



October 3rd, 2024

**Notice Of Meeting**

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 7th October 2024** at **6:00 pm** in **Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre.**

# Agenda

## 1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

## 2.0 Declarations of Interest

## 3.0 Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 2 September 2024

*For Information*

[Action Sheet Council Meeting 2024 09 02.pdf](#)

Page 1

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### *Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing*

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## 4.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 2 September 2024

*For Approval*

[Council Minutes 2024 09 02.pdf](#)

Page 6

## 5.0 Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 27 August 2024

*For Approval*

[Special Council Minutes - 2024-08-27.pdf](#)

Page 20

## 6.0 Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 23 September 2024

*For Approval*

[Special Council Minutes - 2024-09-23.pdf](#)

Page 30

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### *Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption*

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## 7.0 Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 9 September 2024

*For Approval*

[Economy Regeneration and Tourism Minutes 2024 09 09.pdf](#)

Page 35

## 8.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 September 2024

*For Approval*

[Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting Minutes 2024-09-12.pdf](#)

Page 41

## 9.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16 September 2024

*For Approval*

[Active\\_and\\_Healthy\\_Communities\\_Committee\\_Minutes\\_2024\\_09\\_16.pdf](#)

Page 51

## 10.0 Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2024

*For Approval*

[Sustainabilty\\_and\\_Environment\\_Committee\\_Minutes\\_2024\\_09\\_18.pdf](#)

Page 59

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### **Correspondence**

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## 11.0 Correspondence Report

*For Information*

[Correspondence Report Council 2024 10 07.pdf](#)

Page 65

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### 11.1 Correspondence from Department for Communities

[Correspondence from Department for Communities.pdf](#)

Page 67

### 11.2 Correspondence from Department of Communities re Notice of Motion - Winter Fuel Payment - Anti Poverty and Fuel Poverty Strategies

[Correspondence from Department for Communities re NOM Winter Fuel Payment.pdf](#)

Page 70

### 11.3 Correspondence from NI Water re NI Water Economic Constraints

[Correspondence from NI Water re Economic Constraints.pdf](#)

Page 73

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### **Notices of Motion**

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## 12.0 Notice of Motion - Programme for Government

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Truesdale:

"That this Council welcomes publication of the draft Programme for Government (PfG) by the NI Executive; agrees that the PfG should include a standalone Mission on Peace and Peacebuilding; further agrees that peacebuilding, reconciliation, equality and inclusion are vital to achieving the key ambitions in the Programme for Government; notes that political instability and societal division are major barriers to growing Northern Ireland's economy, improving public services, tackling poverty and supporting communities; and agrees to write to the First and deputy First Minister to call for the inclusion of a Mission on Peace and Peacebuilding in the Programme for Government before the PfG public consultation deadline on 4 November 2024".

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## **13.0 Notice of Motion - Sign Language**

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Devlin:

"Noting with regret the recent decision taken by BBC Northern Ireland to remove sign language from its lunchtime news bulletin, and the decision to move this feature solely to its digital edition, this Council stands in solidarity with members of our deaf community, will write to the Director of BBC Northern Ireland calling for the reinstatement of sign language to the lunchtime bulletin, and will also write to the Minister for Communities seeking an update on the development of the awaited Sign Language Bill, so as to enshrine the right of deaf people to access services in one's own language into law."

# Invitees

- Cllr Terry Andrews
- Cllr Callum Bowsie
- Fionnuala Branagh
- Cllr Jim Brennan
- Cllr Pete Byrne
- Cllr Philip Campbell
- Cllr William Clarke
- Cllr Laura Devlin
- Ms Louise Dillon
- Cllr Cadogan Enright
- Cllr Killian Feehan
- Cllr Doire Finn
- Cllr Aoife Finnegan
- Ms Joanne Fleming
- Cllr Conor Galbraith
- Cllr Mark Gibbons
- Cllr Oonagh Hanlon
- Cllr Glyn Hanna
- Cllr Valerie Harte
- Cllr Roisin Howell
- Cllr Tiarna Howie
- Ms Catherine Hughes
- Cllr Jonathan Jackson
- Cllr Geraldine Kearns
- Miss Veronica Keegan
- Mrs Josephine Kelly
- Mrs Sheila Kieran
- Cllr Cathal King
- Cllr Mickey Larkin
- Cllr David Lee-Surginor
- Cllr Alan Lewis
- Cllr Oonagh Magennis
- Mr Conor Mallon
- Cllr Aidan Mathers
- Cllr Declan McAteer
- Cllr Leeanne McEvoy
- Cllr Andrew McMurray
- Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston
- Cllr Declan Murphy
- Sinead Murphy
- Cllr Kate Murphy
- Cllr Selina Murphy

Cllr Siobhan O'Hare  
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Mr Andy Patterson  
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Cllr Áine Quinn  
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Cllr Henry Reilly  
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Cllr Michael Rice  
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Cllr Michael Ruane  
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin  
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Donna Starkey  
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Nicola Stranney  
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Sarah Taggart  
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Cllr David Taylor  
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly  
.....  
Cllr Jill Truesdale  
.....  
Mrs Marie Ward  
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Cllr Helena Young  
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**ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024**

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
<i>C/128/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Council Meeting held on 01.07.2024</i>	It was agreed item C/058/2024: Twinning Newry with City of Ramallah should remain on the action sheet.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<i>N</i>
<i>C/135/2024</i>	<i>Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 05.08.2024</i>	It was agreed to note the action sheet.  <i>C/132/2024: Emergency Notice of Motion, Shimna House, Ward 15</i> Follow up on request for South Eastern Trust Chief Executive to meet with Council.	<i>Democratic Services</i>  <i>S Trainor/ J Campbell</i>	<b>Noted</b>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/136/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Council Meeting held on 05.08.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/137/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 31.07.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/138/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 12.08.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/139/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15.08.2024</i>	<i>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.</i>	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	<i>Y</i>

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
C/140/2024	<i>Minutes of Special Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 27.08.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
C/141/2024	<i>Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 19.08.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
C/142/2024	<i>Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21.08.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
C/143/2024	<b>Correspondence Report</b>	<p>It was agreed to note the Correspondence report.</p> <p><i>Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure: C/084/2024, C/129/2024 Newry Southern Relief Road</i> It was agreed that Council write back to the Department to schedule a meeting with Mr Stevenson but that Council would also like to meet with the Minister at any stage.</p> <p><i>Correspondence from NI Water regarding Economic Constraints</i> It was agreed that Council write to NI Water to request when did they anticipate moving forward with developments being held up in areas such as Killeel and Warrenpoint and ask for some indication as to when that would move forward.</p>	<p><i>Democratic Services</i></p> <p><i>Democratic Services</i></p>	<p><b>Correspondence issued</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence issued</b></p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>



<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
		<p>It was agreed to follow up and request a response on actions following the Special Council Meeting with NI Water held on 29 April 2024.</p> <p><i>Correspondence from Department of Health regarding request for Local Government representatives to be members of Area Integrated Partnership Boards</i></p> <p>It was agreed names of nominees to the Area Integrated Partnership Board be forwarded to Democratic Services by end of 2 September 2024.</p>	<p><i>Democratic Services</i></p> <p><i>Democratic Services</i></p>	<p><b>Previously received and circulated</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b></p>	Y
C/144/2024	Notice of Motion: Good Relations Programme	<p><i>"That this is Council recognises the vital role of Good Relations programmes in supporting reconciliation in a society recovering from conflict, bringing communities together, creating shared spaces, challenging sectarian, racism and other forms of prejudice, and promoting respect for all cultural identities; strongly condemns the recent violence and targeting of businesses; encourages greater support and investment for sporting and cultural events as a mechanism for uniting local communities; registers its disappointment that an enhanced and fully-funded regional Good Relations Strategy has not been prioritised since the restoration of the NI Assembly; further records its disappointment that the reduction in good relations funding granted in 2023/24 to Councils by The Executive Office has not been reinstated to previous levels; and requests a review from Officers of the progress and future opportunities available to enhance Good Relations programmes in [council area] to be completed within 6 months".</i></p>			

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
		The Motion was referred to the Good Relations Forum in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.	C Moffett	<b>Tabled for discussion at the Councillors' Equality &amp; Good Relations Reference Group on 26 September 2024</b>	Y
C/145/2024	<i>Notice of Motion – Addiction Support</i>	<i>It was agreed that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council recognises the impact that addiction has on individuals, families and communities across our district. This Council commends the work of those organisations who are supporting people on their path to recovery and will write to the Health Minister to invite him to meet with organisations across the district along with a delegation of councillors to discuss how best we can work in partnership to support the invaluable work they do.</i>	Democratic Services  S Trainor / J Campbell	<b>Ongoing</b>	N
C/146/2024	<i>Notice of Motion – Fast Tracked Cities</i>	<i>It was agreed that Council recognises that ending the HIV epidemic requires a comprehensive approach that allows all those in need, to access quality lifesaving treatment, enhances prevention, care, and support services for HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and viral hepatitis.</i>  <i>Council further recognises that integrating these services into sexual, reproductive, and mental health services is critical to achieving universal access to health care. Seeks to eliminate stigma and discrimination by building on scientific evidence. Understanding that successful HIV treatment and viral suppression prevents HIV transmission which can help reduce stigma and encourage people living with HIV to initiate and adhere to HIV treatment.</i>	Democratic Services  S Trainor / J Campbell	<b>Ongoing</b>	N

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
		<p><i>Acknowledges by working together, cities and municipalities can accelerate local actions towards ending the HIV, TB, and viral hepatitis epidemics globally by 2030. As called for by the New Urban Agenda, we will leverage our reach, infrastructure, and human capacity to build a more equitable, inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable future for all our residents, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, and social and economic circumstances.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, this Council will sign up to the Paris Declaration supporting the Fast-Track Cities aim of eliminating the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS as well as aiming for no new HIV diagnosis by 2030.</i></p>			
C/147/2024	Emergency Notice of Motion – Winter Fuel Payments	<p><i>It was agreed on that this Council notes with concern the recent decision by the British Government to cut Winter Fuel Payments.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- Write to British Government raising our concern at the cruel cuts to this payment</i></li> <li><i>- Write to Minister of Communities asking that he prioritises the Anti-Poverty and Fuel Poverty Strategies</i></li> <li><i>- Write to all Executive parties to ask that they work together to find the solution to this</i></li> </ul>	Democratic Services	<p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence issued</b></p>	Y
END					

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL****NMD/C/****Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 2 September 2024 at 6.00pm in Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick****In the Chair:** Councillor P Byrne

<b>In attendance in Chamber:</b>	Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Bowsie
	Councillor J Brennan	Councillor P Campbell
	Councillor W Clarke	Councillor L Devlin
	Councillor C Enright	Councillor K Feehan
	Councillor D Finn	Councillor A Finnegan
	Councillor C Galbraith	Councillor O Hanlon
	Councillor G Hanna	Councillor R Howell
	Councillor T Howie	Councillor J Jackson
	Councillor G Kearns	Councillor C King
	Councillor M Larkin	Councillor D Lee-Surginor
	Councillor A Lewis	Councillor O Magennis
	Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D McAteer
	Councillor L McEvoy	Councillor S O'Hare
	Councillor A Quinn	Councillor H Reilly
	Councillor M Rice	Councillor M Ruane
	Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor D Taylor
	Councillor J Truesdale	Councillor H Young

**Officials in attendance:** Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
 Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services  
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism  
 Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability and Environment  
 Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities  
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

**C/133/2024****APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Gibbons, Harte, D Murphy, K Murphy, S Murphy and Tinnelly.

The Chairperson advised an emergency motion had been received and would be dealt with later in the meeting.

On behalf of everyone at Council the Chairperson offered condolences to the family of the late Caolan Finnegan who sadly passed away with thoughts of all with his father Liam, Mother Jeanette, his brothers Stephen, Ronan, Patsy and Liam and girlfriend Emily at this sad time.

The Chairperson expressed condolences on behalf of the Council to the family of Tracey Crossan (nee McVerry) who had sadly passed away.

Congratulations were extended to all staff involved in the recent Wake the Giant Festival in Warrenpoint at which two new giants had joined Fionn the Giant this year.

The Chairperson offered congratulations to the Mourne Chamber Music Festival which the Deputy Chairperson had attended and from speaking with the audience they thoroughly enjoyed the festival and looked forward to it coming back to Newcastle next year.

At the request of Councillor Andrews, the Chairperson sent congratulations to the village of Shrigley on celebrating the bicentenary of the establishment of its foundation in 1824.

The Chairperson joined Councillor Howell in congratulating those who had qualified for the All-Ireland fleadh in Wexford and all who were successful in bringing medals home to the District. He also congratulated those clubs within South Armagh who had received 5 gold medals as well as an All-Ireland Senior Pipes Champion for the first time in South Armagh's history and spoke of the trad night held in Crossmaglen as part of the Lúnasa festival. The Chairperson commended the talent held across the District referring to An Bonnán Buí one of his charities for the year ahead, which would be launched in the coming weeks.

The Chairperson acknowledged the LGBTQ+ Women's Group for bringing Pride back after a five year gap and spoke of how it was a remarkable occasion where he and Councillor Lee-Surginor, Deputy Chairperson led the parade with the Lord Mayor of Belfast and the Mayor of Lisburn and Castlereagh and how that had sent out a such positive message. He further extended a huge well done to everybody involved in organising the event which he hoped would be back bigger and better next year.

