



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 6.30 PM

In the Chair: Councillor P Dunlop

Members Present: Aldermen F Agnew
Councillors – H Cushinan, S Flanagan, M Goodman,
P Hamill, N Kelly, N McClelland, M Magill, P Michael,
V Robinson, B Webb and R Wilson

Non Committee Members: Councillor A Bennington

Officers Present: Director of Finance & Governance – S Cole
Director of Organisation Development – A McCooke
Head of Finance – J Balmer
Systems Support Officer – C Bell
Member Services Manager – V Lisk

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the February Meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee, and reminded all present of recording requirements.

1. APOLOGIES

Alderman Kinahan
Councillor McAuley

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. PRESENTATION

3.1 FI/FIN/041 LAND AND PROPERTY SERVICES REVALUATION 2020

Members were reminded that in November 2019, it was agreed that Land and Property Services (LPS) be invited to make a presentation to the Policy and Governance Committee.

David Ross, Director of Valuation/Commissioner of Valuation, Land and Property Services made a presentation and provided Members with an update on 'Revaluation 2020', the revaluation of non-domestic properties to come into effect from 1st April 2020.

Mr Ross responded to Members queries and agreed to provide the Reval 2020 NDR Factsheet for Councillors to the Director of Finance for circulation to the Committee.

ACTION BY: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

4. ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 CCS/CEA/8 ERECTION OF COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVE COMMISSION HEADSTONE AT CARNMONEY MAIN CEMETERY – PLOT AE: 87

Email correspondence has been received from the Commonwealth War Grave Commission who has responsibility for ensuring all Commonwealth War casualties from the two World Wars are adequately commemorated.

The Commission has been informed that Arthur Doogan has been afforded war grave status. Mr Arthur Doogan died 17/11/1945 and is interred in plot AE:87 in Carnmoney Main Cemetery. The Commission is seeking permission to erect a standard war pattern type headstone at the head of the grave (which meets the memorials size requirements). The manufacture, erection and future upkeep of the memorial would be borne by the Commission.

The headstone would be erected on the grave space on the understanding that should at some future point, a member of the family object, it would be removed at the expense of the Commission.

The Commission is requesting the erection memorial fee be waived which is normally £150.00

It is proposed that for all future requests of this nature, that the erection memorial fee of £150.00 be waived subject to the satisfactory receipt of the relevant application and related documentation.

Proposed by Councillor Hamill

Seconded by Alderman Agnew and agreed that

(a) the Council waive the memorial fee of £150.00 for the erection of a Commemorative War Grave Marker on plot AE:87 in Carnmoney Main Cemetery.

(b) the Council waive all future requests from the War Grave Commission for the erection of Commemorative War Grave Markers.

ACTION BY: Emma Thompson, Registrar

Alderman Agnew left the meeting during the next item.

5. ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

Members were reminded the Department for Communities (DfC) issued revised guidance (Local Government Circular 19/2016) on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments in November 2016. This guidance requested councils to record specific performance targets of 10 working days and 30 calendar days and continue a cycle of quarterly reporting on prompt payment performance by councils to the DfC and its publication on their website.

The Council's prompt payment performance for the period **1 October 2019 to 31 December 2019** is set out below:

The default target for paying invoices, where no other terms are agreed, is 30 days.

(N.B. 30 days target is 30 calendar days and 10 days is 10 working days).

During the above period, the Council paid 7,240 invoices totalling £15,722,353.

