair.

arc21 staff introduced themselves to the meeting.

Item 2 - Conflicts of Interest Statement

The Chair read out the Conflicts of Interest Statement and none were noted. **Action: Noted**

Item 3 - Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Action: Noted

Item 4 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 078 held on 30 March 2023

Mr Walker reported that regarding approving the minutes in the absence of Members from the previous Joint Committee being re-appointed, he had taken advice from Belfast City Council's Democratic Services [there was only one returning Member, who had also been present at the last Joint Committee meeting], and had been advised that it was ok to approve the minutes if the Councillor was content to vouch for them as a fair and accurate record.

The Chair advised that, as the only extant member of the former Joint Committee, he was happy to approve the minutes

Action: Agreed

Item 5 - Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Action: Noted

Item 6 - Contracts & Operations Briefing Report

Ms Boal provided a report on the current contracts and operations and noted that not all councils were in every contract, some may be specific to just one council while other contracts were for all of arc21's constituent councils. She advised that every month, this briefing report would be provided to update Members on contract activity and performance issues. Any issues of a commercially sensitive nature are dealt with in a separate report under the "*In Committee*" section of the meeting.

Service Status

Ms Boal advised that all services were operational during the month of May 2023 and no contractors required to put in place any contingency measures.

Performance

The Contractor Performance for May 2023 was presented showing the various contracts and Ms Boal summarised the contracts as follows:

- 2 contracts for the Mixed Dry Recyclables;
 - o Lot 1 is the contract with Bryson for all of the councils apart from NM&DDC; and
 - o Lot 2 is the contract with Regen which operates just for NM&DDC;
- all of the councils are part of the Organics contract;
- 4 councils partake of the Street Sweepings contract which is divided into 2 Lots, while Belfast City Council is the only user of Lot 1;
- Transfer contract for L&CCC for the movement of residual waste to landfill;
- Transfer contract for NM&DDC with Natural World Products for the movement of dry recyclables from a transfer station to the delivery point in the MRF Lot 2 contract;
- 3 Transfer Stations operated by councils are serviced by arc21 haulage contracts with Heatricks to move wastes to various locations.

She advised that arc21 has contracts in place for the processing or receipt of materials for disposal, and support contracts for delivery of those materials to sites.

Ms Boal noted that the number of loads, site visits, overweight vehicles, use of contingency arrangements, turnaround and data reporting is all monitored and reported on a monthly basis.

She reported that the turnaround times had been reviewed and in all cases the contractors provided adequate reasons for these, and therefore service credits were not applied. The turnaround times is normally 30mins, with the exception of organics which is 20mins.

The overweight vehicles relating to the Haulage contracts continue to be monitored and discussed at Contract Meetings. arc21 council officers have been asked to liaise with their Operational Managers to try and reduce the overweight vehicles going to the Landfill and Organics sites as these numbers are quite high. All reports this month were sent in on time and there were only some minor issues with Heatricks report that required revision due to incorrect data.

She noted that the next table presented looked at Bring Bank sites for glass, paper, cans and textiles across the borough. She noted that the frequency of collections and number of sites vary between council.

In May, there were 2 x Bottle Bank sites that did not have the specified capacity available. Ms Boal advised that the contractor was notified, following which these banks were then serviced as soon as possible. There were no Service Credits applied this month.

She noted that arc21 is out for procurement for a new contract which was reported separately at the meeting and one of the items arc21 has introduced a rectification mechanism in the new contract so that if arc21 receives notification of a site not being fully maintained then the contractor is given a fixed time period during which it is expected to rectify the situation.

Health & Safety

Ms Boal reported that arc21 requires the reporting of all incidents, including near misses. She advised that every time arc21 receives notification of an event, this is passed to the respective council for review and, if required, to enable appropriate action to be taken. Contractors may also take action and this can include requiring councils, or contractors acting on their behalf, to undergo re-induction.

During May 2023, she advised that there had been 3 x Health & Safety matters reported to arc21 by contractors and councils, and the details were noted in the table presented.