Members were reminded to submit nominations for Civic Awards to Democratic Services as soon as possible as it was important Councillors used their role to acknowledge people across the District for the fantastic work being done.

#### **C/134/2024**                    **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **C/135/2024**                    **ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 5 AUGUST 2024**

*C/132/2024: Emergency Notice of Motion, Shimna House, Ward 15*

In acknowledging that a response had been received from the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Trust, Councillor Sharvin queried the Council's request for her to meet with Council regarding Shimna House at the earliest convenience.

Mrs Ward confirmed this request had been made and would be followed up on.

**Agreed:**                                    **The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 5 Augst 2024 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor McEvoy.**

#### **C/136/2024**                    **COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 5 AUGUST 2024**

**Read:**    Minutes of Council Meeting held on 5 August 2024 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:**                                    **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 5 August 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Sharvin.**

**COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION****C/137/2024                    MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 31 JULY 2024**

Read:                            Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 31 July 2024 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:**                            **The Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 31 July 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Devlin.**

**C/138/2024                    MINUTES OF ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 AUGUST 2024**

Read:                            Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 12 August 2024 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:**                            **The Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 12 August 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Andrews.**

**C/139/2024                    MINUTES OF STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 AUGUST 2024**

Read:                            Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15 August 2024 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:**                            **The Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15 August 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Quinn.**

**C/140/2024                    MINUTES OF SPECIAL STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27 AUGUST 2024**

Read:                            Minutes of Special Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 27 August 2024 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:**                            **The Minutes of Special Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 27 August 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor McAteer.**

**C/141/2024**                      **MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 AUGUST 2024**

**Read:**                              Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 19 August 2024 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:**                              **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 19 August 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Finnegan.**

**C/142/2024**                      **MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 AUGUST 2024**

**Read:**                              Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 August 2024 (copy circulated).

*SE/093/2024: Proposed Installation of Height Restriction Barriers at Council Car Parks*  
Councillor McAteer made reference to the Motor Home Strategy discussed at the Committee meeting and spoke of the importance that the Strategy was produced as soon as possible.

Mrs Murphy confirmed queries raised in relation to the Motor Home Strategy were to be brought to the next Sustainability and Environment Working Group Meeting and that the Strategy was to be finalised in joint working with the Economy, Regeneration and Tourism directorate.

Councillor Clarke welcomed that the Motor Home Strategy was to be finalised following on from a motion he had brought forward through the Economy, Resources and Tourism Committee and spoke at length about the need to look at areas to improve the infrastructure to take the pressure of popular areas and encourage visitors off-season.

Councillor Hanna also welcomed a Strategy and joined Councillors McAteer and Clarke's comments that there were unique opportunities throughout the Council area particularly for provision in rural areas for motorhome/caravan users e.g. at Ballyhornan, Spelga Dam.

Councillor Hanna commented that he would like to see the temporary height restrictions in place during the Irish Open to be made permanent.

Councillor Devlin suggested that an invite be extended to the DEAs and Mourne Councillors to attend the next working group meeting for consideration given some of the issues they were having and local knowledge.

**Agreed:**                              **The Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 August 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Young.**

**C/143/2024****CORRESPONDENCE REPORT**

Read: Report dated 2 September 2024 from Mrs Ward, Chief Executive, regarding an update on correspondence received for the attention of Council.

*Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure: C/084/2024, C/129/2024 Newry Southern Relief Road*

Councillor Finn proposed Council write back to the Department to confirm they were happy to meet with Mr Stevenson but would also like to meet with the Minister at any stage and Members would make themselves available to do so. Councillor Feehan seconded the proposal.

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Feehan that Council write back to the Department to schedule a meeting with Mr Stevenson but that Council would also like to meet with the Minister at any stage.**

*Correspondence from NI Water regarding Economic Constraints*

Councillor Hanlon stated it was really worrying that NI Water could not deliver on the amount of Units that were needed across the North but that it was welcome news that they were engaging with the top 20 developers and trying to roll that out to smaller developers because that might allow key developments to go ahead.

Councillor Hanna voiced concern at how constraints were going to have major impact on the Local Development Plan if it could not provide the infrastructure required and how there were no major developers within South Down.

Mr Mallon responded that the infrastructure deficit in terms of waste water was well known across all Council areas however work was undertaken on an individual application basis with NI Water to develop waste water assessments to determine if an application could proceed. He added that through the Local Development Plan (LDP) there was an opportunity to highlight areas for development and understand what the infrastructure deficit was during that process. Members were advised Council worked closely with NI Water and the LDP team would continue to do so along with all other statutory agencies with the development of the plan.

Councillor Hanna proposed Council write to NI Water to request when did they anticipate moving forward with developments being held up in areas such as Kilkeel and Warrenpoint and ask for some indication as to when that would move forward. Councillor Feehan seconded the proposal.

Councillor McAteer voiced his concerns that the letter received compounded the problems being faced with one crisis after another with no action and that as a Council Members could try their best for communities however it was not happening in terms of Central Government.

Councillor McAteer referred to a previous Council Meeting with NI Water and asked that what was asked of NI Water at that meeting be addressed.

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Feehan that Council write to NI Water to request when did they anticipate moving forward with developments being held up in areas such as Kilkeel and Warrenpoint and ask for some indication as to when that would move forward.**



**It was agreed to follow up and request a response on actions following the Special Council Meeting with NI Water held on 29 April 2024.**

*Correspondence from Department of Health regarding request for Local Government representatives to be members of Area Integrated Partnership Boards*

In response to a query from Councillor Taylor the Chief Executive clarified that it was an independent Expression of Interest managed by the Department of Health and Council required only a list of names of nominees for record purposes.

**Agreed:** It was agreed names of nominees to the Area Integrated Partnership Board be forwarded to Democratic Services by end of 2 September 2024.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanna to note the correspondence report and the following correspondence:

- **South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust: Notice of Motion C/132/2024 Shimna House, Ward 15.**
- **Department for Infrastructure: C/084/2024, C/129/2024 Newry Southern Relief Road.**
- **NI Water regarding Economic Constraints.**
- **Department of Health regarding request for Local Government representatives to be members of Area Integrated Partnership Boards.**
- **NI Courts and Tribunals Service regarding an increase to Court Fees from 1 October 2024.**

**C/144/2024                      NOTICE OF MOTION – GOOD RELATIONS PROGRAMMES**

The following Motion was received from Councillor Truesdale:

*"That this is Council recognises the vital role of Good Relations programmes in supporting reconciliation in a society recovering from conflict, bringing communities together, creating shared spaces, challenging sectarian, racism and other forms of prejudice, and promoting respect for all cultural identities; strongly condemns the recent violence and targeting of businesses; encourages greater support and investment for sporting and cultural events as a mechanism for uniting local communities; registers its disappointment that an enhanced and fully-funded regional Good Relations Strategy has not been prioritised since the restoration of the NI Assembly; further records its disappointment that the reduction in good relations funding granted in 2023/24 to Councils by The Executive Office has not been reinstated to previous levels; and requests a review from Officers of the progress and future opportunities available to enhance Good Relations programmes in [council area] to be completed within 6 months".*

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Young.

**Agreed:** The Motion was referred to the Good Relations Forum in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6

C/145/2024

**NOTICE OF MOTION – ADDICTION SUPPORT**

The following Motion was received from Councillor Finn:

*"Newry, Mourne and Down District Council recognises the impact that addiction has on individuals, families and communities across our district. This Council commends the work of those organisations who are supporting people on their path to recovery and will write to the Health Minister to invite him to meet with organisations across the district along with a delegation of councillors to discuss how best we can work in partnership to support the invaluable work they do".*

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Galbraith.

In presenting Motion, Councillor Finn began by stating that alcohol and drug addiction within society was one of the biggest public health issues that had to be addressed and was one which since the pandemic had only become more prevalent and damaging. She made reference to statistics and Members were minded that behind every statistic there were families who had lost a loved one and that many within the chamber had in some way experienced addiction within their own family units or friend groups.

Councillor Finn spoke of how there was still a stigma when speaking about addiction and that was something as Councillors working within communities must work towards breaking. Open conversations about addiction should be had and anyone struggling with addiction should know there was support and help out there.

Councillor Finn spoke of a meeting with representatives of Davina's Ark in Newry and how it offered hope and new opportunity to many within society who were affected by addiction and the work carried was critically important. Davina's Ark was just one of a number of organisations such as Cuan Muire and AA who worked across the greater Newry area and it was hoped the motion would provide an opportunity to show that as public representatives Members supported and stood in solidarity for those working within that sector as well as those people and families facing addiction.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Galbraith stated everyone was aware of the invaluable work organisations provided not only to support a person trying to recover from an addiction, but also in supporting family members who suffered.

Councillor Galbraith added that from speaking with some families he had learnt it was vital that everyone involved including the individual, family and community were helped in recognising the early stages of addiction at which the chances of success in recovery were greatest. This in turn lead to less chance of serious health issues, family breakdowns, job loss and even take some pressure of the already struggling health services.

Councillor Hanlon voiced support for the motion on behalf of Sinn Féin agreeing that there were few families who would be touched by addiction in whatever form it presented itself. She spoke of how only last month Council had discussed the threat to Ward 15 locally and how thankfully there had been temporary measures put in place which needed to be ratified into something more permanent. Referring to Davina's Arc. as well as Cuan Mhuire and Friends of Ward 15 who both were celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Councillor Hanlon pointed out that without such organisations people would die and were being saved by the work being undertaken as too were their families who suffered as well as the person going through the addiction.

In voicing support for the motion on behalf of their respective parties, Councillors Hanna and Taylor spoke of how it was such an important issue for families across the District particularly with the suicide levels and how there was a need for government to be more proactive and support the charitable sector.

Councillor Taylor spoke of how the health and wellbeing of the people was one of the main principles for Council and therefore it should do all it could to find a way of improving that further to ease anybody's suffering from addiction.

Councillor Howie echoed the sentiments of Members on behalf of her party and that it was important to write to the Department of Health to get their support in tackling the issue to addiction and ensure provision of essential support.

Councillor Finn thanked Members for their support for the motion which was unanimously agreed.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Galbraith that Newry, Mourne and Down District Council recognises the impact that addiction has on individuals, families and communities across our district. This Council commends the work of those organisations who are supporting people on their path to recovery and will write to the Health Minister to invite him to meet with organisations across the district along with a delegation of councillors to discuss how best we can work in partnership to support the invaluable work they do.**

#### **C/146/2024                      NOTICE OF MOTION – FAST TRACKED CITIES**

The following Motion was received from Councillor Feehan:

*“This Council recognises that ending the HIV epidemic requires a comprehensive approach that allows all those in need, to access quality lifesaving treatment, enhances prevention, care, and support services for HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and viral hepatitis.*

*Council further recognises that integrating these services into sexual, reproductive, and mental health services is critical to achieving universal access to health care. Seeks to eliminate stigma and discrimination by building on scientific evidence. Understanding that successful HIV treatment and viral suppression prevents HIV transmission which can help reduce stigma and encourage people living with HIV to initiate and adhere to HIV treatment.*

*Acknowledges by working together, cities and municipalities can accelerate local actions towards ending the HIV, TB, and viral hepatitis epidemics globally by 2030. As called for by the New Urban Agenda, we will leverage our reach, infrastructure, and human capacity to build a more equitable, inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable future for all our residents, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, and social and economic circumstances.*

*Therefore, this Council will sign up to the Paris Declaration supporting the Fast-Track Cities aim of eliminating the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS as well as aiming for no new HIV diagnosis by 2030.”*

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Andrews.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor Feehan spoke at length about the need to destigmatise HIV and AIDS as a condition. He made reference to the Chairperson speaking earlier in the meeting about the recent Pride Parade in Newry and how 10/15 years ago that would have been unimaginable in this part of the world, and whilst a lot of progress had been made certain stigmas that still existed and HIV diagnosis and status was one of them.

Councillor Feehan stated it was not about reinventing the wheel or investing billions of pounds in medical research, but rather it was about connecting people who were at risk with the

resources and treatment needed to live long lives. This disease could be managed and was no longer a death sentence.

In asking for support, Councillor Feehan said there was still a lot of work to do in reassuring people and as leaders of the local community it was important to get the message out clearly from Council that there was absolutely no shame in HIV and no reason to keep it hidden as it was treatable and preventable.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Andrews spoke of the importance of the overall aims and aspirations by supporting the Fast Track Cities in eliminating the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS as well as aiming for no new HIV diagnosis by 2030.

Councillor Hanlon, on behalf of Sinn Féin, spoke in support of the motion and the importance of encouraging conversations about the continued risks and impacts of HIV and the need for ongoing awareness and allow people to take advantage of the support that was available.

Councillor Lee-Surginor stated Alliance was fully supportive of the Motion and Council signing up to the Paris Declaration and endorsed the initiative. He spoke of how the declaration represented a bold commitment to creating a healthier, more inclusive urban environment and taking a significant step towards addressing the public health challenges that affect communities and this would require a concerted effort from all sectors of society, including local government, healthcare providers and community organisations.

The Chairperson spoke of as Chairperson he had met with Positive Life and would be working during his term to raise awareness around testing and publicly doing testing to raise awareness of the issue because to destigmatise issues like this was so important.