The Council paid 6,253 invoices within the 30 day target. (86%)

The Council paid 5,252 invoices within the 10 day target. (73%)

The Council 987 paid invoices outside of the 30 day target. (14%)

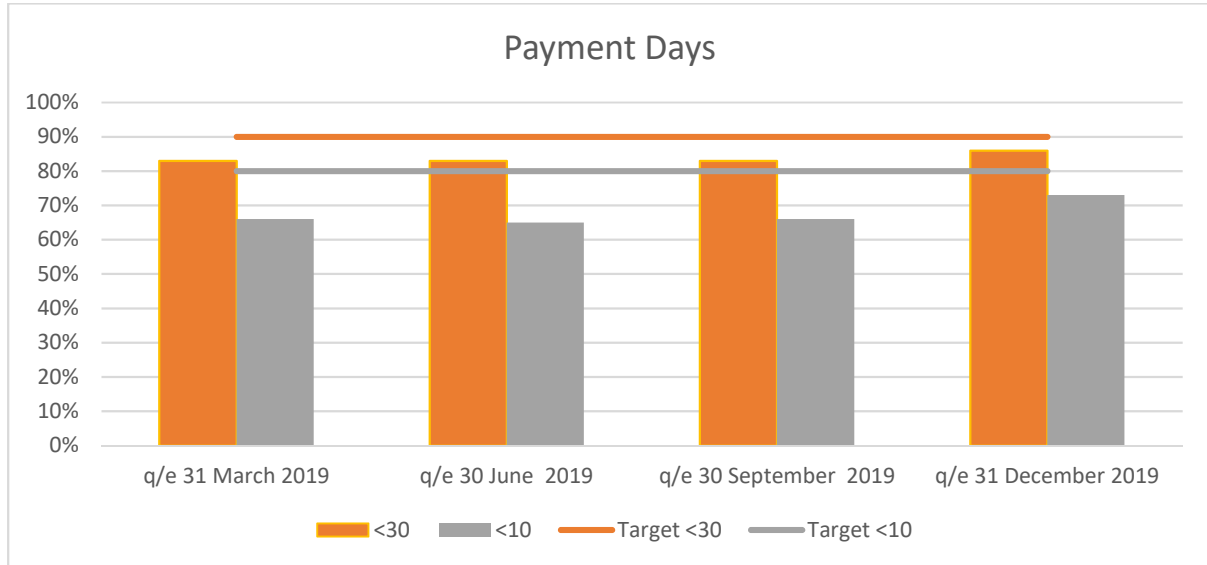
The Council has set a target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days and 80% within 10 days.

The quarterly results from 1 January 2019 to date are as follows:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
q/e 31 March 2019	7,413	83%	66%
q/e 30 June 2019	6,680	83%	65%

q/e 30 Sept 2019	6,342	83%	66%
q/e 31 Dec 2019	7,240	86%	73%

The performance presented graphically highlights the performance metrics for the above.



Performance for quarter 1 and 2 of 2019/20 are similar for both the 30 day and 10 day targets with quarter 3 showing a marked improvement in performance for the 10 day target.

We will continue to strive to achieve the 30 day target and further improve the 10 day performance whilst maintaining a high level of good governance and internal control in relation to supplier payments.

The prompt payment performance for Councils in Northern Ireland is published quarterly by the Department for Communities (DfC). The prompt payment performance for the quarter ended 30 September 2019 is shown in **Appendix 1** (circulated) the Council's performance against the average performance for the other Councils for the second quarter of 2019/20 is set out in the table below:

Council	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Antrim & Newtownabbey BC	83%	66%
All Councils	85%	54%

The Director of Finance and Governance provided an update and Members noted the continuing improvement in prompt payment performance.

Proposed by Councillor Goodman
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.2 G-LEG-319 LAND ABANDONED BY THE DEPARTMENT - THE FERRARD MEADOW, ANTRIM (ABANDONMENT) ORDER (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2019

Members were advised that correspondence has been received from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) advising that The Ferrard Meadow, Antrim (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019 will come into operation 7th January 2020.

The Council has no interest in the land.

Members recalled that previous correspondence from DfI in relation to the abandonment of a roadway beside Plots 21,22 and 23 Ferrard Meadow was considered at the Council Meeting in December 2018 and the abandonment of this road is in addition to area that was previously abandoned.