She advised that council officers had been asked to liaise with their Health & Safety officers and operational managers, including those of external contractors, to check all drivers understand their Health & Safety obligations on site whilst operating their vehicles.

Audits

Ms Boal reported that arc21 has a contract for the provision of external Health & Safety consultancy advice. Under the contract, they will visit all of the contractor sites to undertake independent Health & Safety audits. The findings are provided to the contractors and any actions arising are monitored for implementation.

In May, an audit was conducted at the NWP Transfer Station (Antrim). No issues were reported and it was concluded that *"the company maintains a high level of health and safety compliance on site"*.

Rejected Loads

(i) Organic Waste Treatment Contract

Ms Boal reported that another key factor is the quality of the material received by NWP and that, occasionally, loads are rejected due to contamination and these are highlighted each month to the relevant council. She advised that there had been two loads rejected from the organics delivery sites in May 2023 and, to put this in perspective, there had been over 40,000 loads delivered in the year to various sites. Overall, only 25 loads had been rejected in the 2022/23 year but nonetheless, it was important to focus upon quality and eradicate these incidents where possible.

She noted that this can be caused by vehicles not being fully emptied before being dispatched for an organics run, and council officers are encouraged to ensure that they have appropriate provision in place to ensure that the vehicles are fully emptied at the end of each round/day.

She noted that the rejected loads in the organics are taken to landfill and the relevant council will be charged accordingly.

(ii) Materials Recovery Facilities

Ms Boal reported that one rejected load had been received by Bryson in May 2023 and that these rejected loads are not taken to landfill but to another facility for further segregation following which an element will be sent for energy recovery. The emphasis being that little material will be dispatched to landfill.

She advised that officers have been requested to continue to review their protocols to ensure that systems are in place so that vehicles are fully emptied before collecting another material stream.

arc21 Contract Tonnages

Ms Boal reported that May had been a bumper month for organics, and the highest ever month since the contract had commenced.

She advised that it was important that arc21 increase the tonnages collected via kerbside collections of mixed food and garden waste or separately collected food as this would improve the prospective of a gate fee rebate and would benefit from savings from landfilling or treating that tonnage as residual waste.

A list of the contract tonnages for May 2023 compared to May 2022, was presented and summarised as follows:

- an increase of 1.2% for Mixed Dry Recyclable (MDR) material delivered into Bryson;
- a 10.5% increase in MRF Lot 2 for MDR material sent to ReGen;
- an increase of 4.3% for Type 1 Organic Waste (garden waste from civic amenity sites) for the Organics Contract;
- an increase of 20.2% for Type 2 Organic Waste (mixed garden and food or separately collected food waste collected at the kerbside);
- a 4.2% increase for the Landfill Contract.

Persistent Organic Pollutants In Domestic Soft Seating

Ms Boal reported on the emerging issues of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) which is found in domestic soft seating, primarily due the fire retardant chemicals previously used to reduce the flammability of some of these furnishings. Reference was made to the fact that in England, there has been a regulatory position statement prepared by the Environment Agency (EA) aimed at moving this waste stream to incineration.

She advised that the EA had many meetings and briefings with local authorities in advance of preparing its position statement/guidance and that it gave advance warning of what was expected of local authorities in preventing the disposal of furnishings to landfill, including clearly setting a date when this guidance would become active. A particular set-up involving energy-from-waste facilities was recognized as being the considered the appropriate disposal route for these items.

She noted that Northern Ireland is obligated under the same national legislation but, to date, no similar guidance has been issued however it was acknowledged by the Department that in NI there is a lack of suitable infrastructure to deal with the waste stream.

arc21 has repeatedly sought guidance from DAERA/NIEA concerning issues including how the items are to be handled, the cost of transporting the suitable facilities probably in England or beyond and whether there would be any new burdens funding available to offset would could be a significant new financial burden on councils.