The Motion which was unanimously agreed.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Andrews that Council recognises that ending the HIV epidemic requires a comprehensive approach that allows all those in need, to access quality lifesaving treatment, enhances prevention, care, and support services for HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and viral hepatitis.**

**Council further recognises that integrating these services into sexual, reproductive, and mental health services is critical to achieving universal access to health care. Seeks to eliminate stigma and discrimination by building on scientific evidence. Understanding that successful HIV treatment and viral suppression prevents HIV transmission which can help reduce stigma and encourage people living with HIV to initiate and adhere to HIV treatment.**

**Acknowledges by working together, cities and municipalities can accelerate local actions towards ending the HIV, TB, and viral hepatitis epidemics globally by 2030. As called for by the New Urban Agenda, we will leverage our reach, infrastructure, and human capacity to build a more equitable, inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable future for all our residents, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, and social and economic circumstances.**

**Therefore, this Council will sign up to the Paris Declaration supporting the Fast-Track Cities aim of eliminating the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS as well as aiming for no new HIV diagnosis by 2030.**

## EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION

The Chairperson advised an emergency Notice of Motion had been received, the wording of which had been emailed to all Councillors and to enable it to be heard, it would be necessary to suspend Standing Order 16.1.1 for which a qualified majority vote was required. (80% of Members present and voting).

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Quinn to suspend Standing Order 16.1.1 at this point of the meeting to allow the tabling of the emergency Notice of Motion received by the Chairperson from Councillor Finnegan.

The Chairperson put the matter to a recorded a vote, the results of which were as follows: (copy attached)

<b>FOR:</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>AGAINST:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>ABSTENTIONS:</b>	<b>0</b>

It was agreed by a qualified majority vote to suspend Standing Orders 16.1.1 (copy attached)

Councillor Enright left the meeting at this point – 6.54pm.

### **C/147/2024: EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION – WINTER FUEL PAYMENTS**

The following Emergency Motion was received from Councillor Finnegan:

*“This Council notes with concern the recent decision by the British Government to cut Winter Fuel Payments.*

*- Write to British Government raising our concern at the cruel cuts to this payment  
- Write to Minister of Communities asking that he prioritises the Anti-Poverty and Fuel Poverty Strategies*

*The most vulnerable in our society need to be protected”.*

The Emergency Motion was seconded by Councillor Quinn.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor Finnegan said it was deeply concerning that one of the first acts of the new British Government was to cut fuel payments and all Executive parties had collectively highlighted those concerns in a letter to the British Prime Minister.

Councillor Finnegan said that working every day in a constituency office she saw first hand that people were already struggling with the cost of living, including increased fuel and energy bills. She said the new British Government needed to leave behind the Tory austerity policies of the past 14 years and work to protect workers, families and public services and it was essential that everything possible was done to protect those in need.

Councillor Finnegan said it was vital that the Executive continued to do all in its power to protect those in most need and urged the Communities Minister to bring forward the Anti-Poverty and Fuel Poverty Strategies soon as possible. Whilst acknowledging the difficult position of the Executive, and in particular the Communities Minister it was imperative to understand the origin of these cuts was the British government at Westminster.

Councillor Sharvin stated the SDLP agreed that the most vulnerable within society needed to be protected, and the only way that could be done was to reverse the decision and restore winter fuel payment support. He said it was important to state that this had not just been a decision by the Communities Minister but a decision made by the Executive.

Councillor Sharvin proposed an amendment that Council write to the Communities and Finance Minister to ask that they reverse the decision with a clear statement that the impact that this would have on the most vulnerable in our society.

Councillor Finn seconded Councillor Sharvin's proposed amendment.

Councillor Finnegan did not accept the proposed amendment put forward by Councillor Sharvin.

The Chairperson asked for a show of hands for Councillor Sharvin's proposed amendment, seconded by Councillor Finn, the results of which were as follows:

For:	8
Against:	26
Abstentions:	0

The proposed amendment was lost.

Councillor Sharvin stated that as a Council there was a responsibility to represent the people of District and to write to those that were making these extremely difficult but wrong decisions that were attacking the most vulnerable in our society.

Councillor Sharvin proposed an amendment that Council write to all Executive parties to ask that they work together to find the solution to this.

Councillor Andrews seconded Councillor Sharvin's proposed amendment.

Councillor Finnegan accepted the proposed amendment put forward by Councillor Sharvin.

Councillor Hanna welcomed what was a very important motion and agreed with Councillor Sharvin in that the Executive had made the decision and that DUP MPs in Westminster were working hard to mitigate that, if even for it to be a little bit more flexible would make a difference to a lot of people.

Councillor Hanna said it was going to cost £44 million for Stormont to cover what Westminster had removed and with the Communities Minister facing a £110 million overspend he questioned where would the money come from. He said the removal of the payment was a vicious attack on the elderly and needed to be reversed or mitigated in some way that not as many people were impacted.

Councillor Taylor spoke about the position the Northern Ireland Executive had found itself in following on from the decision taken by the Prime Minister in the Labour Government and having to find money to preserve the universal approach to winter fuel payments in an already challenging budget environment.

He said he understood there were some who would argue that the universal distribution of the winter fuel payment was unsustainable but the position that the Executive had found itself in risked leaving many pensioner households in significant hardship. He spoke of the outcomes in terms of health and how the cuts were both socially and economically detrimental and the Executive was in a very difficult position as a result of that.

Councillor Taylor said he hoped any representations that could be made from Council could be looked upon favourably, to allow at least a solution that worked for those that were going to be impacted within society here in Northern Ireland.

Councillor Reilly spoke of his disbelief at the decision taken by Prime Minister Starmer referring to moneys to be given to Ukraine and immigration costs.

The Chairperson requested that Councillor Reilly remain on the subject of the motion to which he replied it was relevant to the motion as the people who built the country up over 60 to 80 odd years were being denied a cold weather payment. Councillor Reilly made reference to the Republic of Ireland which had a cold weather scheme that was heavily means tested.

Councillor Truesdale, on behalf of Alliance, voiced support for the motion as it was not as simple as reversal and there would be consequences with public finances in Northern Ireland severely stretched and the cost of breaking parity on the winter fuel payment would result in less money on the spend of healthcare, schools, policing, justice and other services.

Councillor Truesdale asked that it be known that older people who were struggling with fuel costs could also apply for help through discretionary support which provided grants and loans to help with living costs for those in severe financial hardship and had considerably wider eligibility in terms of annual income compared to pension credit.

The Chairperson declared the Motion unanimously agreed.

**Agreed:**                    **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Quinn that this Council notes with concern the recent decision by the British Government to cut Winter Fuel Payments.**

- **Write to British Government raising our concern at the cruel cuts to this payment**
- **Write to Minister of Communities asking that he prioritises the Anti-Poverty and Fuel Poverty Strategies**
- **Write to all Executive parties to ask that they work together to find the solution to this**

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.15pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 October 2024.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chief Executive**

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**RECORDED VOTE**

DATE: 2 September 2024      VENUE: Downshire Civic Centre      MEETING: Council

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Suspension of Standing Orders to hear Emergency Motion

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews	X			
C Bowsie	X			
J Brennan	X			
P Byrne	X			
P Campbell	X			
W Clarke	X			
L Devlin	X			
C Enright	X			
K Feehan	X			
D Finn	X			
A Finnegan	X			
C Galbraith	X			
M Gibbons				X
O Hanlon	X			
G Hanna	X			
V Harte				X
R Howell	X			
T Howie	X			
J Jackson	X			
G Kearns	X			
C King	X			
M Larkin	X			
D Lee-Surginor	X			
A Lewis	X			
O Magennis	X			
A Mathers	X			
D McAteer	X			
L McEvoy	X			
D Murphy				X
K Murphy				X
S Murphy				X
S O'Hare	X			
A Quinn	X			
H Reilly	X			
M Rice	X			
M Ruane	X			
G Sharvin	X			
D Taylor	X			
J Tinnelly	X			X
J Truesdale	X			
H Young	X			
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>





**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

NMC/SC

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**Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 27 August 2024 at 6.00pm in Downshire Chamber**

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**In the Chair:** Councillor P Byrne

<b>In attendance in Chamber:</b>	Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Bowsie
	Councillor W Clarke	Councillor C Enright
	Councillor K Feehan	Councillor A Finnegan
	Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor V Harte
	Councillor T Howie	Councillor J Jackson
	Councillor G Kearns	Councillor C King
	Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D McAteer
	Councillor K Murphy	Councillor S O'Hare
	Councillor A Quinn	Councillor H Reilly
	Councillor M Rice	Councillor J Truesdale

**In attendance in Chamber:  
(Officials)**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
 Mrs J Kelly, Director Corporate Services  
 Mr C Mallon, Director Economy, Regeneration & Tourism  
 Mr A Patterson, Director Active & Healthy Communities  
 Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
 Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in attendance in  
Chamber:****NI Housing Executive**

Ms Grainia Long – Chief Executive  
 Mr John McCartan – South Regional Manager  
 Ms Claire Creaney – South Down Area Manager  
 Ms Sinead Collins – Head of Place Shaping South  
 Mr Andy Kennedy – Assistant Director Asset Strategy

**Also in attendance via  
Teams:****NI Housing Executive**

Mr David Palmer – Regional Programme Delivery Manager  
 Mr Mark Halliday – Assistant Director Programme Delivery  
 Ms Caroline O'Hare – Head of Private Grants

SC/013/2024

**APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Brennan, Campbell, Devlin, Finn, Galbraith, Howell, Larkin, Lee-Surginor, Lewis, Magennis, McEvoy, D Murphy, S Murphy, Sharvin, Taylor and Young.

SC/014/2024

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared.

**SC/015/2024**      **NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE**

The Chairperson welcomed the delegation to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation. (Copy attached to these minutes)

The Delegation outlined some details regarding a breakdown of total homes within the District, and their spend within the District over the 2023/24 period, detailed the new Housing For All initiative, and provided an overview of the waiting list trends over the past few years. They further outlined some key housing challenges and highlighted some ideas that were being explored regarding addressing these, such as new builds, land banking and the potential use of private land.

Following this, the Delegation provided some information regarding projected spends over the next number of years and expressed their optimism regarding "fabric first" retrofits of 1,400 homes and low carbon heating installations, and highlighted the New Procurement Legislation which would hopefully allow the Housing Executive to invest in and add to its stock.

Following the presentation the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- What steps was the Department taking to reach a solution to the growing housing need, and could Council provide any assistance?
- What was the funding source for the new builds being completed for the first time in 24 years, given the recent reduction in housing funding?
- The Delegation was thanked for their communication regarding funding in relation to the Shrigley Memorial Clock and were urged to reconsider the fact that they could not make a donation to the project.
- The delegation was commended for their support of the Shrigley's recent 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary festival and the involvement of the community engagement officer.
- Was there a possibility of a cross-border initiative, given that there was potential land availability in Counties Louth and Monaghan, and was it possible to look at working collaboratively with officials in these areas to help plan for the future?
- Members advised that they had been informed of a number of abandoned houses within certain areas, and queried both what the procedure was in relation to these, and what impact they had on the Housing Executive's duty of care to those on the waiting list.
- The Delegation and their team were thanked for all the hard work they continually offered and for responding so quickly and willingly when contacted.
- Was landbank an option that could be reconsidered as this could prove suitable for the current housing needs?
- Could sheltered or supported housing be considered in Rowallane, to allow residents in larger houses to downsize to more suitable accommodation and allow families on the current waiting list to move into the larger houses?
- Was the Housing Executive able to provide some funding for supported housing or a community hub in Shrigley?
- Following the 2020 Ministerial statement regarding the partial revitalisation of the Housing Executive, what progress had taken place and to what extent would that bridge the gap between supply and demand for housing needs.
- It was queried why the Housing Executive would borrow against rental income, and not against existing collateral stock.

The delegation responded as follows:

- There was unfortunately no simple answer to solving the housing crisis as three things were needed at once to solve the issue, those being available and affordable land, delivery capacity and subsidy to outlay the costs.
- Council was commended on the working partnership with the Housing Executive over the last number of years, and this was credited as one of the reasons for some of the new builds going ahead.
- It was noted that a solution could be public land working alongside private land, although a strategic approach was needed to make use of public land for housing to address constraints given that the need was known.
- Housing Associations had played a vital role in delivering affordable housing; however, Members were reminded that the Housing Executive could not direct Housing Associations where to focus their work, they merely produced an annual report that highlighted the housing need in an attempt to identify sites.
- It was stressed that the Housing Executive were keen to be able to build new houses, and to work alongside Housing Associations on these new builds.
- Members were informed that the Housing Executive had bid for funding for 2000 homes across NI from the NI Executive and had received funding for approximately 600.
- The delegation stressed that they were aware of the housing need and were focusing on how to address it, and this predominately meant focusing on using public and private land effectively.
- It was noted that Newry, Mourne and Down Council was a predominately rural council area and highlighted that there was a large unmet need for housing settlements across the District, however the Delegation stressed that there was not the site availability for this need due to competition from the private sector, the constraints of Planning Policy PPS8 and limited land remaining within designated settlement areas.
- Rural schemes were planned should further funding become available, with a plan to develop 876 new homes across the district, which was approximately 39% of the need across the district.
- The delegation advised that they worked closely with the LDP team to help shape the future for housing and social housing needs and would continue to promote the need for zoned land for social housing over the next 15 years.
- In relation to Shrigley, the delegation noted that they were happy to look at opportunities for funding but were unfortunately not in a position to offer funding.
- There were well adopted policies and procedures in place for dealing with abandoned properties, and the Housing Executive asked for all concerns of potential abandoned houses be forwarded for investigation as they were keen to address the unmet housing need.
- The delegation advised that they were working to identify any funding opportunity to subsidise a new supply of housing and advised this funding was being maximised.
- Some funding was also being utilised by a smaller number of partner organisations who provided temporary accommodation. However, the Housing Executive were limited in their expansion scope due to the legal frameworks with the Department of Communities.
- The Delegation advised that while their legal parameters had not changed, the 6 new houses they were building was a pilot project with two aims
  - To demonstrate that a low energy, passive house can be delivered using modern construction methods.
  - That a small, perfectly formed cul-de-sac was not going to cost a lot to build and maintain.
- It was noted that there were 520 units within the District, and a large number of them were smaller apartments. It was hoped that people would downsize and allow the option of the larger homes for families, but this wasn't always a straightforward process.