A copy of the correspondence, legislation and map were circulated for Members' information.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.3 G/MSMO/018 NILGA'S ANNUAL INVESTMENT & WORK PLAN FOR 2020/21

Members were advised that communication has been received from NILGA (circulated) in relation to NILGA's Annual Investment and Work Plan for 2020/21 this is part of the all Council NILGA approved Corporate Plan 2020 – 2023.

The plan acknowledged work by Antrim and Newtownabbey's Borough Council Members, Officers and finalised by NILGA's all Council Executive and Cross Party appointed Officer Bearers.

The work plan fulfils the sector's requirements but has been carefully designed to adapt to the wider political and fiscal environment that Council operates within. The invoice for Council contribution to the 2020/21 work plan will follow in April 2020.

NILGA wished to convey their thanks to the Members and Officers involved for their advice and participation throughout the year.

Proposed by Councillor Goodman
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.4 CE/GEN/030 APSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION 2030 – NORTHERN IRELAND EVIDENCE SESSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Members were advised that correspondence had been received (circulated) in relation to the recently launched APSE Local Government Commission 2030.

The Commission have advised that they will be considering the below areas:

- The future role of local government
- stewardship of place
- local finance and funding regimes
- local government organisations and structures
- workforce capacities and roles
- local service provision
- local democracy and accountability
- community leadership
- equality and diversity and centre-local relations

The Commission will then produce a report with recommendations in early 2021, based on its findings from written and oral evidence gathered from interested parties.

As part of the evidence gathering process a special session will be hosted for Northern Ireland Local Government to further inform the work of the Commission. The event be held on Friday 21 February 2020 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Belfast commencing at 10:00am and will take place the day after the NILGA conference and the Northern Ireland Local Government Awards.

Proposed by Councillor Goodman
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.5 HR/HR/019 AGENCY UPDATE

Members were reminded that agency staff are used across the Council to provide temporary cover for absence such as:

- Maternity leave
- Secondments
- Sickness absence
- Vacant posts

The use of agency staff is subject to a rigorous approval process, which requires the approval of the Corporate Leadership Team and there is budgetary provision for the majority of posts filled via departmental salary budgets, salary contingency and grant funding.

The table appended provided an update for Members on the use of agency staff as at December 2019 as compared to December 2018. It excludes limited ad-hoc agency cover, which is necessary to provide operational cover, at short notice (see Appendix 1 circulated).

Appendix 2 (circulated) set out expenditure on agency workers in December 2019.

The cost of agency staff had increased for the period of 1 April 2019 to 31 December 2019 at 7% of all staffing costs compared to 6.49% for the same period last year. This increase substantively relates to the pay increase and increase in Employers pension contributions effective from April 2019, and the earlier starting date required for parks seasonal staff this year.

Proposed by Councillor Magill
 Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.6 CCS/EDP/7 QUARTERLY SCREENING REPORT AND RURAL SCREENING

Members were advised that in line with the Council's Equality Scheme it was agreed to provide quarterly updates on the screening of policies under Section 75. Within the Scheme, the Council gave a commitment to apply screening methodology to all new and revised policies. Where necessary and appropriate, these new policies would be subject to further equality impact assessment.

The policies noted below have been screened between October and December 2019.

POLICY	SCREENING DECISION
Review of the Waste Pricing Policy	1
Annual Parks Pricing Review 2020/21	1
Leisure Strategy Incorporating Annual Pricing Review 2020/21	1
Breastfeeding Welcome Here	1
Exercise Class Booking	1

- (1) Screened with no mitigation
- (2) Screened with mitigation
- (3) Screened and EQIA required

Proposed by Councillor Robinson

Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.7 HR/ER/008 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS – NEW EARLY CONCILIATION REGULATIONS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Following a change in Northern Ireland Employment Law, Early Conciliation Regulations came into effect on 27 January 2020.

The objective of these Regulations is to reach an agreement that both parties can accept and avoid protracted and expensive tribunal claims.