Given that POPs in soft furnishings is probably going to be extended to a range of other everyday items, this issue is only going to become more pressing and impact upon how councils will be expected to differentiate their waste streams.

She reported that Biffa had expressed concern that waste containing obvious amounts of POPs continued to be delivered to landfill by arc21's constituent councils. arc21 continue to seek to make contact with the NIEA for guidance on how these waste items are to be dealt with in the absence of suitable infrastructure.

Councillor Enright enquired as to the possibility of using the facilities at the Belfast Harbour Estate or across the border at Duleek and if arc21 had any relationship with them.

Ms Boal advised that arc21 has no relationship with these facilities at present and that the gasification plant at Airport Road had to pretreat all the materials it accepts.

There have also been conversations with other plants, such as cement kilns, and issues have been identified with licensing and monitoring requirements should these facilities consider accepting these items. In England, the EA guidance identified that shredding was likely to be needed prior to treating in an energy-from-waste facility, but the shredding process itself had to be managed in a controlled environment to prevent the release of fibres to the air, water or soil which few plants provided.

For Northern Ireland, it is likely that any guidance produced will have to consider such issues following which arc21 and the councils can respond accordingly.

Mr Walker advised that a call had been put out by DAERA to establish a POPs working group but that, at the time of writing, this had not been established. It remains a critical issue and will not be adequately addressed until clarity is provided by the Department as to what steps need taken.

He noted that the waste streams at this time is domestic seating like chairs, cushions etc but the annual meeting of the Stockholm Convention raises the prospect of further items being included as the impact of the POPs chemicals becomes increasingly apparent and restrictions on their use (and/or disposal) is introduced to mitigate their impacts.

It was noted that this was an ongoing issue and Members would be kept informed accordingly.

Supplies

Ms Boal advised that arc21 also purchases supplies through a framework and a summary of the relevant aspects pertinent to the supplies contract was provided.

She advised that due to current market conditions which include extended delivery timeframes and price increases, councils have been reminded to ensure that stock levels are monitored and order requests made well in advance of requirements.

The Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by Councillor Enright and seconded by Councillor Givan and noted by all.

Action: Noted

Item 7 - Waste Tonnage Trends

Ms Boal provided a report showing the waste tonnage trends for materials delivered into the arc21 contracts and graphs showing the councils' performance against 10% landfill diversion and a 70% recycling target.

She talked to each of the graphs and noted that it highlighted the trends over a four-year period and tracked the tonnages. She noted the following:

- Landfill - April started at the same point as 2020 and on an upward trajectory. It is anticipated that this will be the first year when the impacts of COVID will be superseded. She noted that the yearly comparisons were not an exact science as it depends upon collection arrangements within the councils. She noted that councils were trying to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and the new DPS contracts should contribute to meeting this objective.
- Organics – bumper month in May for the material collected at the kerbside which involves co-mingled food and garden waste, and separately collected food waste.

Type 1 (garden waste from civic amenity sites) has fallen in recent years which could be due to some councils introducing booking systems and others having reduced HRC opening hours during COVID. In performance terms, it was a good start to the year.

Type 2 – (food and garden waste through kerbside collection schemes) starting at the same point as last year and on a steep upward trajectory, but weather dependent and hopefully it will continue.

- MRF – Lot 1 and 2 tonnages combined – can see a coalescence in recent years and on an upward trajectory.
- Bring Bank Contract – have been fluctuations in terms of the number of sites so not suitable for direct comparisons and more for informative purposes.
- Street Sweepings – this varies when issues with staff or drivers are experienced by the councils. Over last couple of years with COVID, this service may not have been provided consistently, so not suitable for direct comparisons.

She advised that the second part of the report analysed how arc21 is performing against aspirational targets of 10% landfill and 70% recycling but noted that these targets are not set in stone and were more for informative purposes. There is no requirement to meet these targets at present but it is expected that they will feature in the Waste Management Strategy consultation due out later this year.