- The Housing Executive noted that they utilised a supporting people model, rather than supported accommodation, but were always willing to adapt to reflect the needs of the waiting list.
- Members were advised that following the ministerial statement of 2020, the Housing Executive had been enabled to commence a business plan to look at long term investment requirement over the next 30 years, to identify what funding would be required against rental incomes.
- The Housing Executive advised that they did not have the ability to borrow funds to build new houses as it was considered general NI public borrowing. However, small steps were ongoing to allow some funding to be allocated to continue their small build and land banking pilot.
- The delegation advised that they recently received approval from the Department to acquire lands on a small scale to enable them to deliver more new homes, and while it was a small-scale approval, they expressed their hope at this being a step towards change.
- The Delegation advised that any borrowing they availed of was against any rental income the loan was secured against existing stock, and that any repayments were made form rental income which had to at least remain at a level to afford loan repayments.

**Councillor O’Hare left the meeting during the above discussion – 6.52pm**

The Chairperson thanked the delegation for their presentation and time.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.57pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Director**



## Community Planning update



- The Housing Executive takes a lead role on the Community Planning priority 'Access to Quality Housing' and chair the Housing Needs Working Group.
- During 2023/24, the co-designed 2019 Housing Action Plan was reviewed by the Housing Needs Working Group. The updated Plan details achievements to date and highlights key priorities including identifying and addressing housing need in rural areas, targeting homelessness and ensuring appropriate provision for those with complex housing requirements.
- The updated Plan was approved by the Strategic Partnership Board in June 2024 for publication later this year.
- Aligned to this, the Housing Executive continues to work with partners to progress the housing led regeneration project at the site of the former North Street flats in Newry.

# Tenure Breakdown & Total Homes



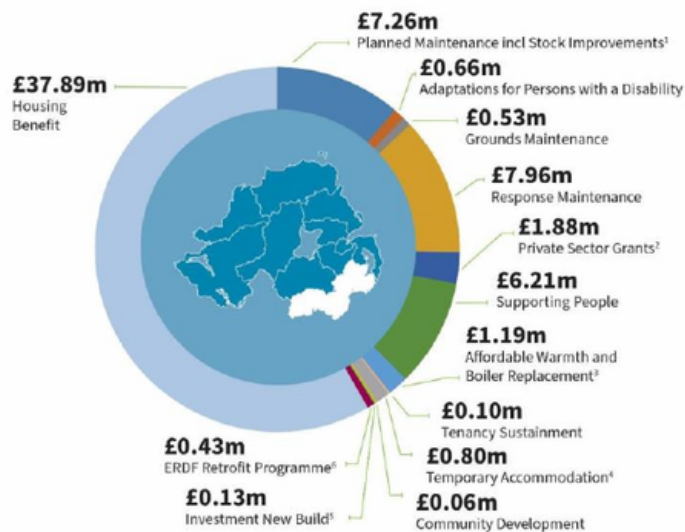
**68,398**  
households

**Managed 5,164**  
social homes

# Housing Executive Spend 2023/24

£65.10m

## Newry, Mourne and Down District Council 2023/24 Public Sector Housing Spend (£m)



## New homes on site in the last year..

- **In 2023/24:**
  - **97** new social homes completed; and
  - **528** new social homes under construction at end of March 2024.



## New Housing for All role

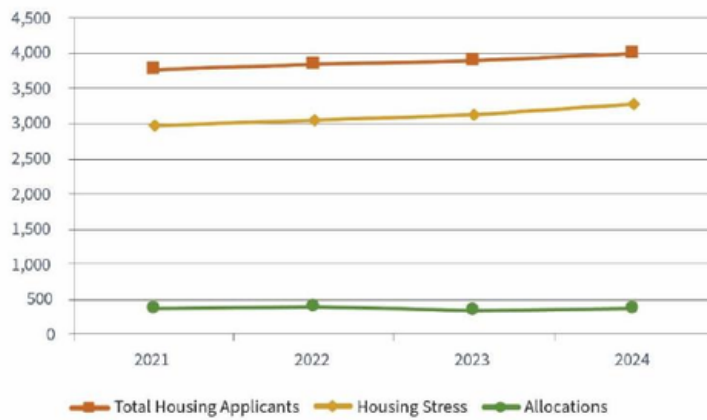
- In 2023/24 management of the 'Housing for All' Shared Housing Programme transferred to NIHE from DFC with plans to further develop this successful partnership for the Good Relations programme in the coming years.
- The Programme has its origins in the NI:TBUC Strategy which reflects the Executive's commitment to Improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.
- Within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area, **nine** Housing for All schemes have been completed and celebrated as shared, with **three** potential schemes at pre allocation stage.







**Social Housing Waiting List Trends**



Source: NIHE



**Future Housing Requirements:**

2,234 new social housing units are needed over next five years.

2023/26 SHDP – 388 (gross) new social housing units programmed.

**5 Year SHDP Performance**

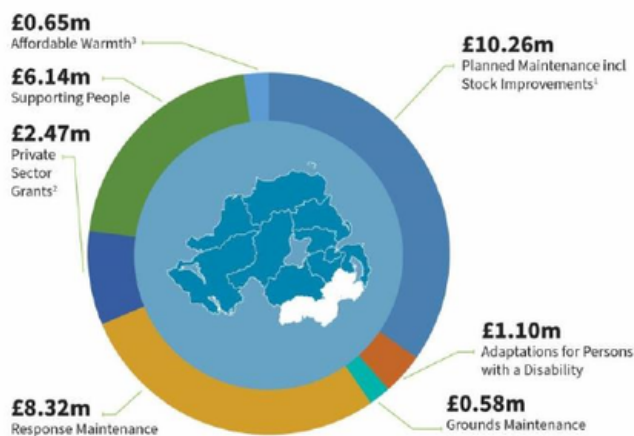
1,217 starts (715 urban and 502 rural) was the SG target for NMD during the 5-year period.

642 starts (595 urban and 47 rural) were achieved against the target.

Resulting in 575 fewer starts (120 urban and 455 rural) against the SG Target.

Projected spend 2024/25  
£29.52m

**Newry, Mourne and Down District Council 2024/25 Projected Public Sector Housing Spend (£m)**



Key housing challenges

- 490 placements in temporary accommodation in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area during 2023/24. Increased reliance on **non-standard accommodation** including hotels and B&Bs.
- 3,986 applicants on the waiting list for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area at March 2024, with 3,286 (82%) in housing stress.
- Just over 360 social housing allocations in 2023/24. An identified need for 2,234 new social housing units over next five years.
- Projected 30 year NIHE stock investment requirement of £631.6 million
- Challenges with the delivery of planned & response maintenance including major adaptations.
- Reduced budget for Affordable Warmth scheme which supports fuel poverty households in the private sector

# Key Housing Opportunities

- Across Northern Ireland, the NIHE has recently completed a programme of 'fabric first' retrofits in 1,400 of our homes, and has commenced a programme of 300 - 400 low carbon heating installations; huge potential to scale up
- As we increase investment in our stock, positive impacts for local supply chains
- New Modern Methods of Construction Pilot
- Progress ongoing to enable NIHE to borrow in order to invest in its stock and add to new supply
- Supporting local communities through our Community Investment grants
- New Procurement Legislation is forthcoming in October and there are hopes it can lead to greater agility, efficiency and transparency in procurement
- Strategic partnerships on homelessness, e.g. 'Homewards'; systems change



**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

NMC/SC

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**Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 23 September 2024 at 6.00pm in Downshire Chamber**

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**In the Chair:** Councillor P Byrne

<b>In attendance in Chamber:</b>	Councillor T Andrews	Councillor J Brennan
	Councillor P Campbell	Councillor W Clarke
	Councillor C Galbraith	Councillor O Hanlon
	Councillor G Hanna	Councillor V Harte
	Councillor R Howell	Councillor G Kearns
	Councillor C King	Councillor M Larkin
	Councillor D Lee-Surginor	Councillor A Lewis
	Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D McAteer
	Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor M Rice
	Councillor G Sharvin	

**In attendance in Chamber:  
(Officials)**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
 Mr C Mallon, Director Economy, Regeneration & Tourism  
 Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
 Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in attendance in  
Chamber:****DFI Roads**

Mr Mark McPeak – Divisional Manager  
 Mr Stephen Duffy – Section Engineer Newry, Mourne & Down East  
 Ms Bronagh Gillespie, Section Engineer Newry, Mourne & Down West

SC/016/2024

**APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bowsie, Devlin, Enright, Feehan, Finn, Finnegan, Howie, Jackson, Magennis, McEvoy, D Murphy, K Murphy, S Murphy, Quinn, Reilly, Ruane, Truesdale and Young.

SC/017/2024

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

SC/018/2024

**DFI ROADS**

The Chairperson welcomed the delegation to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr McPeak thanked Council for the opportunity to present DFI Annual Roads Report, noting that it highlighted the work completed last year and set out a programme of works for this financial year. He highlighted that the road network was the largest structural infrastructure network and although aware that there was a lot of work required to protect and improve the network, his division were maximising the work they were doing to carry out this task, while facing continued staffing pressures, which had an impact on what they were able to deliver.

Mr McPeak stressed that DFI Roads had received a challenging budget for the year, the impact of which was that important areas of work could not be progressed, including essential road maintenance. He highlighted that within the constrained budget, DFI Roads would still manage defect repairs, grass cutting and provide a full street lighting repair service. He outlined the requirements around prioritising potholes on rural and main roads, the verge cutting schedule, and the winter preparation plans that were underway.

Mr McPeak highlighted the recent resurfacing that had been completed within the District, and those that were still at the planning phase, including traffic calming measures and stressed again that a limited budget would mean that all works would have to be prioritised.

Mr McPeak outlined the progress on the Newry Southern Relief Road, which was continuing to progress towards key decisions, with a public consultation expected in early 2025. He further noted that the development work on A24 Ballynahinch bypass had completed and the decision to proceed to procurement would be taken dependent on the Department's Major Projects priorities, which would be informed by the suite of transportation plans.

Mr McPeak ended by highlighting the current staffing pressures, the impact of a constrained budget, and stressed that the main focus was on public safety issues as a priority. He encouraged everyone to report defects using the online service, which had a direct link into the DFI system, where reports were triaged and actioned according to priority.

Following the presentation the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Thanks were expressed to the delegation for the work ethic of their teams, prompt responses to queries and actions taken on any issues raised directly with them.
- Following concerns raised regarding gullies in Downpatrick, could DFI be proactive in ensuring the gullies were cleaned to alleviate concerns regarding flooding?
- Could the online reporting system be better maintained regarding updates on reported issues, as when Members check their submitted reports, they were showing as "to be actioned" when they had been completed.
- What was the shortfall in the annual budget, and what impact would this have on the day-to-day work?
- Was the use of surface dressing rather than resurfacing roads a cost saving exercise, or were there benefits to its use?
- Did the lack of investment result in the Shore Road, Strangford, being reported as the worst road in the North, and what was the plan to improve this, given the current level of investment?
- Who had responsibility over entry ways to housing estates and developments as moss and other vegetation was causing safety risks for residents when walking?
- When would Shore Road, Rostrevor, be reopened to two lanes, and could the delegation confirm that they were working with DAERA and the Forestry Service regarding this reopening?
- Who was responsible for clearing up following on-site works as drain covers had been left in place following a recent surface dressing in Kilkeel that resulted in some localised flooding?

- What was the scheduled maintenance for edging, as several issues had been reported as a safety risk, having overgrown the footpath.
- Following utilities or other departments accessing underground works, who was responsible for the repair of the footpaths, as several had been reported to be in disrepair following works?
- What was the overall cost of compensation events such as liability, etc?
- Was there a timeframe on resolving the landslip outside of Hilltown?
- Why had the Ballynahinch by-pass been rejected, given the highlighted need over a number of years and residents were feeling abandoned while improvement works were being continued elsewhere.
- Could Darragh Cross be reduced to a 30mph zone, and if resources were an issue could Council and local community groups assist in actioning this?
- Could a number be created solely for Elected representatives to make use of?
- What measures were being put in place following the completion of the Narrow Water Bridge, given this would result in rural roads being utilised for a higher volume of traffic that they were not designed for?
- While taking into account the biodiversity benefit of reduced cutting, this inevitably had a knock-on effect on nearby farmland regarding ragweed and thistles and raised concerns regarding visibility on approach to junctions and roundabouts. Could consideration be given to cutting at a different time of the year to reduce this impact, or could additional cuts be scheduled?
- What was the process for surface dressing a road, as there had been instances where potholes had been dressed without being repaired, which resulted in the pothole appearing again.
- Could additional warnings be put in place on Lock Road, Rathfriland, as the local school bus stopped on a dangerous corner and was a safety risk?
- Why had sign posts had been erected with no speed limit signs on the Green Road?
- Could the pedestrian crossing outside Buttercrane Shopping Centre be addressed as it appeared to work on demand, not with the flow of traffic, and was causing a congestion issue.
- Could the delegation comment on the grit levels in storage in preparation for winter?
- What was the delay on beginning works to repair the defect on the Ballynaclosa Road as it was coming close to two years since commitment was given to begin the works?
- Could the delegation be more specific regarding timelines for a public consultation regarding the Newry Southern Relief Road, as Council had requested a meeting with the Minister regarding the design and a timeline would help encourage that meeting to take place?
- Could the delegation outline any discussions that were ongoing with the Department to try and implement the Barton Report and push for a multi-year budget?
- Could the delegation outline the division of funding per council area as it spanned across three Council areas, as the roads within the District were among the worst in the province, especially given the number of rural roads?