The Early Conciliation Regulations make significant and important changes to the current approach taken to lodge a tribunal claim.

Currently if an employee wishes to lodge a tribunal claim, they do so directly with the Industrial or Fair Employment Tribunal usually within three or six months of the alleged incident or behaviour.

UPDATE

Now employees wishing to lodge a tribunal claim must first notify the Labour Relations Agency and discuss the option of Early Conciliation. Early Conciliation is independent and allows time for all to reach agreement to settle the dispute without affecting the deadline for a Tribunal claim.

If early conciliation is to proceed, the claim time limit will be paused for up to one calendar month. If there is a reasonable prospect of agreement, conciliation can be extended by a further two weeks.

If one or both parties do not want to use early conciliation, or agreement after conciliation is not reached, the Labour Relations Agency will issue an Early Conciliation certificate which will be required to be able to proceed to Tribunal.

Early conciliation remains voluntary and requires both parties to enter into conciliation to seek a facilitated and legally binding agreement through the Labour Relations Agency.

The Council will apply the new Early Conciliation Regulations when applicable.

The Director of Organisation Development provided an update and outlined the process for Members.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.8 CP/GR/043/VOL 2 NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP ON TRAVELLERS' ISSUES

Members were advised that correspondence has been received from the Northern Ireland Local Government Partnership on Local Travellers Issues (circulated) advising that the Partnership is holding a half day conference on Thursday 14 May 2020 in Corrick House Hotel & Spa, Clogher themed 'Pioneering a brighter future together with the Travelling Community'.

There is no cost to Council for the conference, dinner or accommodation and the invitation is for Council representatives on the Partnership, ie Alderman Burns, Councillor McAuley and Councillor Goodman, and one named officer.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Councillor Michael and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Member Services

5.9 CE/OA/005 LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLITICAL PARTNERSHIP FORUM

At the Policy and Governance meeting in November 2019 Members requested that Officers write to NILGA to explore the possibility of increasing Membership for Elected Members to the Local Government Political Partnership Forum as only one Elected Member could be nominated by each Council.

Officers subsequently wrote to NILGA and a response has now been received (circulated).

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the report be noted, that Officers clarify the membership of the Partnership Forum and look at the option of nominating a deputy for the current council representative.

ACTION BY: Liz Johnston, Head of Governance

5.10 HR/LD/005 ENGAGEMENT & WELLBEING STRATEGY (2016-2020) UPDATE

1.0 BACKGROUND

Members were reminded that the Council's Employee Engagement and Wellbeing Strategy (2016-20) was designed to support the delivery of organisational outcomes anchored within the Corporate and Community Plans.

Underpinning the Strategy was the 'Steps to Wellbeing' developed by the New Economic Foundation, which in turn was affirmed by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development as being a sound basis on which to build.

The Strategy was developed based on the following 4 key themes:

➤ Keep Connected	➤ Keep Health Focused
➤ Keep Valuing Others	➤ Keep Learning

These themes served to ensure that employees were committed to the goals and values of the Council, motivated to contribute to organisational success and were able, at the same time, to enhance their own sense of wellbeing. For Members' information, Appendix 1 circulated provided an Employee Engagement and Wellbeing Action Plan update.

Members were reminded that to measure the engagement / satisfaction levels of employees and to receive feedback, an Employee Engagement & Wellbeing survey was conducted in 2019. 73% of the workforce responded to the survey with 85% stating that they were satisfied with their job. Other key survey results were referenced within the sections below.

2.0 Health & Wellbeing

The Council's commitment to the health and wellbeing of its employees was made clear through the implementation of a number of initiatives, all of which served to develop a healthy workplace.