Councillor Cathcart inquired if the recycling target in the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 was 70% and if this was a legal requirement for councils. Mr Walker advised that there was a 65% target in place in the Waste (Circular Economy)(Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2020 while the 70% has been included in the Climate Change Act but will be included as part of a consultation exercise shortly which will determine how it should be applied. He highlighted that DAERA modelling was showing that councils are recycling rates are currently predicted to top out around 60% but what proportion was to be made up of additional waste streams was still to be clarified by the Department.

Ms Boal advised that it is important that DAERA provide clarity on these matters, but a lot of consultations on policies are underway at the moment, but it is increasingly recognised that other waste streams will have to contribute to meeting these targets, with councils only being part of achieving this.

Councillor Cathcart also inquired if there would be potentially legal consequences or penalties to councils if they don't achieve the targets and Ms Boal advised that clarity was still required but she felt that could not rule such a prospect out at this time.

He [Cllr Cathcart] also inquired if landfill quotas were falling in terms of how much each council can landfill. Ms Boal advised that councils were still trying to maintain the performance they had achieved under the Landfill Directive and the 50% recycling target but given the annual production of waste cycle some were struggling to avoid going backwards. She highlighted that councils' officers are focussing on the future targets and, given that there are five year intervals between these, it is unclear if there will be any interim targets put in place by DAERA to guide and monitor progress.

Councillor Enright inquired what NM&DDC's recycling rate was and Mr Cassells advised the Members that it was in the low 50s. He inquired if any council was meeting the targets to which Ms Boal advised that several councils had met the 2020 target and that she would report on council performance later in the year.

The Joint Committee noted the report. Proposed by Councillor Kennedy and seconded by Councillor Enright and noted by all.

Action: Noted

IN COMMITTEE

The Chair recommended that the meeting would now move "*in committee*" which was agreed. Proposed by Councillor Givan and seconded by Councillor Enright.

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*" during this section of the meeting, there were four matters discussed.

Item 8 - Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting 078 held on 30 March 2023 "*In Committee*" – approved

Item 9 - Matters Arising – noted

Item 10 - Residual Waste Treatment Project – noted

Item 11 - Commercially Sensitive Contract & Procurement Issues – approved

OUT OF COMMITTEE

Proposed by Councillor Givan and seconded by Councillor Kennedy.

Item 12 - Consultations Responses

Mr Walker reported that there were several consultations underway which outlined the extent of Government ambition but this was serving to highlight the increasing gap between what was being sought and what was being delivered. The three consultation responses prepared by arc21 were presented as follows:

- Consultation on the Draft Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland;
- Consultation on potential amendments to the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Regulation; and
- Call for Evidence - Resources & Waste provisional Common Framework.

Mr Walker summarised them as follows:

The Draft Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland - increasing gap between the ambition and action is becoming rather stark and issues arising re regeneration and biodiversity.

Consultation on potential amendments to the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Regulation – seeks to change the specificity of how it defines POPs. Where is this going to go to? How to identify and include chemicals in this new criteria so they don't need to do individual pieces of legislation. We need clarity and regulatory position statements issued in a timely manner. In terms of infrastructure in NI, there needs to be some thought in how we invest in local infrastructure to ensure we have an appropriate landscape of facilities to deal with these materials or how are we going to gain access elsewhere and cost consequential.

Call for Evidence - Resources and Waste provisional Common Framework - common framework established between the different administrations on how to consider environmental policy directives which both we and our DAERA colleagues were unaware of.

The Chair raised his concerns at consultation responses being submitted on behalf of the Joint Committee without prior Member oversight and suggested that arc21 officers consider how to better address the scheduling of responses in terms of achieving better governance and recognising the responsibility of Members.

Mr Walker advised that this was due to circumstances with the election etc but indeed it was not desirable going forward that consultation responses would be prepared and submitted with retrospective approval then sought. He agreed to take the Chair's comments on board and would consider how to mitigate the approvals process for future responses.