The delegation responded as follows:

- The gullies in Downpatrick were inspected the same day as they were reported, and action was taken accordingly.
- In 2022, DFI received 25,000 online reports, compared to 45,000 online reports in 2023. It was difficult to respond to all online reports, however Mr McPeak reassured everyone that all reports go directly into the system and are triaged accordingly, with critical safety issues actioned urgently.
- The day-to-day impact of the reduced budget of £89m, compared to the Barton report outlining a minimum investment of £143m per year, was a work list that required

prioritisation while taking account of the result of 10 years of under investment, increasing liability claims and defects needing repaired. Mr McPeak highlighted that ongoing work was being carried out to manage the situation as best as possible.

- Shore Road, Strangford, was in a phased repair plan, but any works would be dependent on budget allocation and prioritisation.
- Surface dressing was carried out to protect the life of the pavement as it ensured its structural integrity and prolonged the life for 10 – 15 additional years. The aim was to surface dress a road every 10 years, but at no point would a failed road be surface dressed.
- DFI would not intervene if there was not a safety issue but encouraged the reporting of issues such as moss and work would be undertaken to source the responsible owner to take action as DFI were not in a position to spend funds on areas they were not responsible for.
- The Shore Road landslip clean up required the appointment of geotechnical engineers to help plan the reopening of the road. Quick action had been taken to reopen one lane as there were concerns of further slips and safety concerns and the situation was monitored until the team were confident that the landslip had stabilised. The Forestry Service and NIEA were engaged in talks on moving towards a permanent solution. A further temporary solution had been devised and was awaiting confirmation from NIEA that this was acceptable.
- Drain covers during road works should have been removed upon completion of the work and DFI would action a response team to address.
- Utilities were bound by the same standards as DFI with regard to completion of works but would sometimes put in a temporary cover until such time as the rest of the work could be completed. It was noted that some footways were old and falling into disrepair, the footway resurfacing budget was extremely low and action had to be taken on the worst areas initially.
- DFI was exploring ways to improve walking and cycling across the District.
- Concerns regarding grass and vegetation encroachment should be reported utilising the online portal, the policy was to cut once a year in rural areas for biodiversity benefits, but if a second cut would be beneficial this would be taken on board.
- Any edging concerns should be reported utilising the online reporting system and would be actioned accordingly.
- The compensation costs were detailed within the report.
- The landslip outside of Hilltown required the engagement of structural engineers to ensure that any work would not result in a further landslip. A plan was currently being thought out and a timeframe could not be put on this as it required departmental approvals.
- Mr McPeak advised that specific queries would be taken away and dealt with by the appropriate department, such as speed limit zones and pedestrian crossings.
- The cutting schedule had been completed, but if there were areas of concern these should be reported using the online function and would be actioned accordingly, especially if they resulted in a safety concern.
- Mr McPeak advised that DFI would be happy to work with Council on any pilots they wanted to take forward regarding speed limit reductions.
- It was noted that the main roads were holding up well, however rural roads were in need of repair and internal discussions were ongoing with the Department to try to ensure further funding, especially with regard to the completion of Narrow Water Bridge and the impact on the rural roads.
- Prior to surface dressing a road, a pre-service dressing team squad would be dispatched and all potholes repaired prior to a road being dressed. If this was not the case, please report these for investigation and repair.

- Road signs were ordered in batches, and sometimes the poles were ready for installation prior to the signs being received, but they would be in place as soon as possible.
- Mr McPeak noted his understanding of the frustrations felt regarding the Ballynahinch by-pass, advising that schemes were developed and taken forward for decision, but the final decision would be taken following any public consultation and be dependent on available funding.
- Rather than a dedicated phone number, everyone was encouraged to utilise the online reporting tool which would immediately prioritise and action any reports according to protocol.
- The winter service ran from mid-October until April, with the barns currently being at capacity for grit.
- All plans were in place with regard to the Ballynaclosa Road, however, the delay is an issue with the landowners and legal proceedings, and it was not possible to put a timeline on that process.
- Mr McPeak confirmed that DFI had also requested a meeting with the Minister regarding the bridge design, however the BRCD plan was to continue with the design. Any timeline would be dependent on the next stage of statutory orders and an environmental impact assessment, which typically spanned 4 or 5 years.
- Mr McPeak advised that every year, prior to the financial year, DFI always sought a multi-year budget to be able to effectively prepare schemes, highlighting that Northern Ireland could have whatever road quality it liked, it just required an appropriate budget.
- Potholes were noted as a complex issue, especially regarding the different number of potholes across the different Council areas. There was a difficulty in that potholes could be documented a number of times due to the online reporting tool, and while there were notably more potholes within this District, the repair of potholes was dependent on a number of factors such as road length, overall road condition and the width and depth of the pothole. While the number across different districts varied, the funding available to each district was proportionate.

**Councillor Hanlon left the meeting during the above discussion – 7.18pm**

The Chairperson thanked the delegation for their presentation and time.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.20pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**

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**Chief Executive**



**NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting  
held on Monday 9 September 2024 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, Monaghan Row**

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**Chairperson:** Councillor A Lewis

**Committee Members  
in attendance:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor V Harte
Councillor G Kearns	Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor S Murphy	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor J Truesdale

**Non-Committee Members  
in attendance (via Teams):**

Councillor C Bowsie

**Officials in attendance:**

Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism  
Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism  
Mrs N Stranney, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in attendance:  
(via Teams)**

Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (acting)  
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

**ERT/077/2024: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

An apology was received from Councillor Hanlon.

**ERT/078/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Andrews and Galbraith declared an interest in item 5 on the agenda – PeacePlus Update Report.

**ERT/079/2024: ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM  
COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 12 AUGUST 2024**

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 12 August 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Andrews requested an update on ERT/032/2024 and Mr Mallon replied stating an update would be provided within the next few weeks.

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 12 August 2024.**

**FOR DECISION****ERT/080/2024: DOWN COUNTY MUSEUM CAFÉ**

Read: Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding provision of catering services at Down County Museum. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Galbraith, in proposing the officer's recommendation, highlighted that Down County Museum was a popular attraction that brought many visitors and prior to Covid, the café was a popular dining spot.

Councillor Clarke seconded the proposal stating it would increase the footfall and economic regeneration within the old quarter of Downpatrick.

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Galbraith, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed that Council undertake a tender process to appoint a suitably experienced operator to deliver catering services at Down County Museum.**

As they had previously declared an interest, Councillors Andrews and Galbraith left the chamber at this point – 6.10pm

**ERT/081/2024: PEACEPLUS UPDATE REPORT**

Read: Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding the Peaceplus programme. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to note the minutes of the PEACEPLUS Partnership 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024 (draft) which included the following recommendations:**

- **Subject to Letter of Offer proceed with the recruitment of additional funded posts outlined in the Peace Plus submission.**
- **Subject to Letter of Offer and relevant business case approval procurement of the communication plan for the PEACEPLUS programme.**
- **Subject to Letter of Offer and relevant business case approval, procurement & implementation of the programmes outlined above understands 1-3, in section 2.1 of the officer's report.**

Councillors Andrews and Galbraith re-entered the chamber at this stage – 6.12pm

**ERT/082/2024: NATIONAL HISTORIC FLEET VESSEL, MARY JOSEPH**

Read: Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding the National Historic Fleet vessel, Mary Joseph. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Hanna proposed the officer's recommendation, stating it was unfortunate that the vessel had deteriorated beyond repair and given the historical importance of the vessel to the local area, asked that any artefacts that could be salvaged should be displayed in Kilkeel Museum.

Councillor Lee-Surginor seconded the proposal.

Councillor Clarke noted the vessel's importance to Kilkeel's prawn fishery as it was the first prawn vessel in Kilkeel and stated due to the severe decay and extensive costs of deconstruction, the officer's recommendation was the correct course of action. He agreed with Councillor Hanna with regards preserving any artefacts and also with the suggestion to scan the vessel for future reconstruction purposes.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed to accept the National Museums NI (NMNI) decision to undertake ethical deconstruction of the National Historic Fleet vessel, Mary Joseph unless they identify any viable alternative solution by their consultation deadline of midday on Monday 9 December 2024.**

**ERT/083/2024: TOWN AND CITY CENTRE TASKFORCE**

**Read:** Report dated 9 September 2024 from Conor Mallon, Director of Economy Regeneration and Tourism regarding the establishment of a Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Town and City Centre Taskforce. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Andrews proposed to accept the officers report and requested that other areas, such as his own DEA of Rowallane could be included. He proposed that DEA Councillors be involved through existing mechanisms.

Councillor Hanna seconded the report enquiring whether elected representatives would be involved and what kind of input would be sought from the community.

Councillor Clarke supported the strategic approach, highlighting the importance of collaboration to get results. He acknowledged that while dereliction was low in Newcastle it remained a concern elsewhere across the District and welcomed efforts to revitalise high streets.

Councillor Lee-Surginor enquired what timescales were involved and how the taskforce would be communicated to the community and voluntary sector i.e. through DEA fora or community representatives from each town.

Mr Mallon stated that the next stage of the process would be agree membership with terms of reference being developed to set out the key objectives. He advised this would be a strategic group to set the strategic direction across Council to try to resolve issues that were being faced in multiple areas. He stated that proposals would be brought back to a future Committee meeting on how the taskforce would be established.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed that Council progress the establishment of the NMDDC Town and City Centre Taskforce and work with the groups to establish Terms of Reference and key properties.**

**ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

The Chairperson advised the following had been agreed while in closed session.

**FOR DECISION**

**ERT/084/2024: SUB REGIONAL ECONOMIC PLANS**

**Read:** Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Sub Regional Economic Plans. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed that the Council engage Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency and Down Business Centre through a Service Level Agreement to scope and shape a concept paper and proposals on relevant investment areas aligned to a sub-regional economic action plan.

**ERT/085/2024: CHRISTMAS EVENTS 2024**

**Read:** Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding the delivery of Christmas Events 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Clarke, the following was agreed:

- to approve the award of the SLAs for delivery of Christmas Events in 2024 as outlined in section 2.1 of the officer's report.
- to approve the dates for the Council run Christmas Events in Newry on 21 November 2024 and Downpatrick on 23 November 2024.

**ERT/086/2024: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – MINOR CAPITAL GRANTS**

Read: Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Community Minor Capitals Items Call 2 Financial Assistance 2024-2025. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed to allocate letters of offer to projects as per Council Policy to the groups recommended for the award of funding within the budget allocation for each theme.

**ERT/087/2024: SMALL SETTLEMENT SCHEMES**

Read: Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Small Settlements Regeneration Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Ruane, the following was agreed:

- Council Officials engage with the Scheme Funding Departments to identify options to utilise the unallocated budget within scheme eligibility criteria.
- To agree utilisation of unallocated budget reported back to Economy Regeneration and Tourism Committee.

**FOR INFORMATION****ERT/088/2024: ENVIRONMENTAL FUND – REPROFILING REPORT**

Read: Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Financial Commitment to AONB and Geopark Letter of Offer Environment Fund 2023 - 2028. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Clarke, the following was agreed:

- to note the reduction in the in-kind funding provided via volunteer contributions.
- to note the reprofile of the budget.
- to note that Council will issue a letter of comfort to NIEA regarding Councils ambition to deliver on the outcomes and targets as detailed in the Letter of Offer.

**ERT/089/2024: CROSS BORDER TEACHING REGISTRATION**

Read: Report dated 9 September 2024 from Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Challenges faced by teacher seeking employment between Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**                               **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed for the Council to await the findings from the All-Island Labour Market Mobility and engage with cross border stakeholders to support the progression of recommended actions to harmonise the registration process for teachers.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.50pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

**Signed:**                               **Councillor A Lewis**  
**Chairperson**  
**Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee**

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**Signed:**                               **Conor Mallon**  
**Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism**

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**NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

41

**Minutes of Special Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 12 September 2024 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre****In the Chair:** Councillor T Howie

**In Attendance in Chamber:**

Councillor P Byrne	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor C Enright	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor C King	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor M Rice
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor D Taylor

**Non-Committee Members****In Attendance:** Councillor J Truesdale**Officials in Attendance in Chamber:**

Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services  
 Ms C Mallon, Director Economy, Regeneration & Tourism  
 Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment  
 Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities  
 Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital Projects & Procurement  
 Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance  
 Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director Regeneration  
 Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration (Acting)  
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
 Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

**SPR/136/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors McAteer and Lewis and from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive.