The **Keep Health Focused** theme details the extensive Employee Assistance Programme that the Council provides to support the mental and physical wellbeing of its employees. This had been achieved through the provision of a number of pro-active measures including:

- Access to Counselling
- Action Cancer Bus
- Wellness Van Health checks
- Free flu jabs
- Hearing Tests
- Mental Health Awareness Champions
- Phased returns to work
- Temporary restricted duties
- Physio referrals
- Mindfulness training
- Emotional resilience training

The Council was recognised for its extensive Programme at the Inspire Wellbeing Awards, winning the Local Government Workforce Wellbeing category and was highly commended at the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Awards and was shortlisted at the CIPD UK National Awards in 2019.

The proactive management of attendance remains a priority for the Council and it is currently on track to meet its corporate improvement absence target for 2019/20.

Additionally, the feedback from the survey was positive as 86% of employees were satisfied with all that the Council offered in relation to health and wellbeing.

3.0 Communication (Internal)

The **Keep Connected** theme commits to establishing effective internal communication through a number of measures, including the:

- Employee App,
- Monthly Corporate Team Briefs,
- Formal and Informal Trade Union & Management Forums
- Annual Management Conference
- Noticeboards
- Working Groups

Whilst survey feedback about team communication was positive with 81% of employees being satisfied, 66% were satisfied with the internal council communications and 41% were satisfied with the Employee App.

There was scope to improve these results and in practical terms the development and implementation of an Internal Communications Strategy would be prioritised.

4.0 Recognition

The **Keep Valuing Others** theme set out how recognition reinforces and rewards important outcomes that employees create for the Council. Through its Recognition Programme the Council reinforced how it wants employees to contribute towards the realisation of positive community outcomes.

In practical terms, there are a number of ways that the annual Recognition and Reward Programme delivers this, including:

- Long Service Awards
- Extra Mile Awards (customer service excellence)
- Graduation Awards (for iManage and iSupervise graduates and all employees who have achieved a form of training/study).
- Chief Executive & Mayoral Recognition Events
- 100% Attendance Award & Prize Draw
- Leisure Recognition Scheme (pilot scheme aligned to the performance targets for leisure services)

71% of employees were satisfied with the recognition within the Council. This is a positive result and will remain an area to expand upon as we continue to advance and improve the existing Recognition and Reward Programme.

5.0 Learning & Development

The **Keep Learning** theme set out how the Council had been fully committed to creating a strong organisational learning culture ensuring that it developed the necessary capabilities, skills and competencies to realize its ambitions for the Borough.

This commitment was evidenced through the delivery of annual employee training programmes and schemes to develop organisational capacity.

Last year, the Council achieved the Charter Plus for Elected Member Development which provides a robust, structured framework designed to help it enhance and hone Member development.

To support the learning and development of Elected Members, employees and young people across the Borough, the following initiatives had been delivered:

- Numerous student placement schemes e.g. local school placements, placements secured via the Northern Regional College & the Ulster University at Jordanstown
- Supportive placements for marginalised young people e.g. via Youth Justice Agency and The Princes Trust.
- Employees Personal Development Plans (99% completed)
- Delivery of the Elected Member Development Programme
- Development and delivery of the iLead Portfolio i.e. 70+ managers and supervisors have successfully completed the courses.
- Delivery of the Annual Corporate Training Plan
- Continued Professional Development Scheme (delivered annually)
- Delivery of the Coaching and Mentoring Scheme

The Council received external accreditation for its leadership development strategy, and in particular its iLead Portfolio as it was shortlisted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development for its Awards in 2019.

Positively, 76% of employees were satisfied with the training and development opportunities available to them.

6.0 PEOPLE STRATEGY 2020-25

A new People Strategy (2020-25) would soon be developed and reported to Elected Members for consideration. It will set out key outcomes, activities and behaviours to pursue in support of our corporate priorities.

The new Strategy will acknowledge the critical role that employees have in every aspect of service delivery, continuous improvement and transformational change and it will set out a plan of action over the next five years which will support and drive the development and effective leadership of our employees.