The Joint Committee retrospectively endorsed the three arc21 responses submitted. Proposed by Councillor Givan and seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

Item 13 - Corporate Plan 2024-28

Mr Walker provided a report to inform the Joint Committee of the proposed development of a new Corporate Plan that will set out the strategic objectives of the organisation from April 2024.

He advised that the current Corporate Plan expires in March 2024 and a new Plan needed to be developed taking the Joint Committee forward from 1 April 2024.

In regards to the term of the new Corporate Plan, he recommended that this should be for a four year period [2024 – 2028] bearing in mind the electoral cycle and the current and emerging major changes in the waste sector. It was noted that the current council term runs to 2027 and therefore the proposed four-year plan to March 2028 provided cover to the Joint Committee throughout the current council term, and then a further year to provide time for a newly elected Joint Committee to see out the "old" Plan and prepare for the subsequent Corporate Plan. Consequently, it was recommended that:

- the Joint Committee approve the commencement of a new Corporate Plan; and
- the new Corporate Plan be for the four-year period, from April 2024 to March 2028.

The Joint Committee approved the recommendations. Proposed by Councillor Givan and seconded by Councillor Kennedy and agreed by all.

Action: Agreed

Item 14 - Governance and HR Matters

Mr Craig presented a report with a number of items for consideration and, following discussion, it was agreed that only essential items would be discussed and agreed, and the remaining items were deferred to the August Joint Committee meeting.

(1) Election of Chair & Deputy Chair

This item was dealt with at the beginning of the meeting when the Joint Committee nominated Councillor Goodman to be the Acting Chair to undertake the business of the June meeting. This was due to not all constituent councils having nominated their representatives to the arc21 Joint Committee following the local government elections. The election of the Chair and Deputy Chair was therefore deferred to the August AGM.

(2) Audit Committee – discussion deferred to the August meeting

(3) Delegated Authority

As this was an essential item, Members were asked to approve the continuation of delegated authority which was granted in March 2023 to the Acting Chief Executive (or in his absence Ms Boal or Mr Craig) in order to enable decisions to be made until the August meeting to deal with any salient procurement exercises and with any extension/award of contracts during the summer period as necessary. This step was considered necessary to mitigate disruptions to the delivery of waste management services/supplies to the constituent councils.

Mr Craig noted that a list of all decisions made under this delegated authority would be presented to the Joint Committee at the August meeting.

Councillor Enright discussed the Scheme of Delegation (SoD) and the limits to which the senior management team can award before reverting back to the Department. Mr Craig advised the SoD was in place to facilitate the Chief Executive making day-to-day decisions but also the Standing Orders and Terms of Agreement (ToA) need to be considered. The ToA delegates authority to the Joint Committee to approve decisions up to a value of £250,000. He advised that these documents were included in the Member Elected Handbook which had been issued earlier on, and he requested that if Members had any issues concerning these responsibilities, he would be available to discuss them further.

The Chair noted his concerns at extending the delegated authority which had already been in place since March. He suggested a small working group be established to provide guidance to Mr Walker on any issues until the AGM is conducted in August.

Mr Craig advised that decisions would be required before the August meeting and delegated authority would be required to ensure continuation of service. Mr Walker advised that under arc21's Standing Orders, the formation of such a working group would have no legal vires.

Councillor Enright also expressed concern at extending the delegated authority from a governance point of view.

Councillor McKee queried the need to set up a working group, especially in advance of an AGM. He noted the concerns raised but advised that it would be normal practice within a council in advance of an AGM for delegated authority to be extended to the Chief Executive to discharge their duties.

Councillor Enright suggested that the Chief Executive should use the Acting Chair, Councillor Goodman, as a reference point for key decisions until the August meeting when the AGM could be held.

Accordingly, Mr Craig recommended that the delegated authority for the Chief Executive continues until the August meeting and that the Acting Chair is included in any decisions being made in order to provide a democratic input. Any such decisions would then be ratified at the Joint Committee meeting in August as appropriate. The Chair advised that he was happy with this approach and would make himself available.