**SPR/137/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared

**SPR/138/2024 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 15 AUGUST 2024**

**Read:** Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 15 August 2024 (**Copy circulated**)

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to approve the**

**action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources  
Committee meeting of 15 August 2024.**

**SPR/139/2024**

**ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM SPECIAL STRATEGY,  
POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 27  
AUGUST 2024**

**Read:** Action Sheet of Special Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 27 August 2024 **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to approve the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 27 August 2024.**

**SPR/140/2024**

**ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE**

**Read:** Report from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding Assessment of Performance 2023-24. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Byrne highlighted that Council had a statutory requirement to produce and publish an assessment of performance to include performance improvement objectives, statutory and self-imposed performance indicators by 30 September each year.

Councillor Enright stated that he believed that income from the green economy was missing from the assessment and referenced a number of previous motions relating to the green economy advising that he wished to see indicative targets included in the assessment moving forward.

Mrs Murphy noted that no targets had been set in relation to the green economy for the reporting time frame, but that it would be considered in relation to future assessment performance when green economy projects were set.

Councillor Hanlon queried the statistics on cleanliness and supported community litter pick, and asked whether there was a reason why the litter-pick support was down, despite having received a number of complaints about litter within the District recently and queried what steps could be taken to encourage that figure to increase again.

Mrs Murphy advised that the litter-pick support targets had been set during COVID advising that the services were available through Sustainability and Environment Department for community groups and was something that would be encouraged and supported by Council.

Councillor Hanlon queried whether Council could take any preventative actions in relation to raising awareness through local schools, as some of the complaints were in proximity to some schools and suggested involving the local DEA co-ordinators to address the issues in relation to schools.

Mrs Murphy advised that if there were specific complaints around schools then a targeted intervention could be considered and requested that the information be shared with her team to allow a full picture to be built.



Councillor Reilly stated that it was important for Council to be transparent in their strive for continuous improvement of responsibilities and noted that in relation to planning statistics Council was being unfairly tarnished with a negative reputation when it was reliant on responses from external bodies and referenced in particular the NI Environment Agency (NIEA) which had a 37% score of responding within the statutory time frame. He then proposed that Council write to the Minister to invite him to meet with a delegation to hear of the difficulties that Council was facing due to inefficiencies of NIEA in responding within the statutory timescale for planning issue consultations. This was seconded by Councillor Taylor, who stated that Ministers should be invited to explain any issues, such as staffing or resource concerns.

Mr Mallon advised that while a Planning Department Update was on the meeting agenda, all reporting of statutory consultees was published through NISRA and the latest update did not include these statistics, and in advance of any meeting with the Minister it would be beneficial for Members to have the most up to date statistics regarding statutory consultees.

Councillor Hanlon requested clarity on why only NIEA was being considered, and whether other statutory consultees should also be invited to meet with Council to understand the impact of delayed responses.

Councillor Sharvin queried whether the Minister was the most appropriate person to extend the invite to and whether the invite should be extended to the relevant consultee departments first, but stressed he was keen to discuss the proposal when the Planning Department update was discussed as tabled.

Councillor Clarke stated that it would be beneficial to write to NIEA if they were emerging as an issue in relation to planning applications, however noted that the Minister could be extremely busy. He confirmed that within Planning Legislation, it was within Council's remit to put required time frames on statutory consultations responses, and further stressed that a Planning Department Update was tabled later on the agenda which was the most appropriate stage to discuss the issue.

Mr Mallon reminded Members that there was a Report that provided detailed statistical data regarding consultee response times, considered against targets and reported through NISRA and further stressed that it would be useful for members to have full appreciation of overall picture.

Councillor Howie queried whether Councillor Reilly was content to withdraw his proposal until such time as the most up to date statistics were shared with Members, to which Councillor Reilly confirmed that he was.

Mr Mallon then corrected his statement regarding statistics, advising that NISRA reported on Council progress regarding processing applications, and that DFI reported on statutory consultee response statistics.

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, the following was agreed:**

- **The Assessment of Performance 2023-24, including the summary document 'Our Performance Looking Back Going Forward'**
- **That the Assessment of Performance 2023-24 is published by 30 September 2024, before full Council ratification, in order to meet the statutory deadline.**

**SPR/141/2024****COUNCIL REMOTE / HYBRID MEETINGS****Read:**

Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Council Remote / Hybrid Meetings. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Kelly noted that following the June 2024 legislation update regarding hybrid meetings, the item had recently been discussed at a Party Leaders meeting which had resulted in the recommendations as outlined within the Report.

Councillor Howie welcomed the return of hybrid meetings, noting that there were times when an elected member required a hybrid meeting option to allow them to still represent their constituents when necessary.

Councillor Taylor also welcomed the paper, stating that there was always the possibility of an issue arising and a Member not being able to make it to the chamber for a meeting and requested clarity in relation to what was deemed exceptional circumstances as stated within the report.

Mrs Kelly stated that it was difficult to provide an absolute answer for exceptional circumstances and confirmed that as much as possible, Members should be present in the Chamber. She further confirmed that physical attendance would also assist with the practicalities of operating two systems for the meetings, one in the Chamber and a remote meeting.

Councillor Rice confirmed his Party's support of the Report in principle and stated that there were instances when a Councillor was unable to attend a meeting and that remote attendance should remain a last resort for attendance.

Councillor Sharvin noted that the word "exception" was a challenge to try and define, but stated that it would be up to the individual as to what that should be. He confirmed his Party's support of hybrid meetings where necessary and confirmed that while they fully endorse the opportunity to attend remotely, he would encourage people to be in attendance as much as possible as it helped to build rapport with officers and members.

Following a query from Councillor Taylor regarding the protocol for remote attendance, Ms Taggart advised that it would be developed through Democratic Services.

Councillor Hanlon stated that it had to be recognised that most Councillors were employed full time, as well as having other responsibilities, so that while remote meetings allowed democracy to continue, physical attendance was always preferable, particularly with the new protocol that if attending remotely you would be last to speak.

Mrs Kelly confirmed that Council would be setting protocols once the item had been ratified at the next full Council meeting.

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Howie, seconded by Councillor Taylor, the following was agreed:**

- **Statutory meetings i.e. Council, ERT, SPR, AHC, S&E, Audit and Special Council to have physical attendance in respective Council chambers, except in exceptional**

circumstances. Non-statutory meetings to continue to be held remotely or in a hybrid manner.

- Speaking rights of those delegates within the chamber will be exhausted prior to taking queries from any remote delegates in order to make the meeting more manageable for Chairpersons.

#### **ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Rice, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

The Chairperson advised the following had been agreed whilst in closed session:

**SPR/142/2024**

#### **OPERATION AND SUPPORT OF AUDIO-VISUAL SOLUTIONS**

**Read:** Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding the Operation and Support of Audio-Visual Solutions. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to approve the development of a business case supporting the appointment of an IT resource to manage, operate and support the solutions and their users, as well as other audio-visual solutions deployed across Council buildings.

**SPR/143/2024**

#### **STA APPROVAL**

**Read:** Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director of Community Development, regarding an STA Approval. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to approve the STA as outlined within the Officer's Report.

**SPR/144/2024****TENDER OF POSTAL SERVICES****Read:**

Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding the Tender of Postal Services. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to approve the Full Business Case for the Tender of Postal Services as outlined at Appendix A of the Officer's Report and tender for Council's main collection and sorting mail service using a Postal Services Framework Agreement available to all public sector bodies. It was further agreed that the contract award be for a period of 3 years.**

**SPR/145/2024****INSURANCE PREMIUMS****Read:**

Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment, regarding Insurance Premiums. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the additional spend for insurance premiums for 2024/25 and subsequent additional payments / year-end adjustments to date.**

**SPR/146/2024****FUNDING APPLICATION****Read:**

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding a funding application. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed that Council Officers prepare a funding submission to MHCLG and associated business case for projects under the themes set out in Section 2 of the Officer's Report that meet the eligibility criterion and be delivered by March 2025.**

**SPR/147/2024****MULTIPLY FUNDING****Read:**

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Multiply Funding. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve the attached Business Case for the appointment of a delivery agent to undertake business numeracy initiatives.**

**SPR/148/2024****PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY****Read:**

Report from Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding a Public Right of Way. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to approve the decision that "Subsequent to investigation and legal opinion, Council do not assert the path shown in Appendix 1 as a public right of way" and to notify all landowners and interested parties of this decision.**

**SPR/149/2024****CONTRACTOR PROCUREMENT AND APPOINTMENT****Read:**

Report from Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital Projects & Procurement, regarding Contractor Procurement and Appointment. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to commence procurement and appointment of a contractor to complete the upgrades to infrastructure and services outlined in section 2 of the Officer's Report.**

**SPR/150/2024****CONTRACTOR PROCUREMENT AND APPOINTMENT****Read:**

Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities, regarding Contractor Procurement and Appointment. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to award the contract for site investigation works as outlined within the Officer's Report.**

**SPR/151/2024****ACQUISITION OF LAND****Read:**

Report from Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding Acquisition of Land. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve the purchase of lands from the landowners noted within the Officer's Report at the purchase value quoted, subject to Contract and conclusion of Legal process.**

**SPR/152/2024****PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

**Read:** Report from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration, regarding a Planning Department Update. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Clarke, the following was agreed:**

- To note the contents of the report and the proposed additional performance improvement actions.
- To approve the appointment of additional Planning Officers from a reserve list following the current recruitment exercise.
- To approve the additional budget allocation as set out in section 4.1 of the Officer's Report.

**SPR/153/2024**

**ENHANCED FLOOD SCHEME UPDATE**

**Read:** Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding an Enhanced Flood Scheme Update. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, the following was agreed:**

- That Members agree to notify DfE of Council's intention to close the scheme to further applications or letters of offer on 7 November 2024.
- That Members agree the proposed themes to be recommended to DfE for unallocated budget.

**FOR NOTING - ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014**

**SPR/154/2024**

**REPORT FROM MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING HELD 4 JUNE 2024**

**Read:** Report from Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 4 June 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the report from the minutes of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 4 June 2024.**

**FOR NOTING**

**SPR/155/2024****MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING HELD 4 JUNE 2024**

**Read:** Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 4 June 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the minutes of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 4 June 2024.**

**SPR/156/2024****MINUTES OF WOMENS WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD 22 AUGUST 2024**

**Read:** Minutes of Women's Working Group Meeting held 22 August 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

On proposing the report, Councillor O'Hare thanked Council for the ongoing work to end violence against women and girls and stated that it needed to be continually highlighted. She further echoed Councillor Finnegan's sentiment that rural areas needed access to workshops and noted her delight that work was underway to deliver these across the district.

Councillor Quinn queried whether a date had been confirmed for the "supporting the global campaign" being held in the leisure centres, to which Ms Taggart advised that provisional dates of 25<sup>th</sup> November and 26<sup>th</sup> November for Newry Leisure Centre and Down Leisure Centre respectively had been scheduled.

Councillor Byrne noted that the media work had been launched last week in Newry, and commended the work carried out on the project to date.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the minutes of the Women's Working Group meeting held 22 August 2024.**

**SPR/157/2024****NILGA REGIONAL PROGRAMME**

**Read:** Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding NILGA Regional Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Taggart highlighted the item to Members and encouraged them to attend as part of their own elected Member Development, and as part of Council working towards the Elected Members Development Charter.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the NILGA Regional Programme for Councillor Development 2024-25.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 20.51pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 October 2024.

**Signed:**            **Councillor Tierna Howie**  
                         **Chairperson**

**Signed:**            **Josephine Kelly**  
                         **Director of Corporate Services**



**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Ref: AHC/2024

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**Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on  
Monday 16 September 2024 at 6.00pm in the Mourne Room,  
Downshire Civic Centre**

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**Chairperson:** Councillor C Galbraith

**In attendance in Chamber:** Councillor L Devlin                      Councillor A Finnegan  
    Councillor R Howell                      Councillor J Jackson  
    Councillor D Lee-Surginor              Councillor A Lewis  
    Councillor O Magennis                 Councillor A Mathers  
    Councillor L McEvoy                    Councillor D Murphy

**Non-Committee Members  
in Chamber:** Councillor T Andrews**Non-Committee Members  
in attendance (via Teams):** Councillor M Rice

**Officials in Chamber:** Mr A Patterson, Director, Active and Healthy Communities  
 Mr H Korkou, Assistant Director, Healthy Living (Acting)  
 Mrs A Robb, Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development  
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer  
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

**Also in the Chamber:** Mr A Herron, Chief Executive Officer, PlayBoard NI**AHC/075/2024: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Finn, K Murphy and Young.

**AHC/076/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**AHC/077/2024: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY  
COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 AUGUST  
2024****Read:** Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 19 August 2024. **(Copy circulated).****AHC/070/2024: *Leisure Closure Arrangements***

In response to a query from Councillor Devlin regarding Kilkeel swimming pool, Mr Patterson advised it had been necessary to close over the weekend in order for essential maintenance to be carried out. Mr Patterson advised this was likely to be a temporary measure and an update would be provided to Mournes Councillors as soon as possible.

*AHC/068/2024: Attendance Matters, Department of Education*

Councillor Howell welcomed the information regarding the RAISE Programme that had been circulated to Members following the presentation at the previous Committee meeting and whilst welcoming the information received voiced her disappointment that there were areas of the District not included.