Additionally, the strategy will support the delivery of digital transformation and improved customer services. At its core will be the recognition of the importance of building capacity at all levels and effectively engaging with our employees. The Strategy will commit to the implementation of programmes that will develop the knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes required in the future to ultimately improve service outcomes for our citizens.

Proposed by Councillor Michael
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

5.11 CCS/REG/022 CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Members were reminded that the current Cemetery Rules and Regulations were last approved in October 2015.

The Cemetery Rules and Regulations have been reviewed and updated to include any changes approved by the Council since 2015. An updated version of the Cemetery Rules and Regulations was circulated for Members' information.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Flanagan
Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the following Committee business be taken In Confidence.

Members were advised that the audio recording would cease at this point.

Councillor Michael left the meeting.

6. ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 IN CONFIDENCE ECONOMIC APPRAISAL: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM

Members were advised that the current core software within the Finance and Human Resources sections is reaching its end of life. Council had also received notification from the finance software provider that it would be desupporting the software in the near future.

An economic appraisal looking at the options for replacement was circulated. The preferred option was to seek an enterprise solution from a single vendor at an estimated capital cost of £[REDACTED] - costing to be finalised following a procurement exercise.

The funding for replacement of the software was provided for within the capital budget in the 2020/21 Estimates process.

The Director of Finance and Governance provided an overview of the project and officers answered a number of Councillor queries.

Proposed by Councillor Goodman
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the economic appraisal for replacement finance and human resources software be approved and that Members be kept updated on this project.

ACTION BY: John Balmer, Head of Finance

Councillors Hamill and Bennington left the meeting during the next item.

6.2 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/226 TENDER FOR THE PROVISION OF A HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT IT SYSTEM

**CONTRACT PERIOD 3 MARCH 2020 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2022
(WITH AN OPTION, BY THE COUNCIL, TO EXTEND FOR A FURTHER PERIOD OF UP TO 24 MONTHS, SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE AND FUNDING)**

The Council is required to ensure that all health and safety accident reports, risk assessments and audit and inspection findings are identified, recorded, evaluated and actioned on an ongoing basis. This is essential in order to fulfil our legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and associated legislation. Council's previous software provider advised they would not be able to continue to support and maintain the current system beyond March 2019. A request for replacement Health and Safety software was approved at Policy & Governance Committee on 4 September 2018. After market testing, a tendering process was undertaken that was unsuccessful, initially due to cost and then due to lack of bidders.

This re-tender opportunity was made available on eSourcingNI on Wednesday 04 December 2019. Six tenders for the provision of a health and safety management IT system were opened via the eSourcingNI Portal on Friday 10 January 2020 and referred to the evaluation panel for assessment. The tenders were evaluated on a two stage basis as follows:

STAGE 1 – SELECTION STAGE

The tenders were evaluated on a pass/fail basis for mandatory exclusion and financial compliance, economic and financial standing, previous relevant experience, management systems and practices, GDPR and declarations and form of tender. Five tenders did not meet the requirements of Stage 1 and therefore did not proceed further in the evaluation. The one remaining tender met the requirements of Stage 1 of the evaluation process and proceeded to Stage 2.

STAGE 2 – AWARD STAGE

Quality/Commercial Assessment (60%/40%)

The tender was evaluated on the basis of technical merit and functional fit (35%), after sales service management (15%), non-functional characteristics (training etc.) (5%) demonstration of proposed system (5%) and cost (40%) and the recommendation is as follows:

Supplier	Quality Assessment (out of 60%)	Cost Assessment (out of 40%)	Total % Score	Total Cost Over 4 years (excl. VAT)
Riskex Limited	█%	█%	█%	£ █

Proposed by Councillor Webb
 Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

that having achieved a score of █%, Riskex Limited be appointed for the provision of a health and safety management IT system.

ACTION BY: Sharon Logue, Procurement Manager

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
 Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further committee business the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting concluded at 7.46 pm.

MAYOR

Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulations and legal advice.