Ms Boal sought clarification that the use of delegated authority in relation the award of Bring Bank Service Contracts which was agreed following discussion in the in committee section of the meeting, under item 11, still stood to which the Members agreed that it did.

Proposed by Councillor Enright and seconded by Councillor Givan and agreed by all

Action: Agreed

(4) Remote Meetings Legislation – discussion deferred to the August meeting

Mr Craig advised that the legislation to hold virtual meetings expires on 24 September 2023. He advised that the situation was being monitored and Members will be updated at the August meeting when, subject to the legislation being extended, Members can decide if they wish to continue holding meetings virtually.

(5) Recruitment of Chief Executive – discussion deferred to the August meeting

Mr Craig reported on the formalities of the Chief Executive recruitment. He advised that the Joint Committee had approved the advertisement of permanent Chief Executive which Mr Walker had been filling on secondment basis since 2019. He noted that the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) have to be involved in the process. He highlighted that following this exercise, no appointment had been made, and that in his role as Corporate Services Director, he was required to formally notify the Joint Committee of this outcome and to then inform the LGSC know so that they could close their file.

The Chair advised that the issue was merely in abeyance and it was his intention to seek approval from the Joint Committee to re-run a recruitment exercise.

Mr Walker advised that arc21 would need to consider the financial thresholds as the previous exercise had been on a fixed fee basis and use of these consultants again risked breaching these. He stated that the terms of the original tender exercise would need to be reviewed to determine next steps. The Chair advised that he expected that the recruitment exercise would need to progress.

In the absence of the nominations for all Members having been received, Councillor Enright queried whether this could be progressed without having all councils on board.

Mr Walker advised that in light of arc21's financial thresholds, it was likely that a further tender exercise to appoint a recruitment consultancy would need to be undertaken, and that a panel of members would be required from across arc21's constituent councils and be appropriately trained to complete any recruitment process.

Action: Mr Walker

(6) Extension of Secondment Acting Chief Executive

Mr Craig reported that since October 2019, Mr Walker had been appointed as Acting Chief Executive on secondment from Belfast City Council and that there had been several extensions to date.

Given the failure to appoint a Chief Executive, Members were asked to extend the current interim arrangements for a further 6 months [to December 2023] to enable the Joint Committee to determine the next steps to take regarding this post.

As this was deemed as an essential item, the recommendation was agreed. Proposed by Councillor Enright and seconded by Councillor McKeen and agreed by all.

Mr Craig advised that he revert to Belfast City Council to formalise the agreement to allow Mr Walker to continue in his acting capacity until December 2023.

Action: Agreed

The remaining 4 items were deferred to the August meeting.

- (7) Development of a Human Resources Strategy – deferred to the August meeting**
- (8) Draft Policies – deferred to the August meeting**
- (9) Payments – deferred to the August meeting**
- (10) Research – deferred to the August meeting**

Ms Boal asked for clarity in regards to the use of the Chief Executive's delegated authority in dealing with the Bring Bank contract award. The Chair advised that Mr Walker's delegated authority was approved but if there was a need for consultation it was to be reviewed with him. Ms Boal clarified that if arc21 reach the point of award that she could do this with Mr Walker's authorisation for the Bring Bank contract, and the Chair agreed to this.

Action: Agreed

Item 16 - AOB

There were no other matters arising.

Item 17 - Next Meeting Thursday 31 August 2023

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and advised that the next Joint Committee meeting and AGM would be held virtually as scheduled on Thursday 31 August 2023 commencing at 10.30am.

Action: Noted

Officers were asked to leave the meeting and Members remained. Ms P Feeney, the arc21 HR advisor, remained also.

Item 18 - HR Paper

Ms Feeney presented a report regarding a sensitive HR matter and the recommendations presented within this paper were approved.

A copy of the minute will be circulated to Members of the Joint Committee only, due to the sensitive nature of the report.

Action: Agreed

Date: 31 August 2023

Chairman:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Godna", with a horizontal line drawn underneath the name.