Councillor Howell proposed officers write to the Department of Education asking why large parts of the District had been excluded from the RAISE Programme. Councillor Howell's proposal was seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor McEvoy that officers write to the Department of Education asking why large parts of the District had been excluded from the RAISE Programme.**

**It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 19 August 2024.**

## PRESENTATION

**AHC/078/2024: PLAY BOARD NI**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Alan Herron, Chief Executive Officer from PlayBoard NI to the Committee Meeting.

Mr Herron from the Play Board NI, took Members through a presentation entitled 'Newry, Mourne and Down Play Strategy, Impact Review and Assessment of Need September 2024.' (Copy attached to these minutes)

The Chairperson thanked Mr Herron for the presentation and invited questions and comments from Members as follows:

- What were the timescales with regards to year one recommendations for capital upgrade?
- Praise was given to all the work and data gathered to determine where work needed to be prioritised.
- The investment that was made to the Downs Road, Newcastle was commended with the news regarding Islands Park Newcastle also welcomed.
- In relation to the Mournes locations of Ben Crom and Pious Hill it was asked what was meant by transformation and community element.
- The need for considerations in planning applications to be taken forward e.g. Development at Burren Meadow Newcastle with 141 houses built in 2012/13 had no play facilities added.
- The importance of engaging with communities was reiterated.
- In relation to new play parks that may have missed out by a small number of houses yet had external funding that could be secured, would there be an opportunity for those to be considered at a later date?
- Reference was made to removal at Hillfoot Junior. Would Ballynahinch Collective be contacted about how the space would be utilised in the future and how it would be made safe for residents.
- The recommendations acknowledged Langley Road, Ballynahinch was a high volume of private residential development and that had pushed the requirement for an upgrade. Council was to continue to review play value, what happened in that case?

- Reference was made to play facilities within forest environments. The play park at Castlewellan Forest Park was not fit for purpose and did not meet the needs of visitors and should be a priority for Council.

Mr Herron and Mr Patterson responded to queries as follows:

- From PlayBoard NI perspective timescales were dependant on when Council would be able to progress.
- Once there was Council approval for the Play Strategy Review 2024-29, it would be brought before the Council's Strategic Finance Working Group in order to secure finance as soon as possible.
- In locations such as Ben Crom and Pious Hill, the aim would be to take the space and put it back into a use which would be of more benefit to the population there. This would be done in consultation with the local community and would be about creating a space that met the needs of older residents within the area whilst acknowledging that there would still be play need. There would be some play equipment potentially but with a greater focus on the recreational space that could be used by the wider community.
- Once the Play Strategy was approved officers would engage with colleagues in Planning Department.
- At the beginning of the process in 2017 there was acknowledgement that in some areas, particularly more rural locations, that it could be difficult for communities to meet the requirements of the strategy.  
It was built in that if a community were able to secure funding through an alternative route that Council would do its best to facilitate that process and therefore may be an avenue for some areas e.g. an independently owned play park.
- Langley Road, Ballynahinch fell outside the requirements in terms of the capital upgrade however each year Council carried out maintenance reviews for each site, and should the play value reduce, sites such as this may fall into a category for upgrade at another time.
- In terms of Hillfoot Junior that was a matter for Council however the plan was to remove the equipment to create a safe space which would remain for recreational use.
- There would be consultation with communities on any plans.
- The scope of the Play Strategy Review included AHC funded and developed play parks however colleagues within ERT were looking at facilities at Castlewellan and other parks through a separate piece of work.

**AHC/079/2024:**            **PLAY STRATEGY REVIEW 2024-2029**

**Read:**                      Report dated 16 September 2024 from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding Council's Play Strategy Review 2024-2029. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:**                    **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Magennis to approve the recommendations of the Play Strategy Review as presented within the officer's report.**

**AHC/080/2024: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE REPORT**

**Read:** Report dated 16 September 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on District Electoral Area (DEA) Forums. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, to note the report and approve the actions in the action sheets attached for Downpatrick DEA Forum Private Meeting held on 13 August 2024.**

**ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 7 and 8, which related to exempt information by virtue of para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

The Chairperson advised the following had been agreed whilst in closed session:

**AHC/081/2024: SAINTFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE LEASE**

**Read:** Report dated 16 September 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding Saintfield Community Centre Lease. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Howell, to approve the sub-lease of the Council facility at Saintfield Community Centre as set out within the officer's report.**

**AHC/082/2024: SWIMMING POOL PLANT SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE**

**Read:** Report dated 16 September 2024 from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding Swimming Pool Plant Servicing and Maintenance. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Devlin, to approve the re-appointment of a specialist supplier via Direct Award Contract for essential maintenance and servicing of leisure facilities as detailed within the officer's report.**

**AHC/083/2024: NEWRY LEISURE CENTRE SWIMMING POOL**

Read: Report dated 16 September 2024 from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding Newry Leisure Centre Swimming Pool. (Copy circulated)

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Devlin, to note the update on works to the Newry Pool and approved the additional costs of opening Kilkeel Leisure Centre Pool for a group booking as set out in the officer's report.**

**AHC/084/2024: TOWER CLOCK – DAN RICE HALL, DRUMANESS**

Read: Report dated 16 September 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding repair to the Tower Clock at Dan Rice Hall, Drumaness. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Devlin, to note the contents of the officer's report.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.57pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 October 2024.

Signed: Councillor Galbraith  
Chairperson

Signed: Andrew Patterson  
Director Active and Healthy Communities

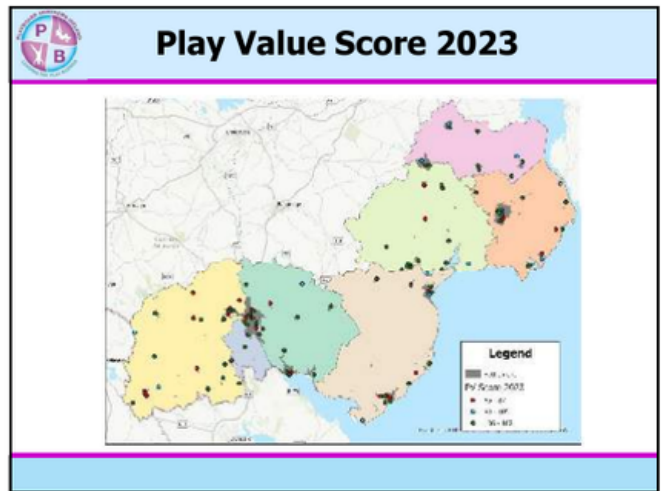
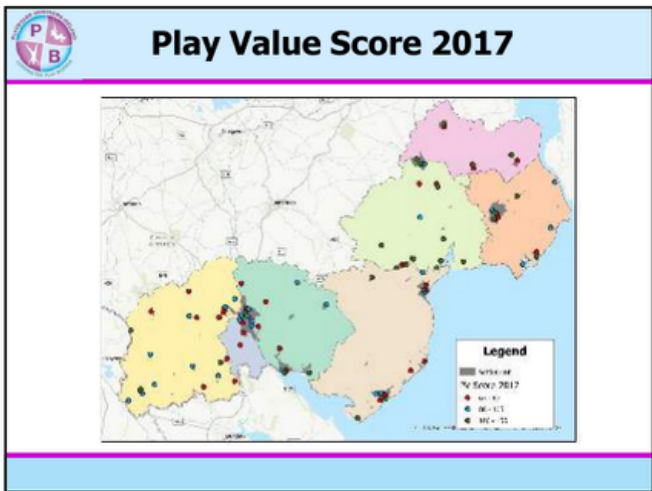
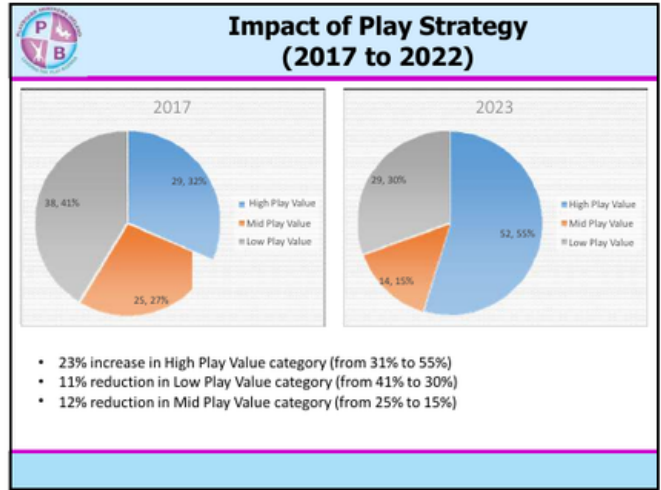
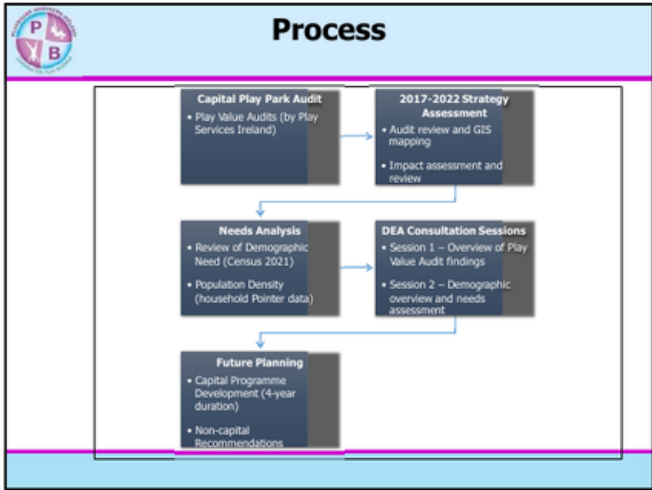


**Newry, Mourne and Down Play Strategy**

Impact Review and Assessment of Need (Sept. 2024)

### Presentation Overview

1. Play Strategy Review Process
2. Impact Overview (2017 to 2022)
3. Future Planning (Draft)
  - Overarching Capital Recommendations
  - Capital programme (Years 1 to 4)
  - Broader recommendations
4. Close



### Overarching Capital Recommendations

Action to be Taken	Number of Sites
Capital Upgrade (under Play Strategy)	14
Addition of Inclusive Play Equipment	1
Consolidation	2
Transformation	3
Closure	2

### Year 1 Capital Programme

DEA	Location	Play Value (2023)	Households	Recommendation
Coalition	Granite Vase	65	111	Capital Upgrade
Downpatrick	Gravise	71	196	Capital Upgrade
Sieve Gullion	Corrivy Park	82	180	Capital Upgrade
Mourmes	Slaggy Road	81 <small>Shire Junior 2016-2022</small>	521	Capital Upgrade
Sieve Gullion	Belbrook	85 <small>Shire Junior 2016-2022</small>	170	Capital Upgrade
Rosillane	Hillfoot Junior	79	-	Closure and removal of equipment
Newry	Springhill Drive	85	-	Closure & return of site to NMI management.

### Year 2 Capital Programme

DEA	Location	Play Value (2023)	Households	Recommendation
Newry	Dembeg	80	70	Capital Upgrade
Downpatrick	Bishops Court	83	102	Capital Upgrade
Sieve Gullion	Dal Ross	81	700	Capital Upgrade
Sieve Gullion	Whitecross	106	-	Introduction of inclusive fixed play equipment to meet local need.
Downpatrick	Bridge Street	80	-	Transformation

### Year 3 Capital Programme

DEA	Location	Play Value (2023)	Households	Recommendation
Mourmes	Island Park	85	566	Capital Upgrade
Sieve Gullion	Listmore	85	709	Capital Upgrade
Sieve Gullion	Rathfrew	85	709	Capital Upgrade
Mourmes	Ben Croin	85	560	Transformation
Newry	Ernett Street Mourme Park	85 86	675	Consolidation onto one site

### Year 4 Capital Programme

DEA	Location	Play Value (2023)	Households	Recommendation
Newry	Peter McFarland Park	84	438	Capital Upgrade
Mourmes	Rooney Road	85	381	Capital Upgrade
Sieve Croob	Dunmowad	85	-	Capital Upgrade
Mourmes	Pious Hill	81	51	Transformation
Downpatrick	Model Farms St. Dymphna	71 79	-	Consolidation onto one site

### Broader Recommendations

#### Community Owned Play Parks

Offer additional access to play through external funding sources and community ownership

Council support through annual maintenance inspection and audit

#### Planning

Residential growth has the potential to increase future demand on the capital play budget

Consideration should be given to application of appropriate planning policy

#### Community Play

3,222 Children engaged in Community Play programmes (2017-2022)

NMD should sustain and expand delivery enhancing access to play





**NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Ref: SE/2024

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**Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on  
Wednesday 18 September 2024 at 6.15pm in Council Chamber, Monaghan Row, Newry**

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**Chair:** Councillor G Kearns**Committee Members  
in Attendance:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor J Brennan
Councillor P Campbell	Councillor Enright
Councillor D Finn	Councillor V Harte
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor H Young	

**Officials in Attendance:** Mrs S Murphy, Director Sustainability and Environment  
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability  
Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director Environment  
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer  
Mrs N Stranney, Democratic Services Officer

**SE/104/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Feehan, Magennis and Reilly.

**SE/105/2024: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"**

There were no declarations of interest.

**SE/106/2024: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 AUGUST 2024**Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 August 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Enright enquired about the status of SE/143/2022 - Notice of Motion - Revenue from EV Charging Infrastructure. Mrs Murphy replied that an update would be provided in due course.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 August 2024.**

**FOR DECISION****SE/107/2024: HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding Houses in Multiple Occupancy – Review of Licence Scheme Charges and Proposed Increase in Licence Fee From 1 October 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Trainor presented a report to Members to consider increasing the fee for licensing a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and varying an HMO licence, in line with the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. She stated that the Act, effective from 1 April 2019, set the maximum licence fee at £45 per person per year, with Belfast City Council initially setting the fee at £37. On 2 August 2024, (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) SOLACE agreed to a proposed fee increase.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Campbell, the following was agreed:

- **Approve the increase of the HMO licence application fee to £45, the maximum permissible under the 2019 Regulations.**
- **Approve the costs of varying an HMO licence as follows; Addition of a new managing agent - £225 and Addition of a new occupant - £225 for each new occupant and £100 inspection fee (per visit).**
- **Note that the Chair of SOLACE will write to the DfC Permanent Secretary regarding the risk being carried by Councils and the need to bring forward legislation on this matter within the current mandate.**

**SE/108/2024: NEW PUBLIC HEALTH BILL CONSULTATION**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding New Public Health Bill Consultation **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Trainor presented a report advising that the Department of Health had issued a consultation that sought views on the new Health Protection Measures being implemented through a Public Health Bill to replace the current Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) 1967. She stated the recommendation was that Council approve the response tabled within Appendix 1 of the report to be submitted to the Department of Health on behalf of the Council.

Councillor Enright advised that his Party was taking legal advice on the consultation and proposed that each Party submit their own response with Council refraining from providing a corporate response. This was seconded by Councillor Young.

Councillor Finn stated that given the significance of the legislation and the consultation deadline approaching, proposed writing to the Department of Health inviting them make a presentation at a Council meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Andrews.

Councillor Ruane stated that Sinn Féin would be responding on Party basis and was unsure whether the Council, as a corporate body, were required to reply.

Mrs Murphy clarified that the officers' consultation response was on behalf of the Council and required approval from both the Committee and the full Council. If the approval was not obtained the consultation response would not be submitted.

Councillor Enright withdrew his proposal and agreed with Councillor Finn's proposal to invite the Department of Health to make a presentation to the Council.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to write to the Department of Health inviting them to make a presentation to brief all Councillors on the subject of the consultation.

**SE/109/2024:** **FLEET POLICY**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Fleet Policy. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Sage presented the paper that recommended approval for the Council's Fleet Policy to provide a framework ensuring that Council's driving activities were organised safely and efficiently while complying with statutory legislation.

Councillor Andrews proposed to accept the officer's recommendation highlighting the need for Council to stay updated with fleet management regulations and policies.

In seconding the proposal, Councillor Enright advised there was an item missing from the report whereby legislation had been issued on 7th May 2024, that required all local authorities to adopt a lifetime cost for replacing fleets, which had been adopted by Council two years ago. He requested that this be included within the related policy and legislation section and added as an aim.

Mr Sage advised the legislation referred to could be included within the Council's overall fleet strategy which would be brought back to a future Committee for approval.

Councillor Enright reiterated that as the legislation had already been enacted, this should be included as well as making it an aim for Council.

Mr Sage stated that he would take the comments on board.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to note contents of this report and to approve the Council's Fleet Policy as presented at Appendix 1 of this report.

**ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Brennan, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters, which related to exempt information by virtue of para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local / Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

The Chairperson advised the following had been agreed whilst in closed session:

**SE110/2024:** **NFLA MEMBERSHIP FEE 2024/2025**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding NFLA Membership Fee 2024/2025. (Nuclear Free Local Authorities) **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to approve the renewal of the annual subscription for membership of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities.

**SE/111/2024:** **DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS – MINOR WORKS CONTRACTS**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Minor Works Contracts **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed to approve the Direct Award Contracts for Minor Works as detailed in section 2.1 of the report.

**SE/112/2024:** **DIRECT AWARD CONTRACT – UPGRADE, DIAGNOSTICS & SERVICING OF VICTORIA LOCKS HYDRAULIC CONTROL SYSTEMS**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Direct Award Contract – Upgrade, Diagnostics & Servicing of Victoria Locks Hydraulic Control Systems. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to approve the Direct Award Contract for the upgrade, diagnostics & servicing of Victoria Locks Hydraulic Control Systems as detailed in section 2.2 of the officer's report.

Councillor Taylor left the meeting at 18.51.

**SE/113/2024:** **DIRECT AWARD CONTRACT EXTENSIONS – WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Direct Award Contract Extensions – Waste Management. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve Two Direct Award Contracts as detailed in Appendix 1 of the officer's report.

**SE/114/2024: BUSINESS CASE – SERVICING AT HILLTOWN HRC**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding a Business Case – Servicing at Hilltown HRC. (Copy circulated)

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Harte, it was agreed to approve the business case to procure services for the collection and transfer of residual waste, hard plastics, and cardboard from Hilltown HRC

**FOR NOTING - ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014**

**SE/115/2024: REPLACEMENT COMPACTOR BUSINESS CASE**

This Item had been deferred to future Committee Meeting

**SE/116/2024: REPORT FROM CLEANSING AND REFUSE TASK GROUP ON 21 AUGUST 2024**

Read: Report from the Report from Cleansing and Refuse Task Group on 21 August 2024 (Copy circulated)

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Brennan, it was agreed to note the presentation and action sheet.

**SE/117/2024: ARC21 SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE IN COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THURSDAY 23 JULY 2024**

Read: Arc21 Special Joint Committee "In Committee" Minutes of Thursday 23 July 2024. (Copy circulated)

**AGREED:** It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Brennan, to note the arc21 Special Joint Committee "in committee" minutes of meeting held 23 July 2024.

**FOR NOTING**

**SE/118/2024: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY 23 JULY 2024**

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Committee Minutes of Thursday 23 July 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Finn, to note the minutes of the Arc21 Joint Committee meeting of Thursday 23 July 2024.**

**SE/119/2024: PUBLIC CONVENIENCE UPDATE**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding an update on Public Convenience project in Newcastle. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Finn enquired whether Councillors would have an opportunity to feed into the strategy with regard to how facilities would be prioritised.

Mr Sage advised the strategy would be brought back to the working group and the plan was to develop a matrix for ranking the facilities, at which stage input from Councillors would be welcome.

**AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Finn to note the contents of the report.**

**SE/120/2024: UPDATE ON UPGRADE OF TOWN CENTRE CCTV PROJECT**

Read: Report dated 18 September 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding an update on the current situation in relation to the upgrade of Town Centre CCTV cameras in Newry, Warrenpoint and Kilkeel. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Finn to approve the contents of the report.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 18.57.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

**Signed: Councillor Geraldine Kearns  
Chairperson**

**Signed: Mrs Sinead Murphy  
Director of Sustainability & Environment**

<b>Report to:</b>	Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	7 October 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Correspondence to Council
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

<b>For decision</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	
<b>1.0</b>			<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1			To provide an update on correspondence received for attention of Council.
<b>2.0</b>			<b>Key issues</b>
2.1			This paper refers to correspondence to be brought to the attention of Council. Items are referred to in 3.0 below.
<b>3.0</b>			<b>Recommendations</b>
			That Council considers and notes the following correspondence:
3.1			<b>Correspondence from Department for Communities</b>  Council received correspondence from the Department for Communities in relation to Public Consultation Summary Report: Section 10 Regulations, Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022.
3.2			<b>Correspondence from Department for Communities.</b>  Council received a response from Department for Communities in relation to Notice of Motion – Winter Fuel Payment – Anti Poverty and Fuel Poverty Strategies.
3.3			<b>Correspondence from NI Water.</b>  Council received a response from NI Water in relation to Economic Constraints
<b>4.0</b>			<b>Resource implications</b>
4.1			Not applicable.
<b>5.0</b>			<b>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</b>
5.1			<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<p><b><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></b></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
5.3	<p><b><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></b></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</b>	
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>	
	<b>None</b>	





Department for  
**Communities**  
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn  
**Pobal**

Department fur  
**Commonities**

Date: 25 September 2024

Dear Stakeholder

**PUBLICATION OF THE CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT:  
SECTION 10 REGULATIONS, PRIVATE TENANCIES ACT (NI) 2022**

This letter is to advise you that the 12-week consultation on Section 10 (Electrical Safety Standard) has now concluded by way of the publication of the Summary Report detailing the findings.

The Section 10 Regulations will introduce 5-yearly safety inspections, by a qualified electrician, for all private rented properties hard-wired electrical installations.

Following the inspection the landlord must:

- Obtain a report from the electrician detailing the results and the date of when the next inspection is due.
- Provide a copy of the report to the tenant (s).
- Provide a copy of the report to any prospective tenant (s) if requested within 28 days.
- Supply the Council with a copy of the report within 7 days of receiving a written request.
- Retain a copy of the report for the electrician undertaking the next inspection and test.

If the report shows further investigative or remedial work is necessary, the landlord must:

- Complete the work within 28 day or any shorter period, if specified on the report.
- Supply written confirmation from the electrician on completion of the investigative/remedial work, to the tenant within 28 days and Council (if linked to Council intervention)

Although the Section 10 Regulations consultation Summary Report has now been published, the Regulations must be progressed under the draft affirmative resolution process, which requires them to be laid before the Assembly. That means that, dependant on scheduling and agreement, Section 10 Regulations will potentially be made by December 2024.

In recognition that a lead in period of time will be required to undertake an electrical safety inspection to achieve compliance, an operational lead in period will be set from the date the Regulations are made (it is proposed that this will be 4 months for new tenancies and 12 months for existing tenancies). A communication strategy commenced in June 2024 to raise awareness for the proposed changes. Once the Regulations clear the legislative process and specific operational dates become clear these will be communicated to you as soon as possible.

**The Section 10 post-consultation Summary Report can be accessed via the following link:**

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/summary-report-private-tenancies-act-northern-ireland-2022-section-10-electrical-safety-standards>

If required, the Summary Reports can on request be made available in an alternative format from this Department via the following contact points:

1. ✉: [prs@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:prs@communities-ni.gov.uk)
2. By written request channelled to: Audrey Fallon, Department for Communities, Private Rented Branch, Level 4 Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street, BELFAST BT2 7EG

Thank you to all who participated.

Yours sincerely

**JULIE LAVERY**

DfC Housing, Private Rented Branch



Department for  
**Communities**  
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An Roinn  
**Pobal**

Department fur  
**Commonities**

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**From: The Minister**

**Level 9  
Causeway Exchange  
1-7 Bedford Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7EG**

Telephone: (028) 90512692  
e-mail: [private.office@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:private.office@communities-ni.gov.uk)  
Our ref: CORR-1509-2024  
Date: 30 September 2024

Marie Ward  
Chief Executive  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Via email: [nicola.stranney@nmandd.org](mailto:nicola.stranney@nmandd.org)

Dear Marie,

## **EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION – WINTER FUEL PAYMENT**

Thank you for your correspondence dated 11 September 2024. I share the frustration of your council at this decision by the Labour Government to limit Winter Fuel Payments. In a statement to the NI Assembly on 10 September on the issue I made clear my total opposition to the Government's decision to change the Winter Fuel Payment eligibility criteria and the serious consequences this will have on the comfort, wellbeing and health of older people across Northern Ireland. The lack of consultation by the UK Government with me or the Executive has been extremely disappointing.

On 30 August 2024, the Executive reluctantly decided to maintain parity in policy and legislation with England, Scotland and Wales with effect from winter 2024/25. This decision was informed by the constrained financial position facing the Executive.

I have raised this issue with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions as well as other Ministers in the UK Government. As an Executive, we have written to the Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, to convey our collective concern at the Government's

changes to the Winter Fuel Payment Scheme and urged an immediate review of the Pension Credit threshold. This must ensure that more low-income pensioner households, who are not financially secure and will narrowly miss out on a Winter Fuel Payment this year, can meet the eligibility criteria for Pension Credit.

I remain committed to developing effective and sustainable solutions to tackle poverty in all its forms for our communities right across Northern Ireland, through the implementation of the Executive's Anti-Poverty Strategy. The Anti-Poverty Strategy will aim to address the complex and multi-faceted issue of poverty and the impacts of socio-economic disadvantage and will set out the NI Executive's commitment to a joined up, long term approach to addressing poverty.

While my Department is leading on the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, it remains an Executive Strategy and final decisions on the content and implementation of the Strategy will be subject to Executive agreement.

I am committed to working with all my Ministerial colleagues to ensure that the Anti-Poverty Strategy is taken forward in the most effective and expeditious way possible, taking account of departmental budgets and the need to develop a prioritised, sustainable and deliverable Strategy action plan.

Following an intensive stakeholder engagement phase, work is already well underway on the preparation of the new Fuel Poverty Strategy with a public consultation planned for this autumn. The strategy will provide a long-term framework for reducing fuel poverty, recognising that this will have positive impacts on both mental and physical health, especially for the most vulnerable in society. It will address issues such as improving energy efficiency in homes, a new fuel poverty energy efficiency scheme, how to support those living in or at risk of fuel poverty and ensure consumer protection.

This strategy proposes an ambitious vision of "Everyone lives in a warm, healthy home" underpinned by guiding principles of long-term sustainable solutions, needs-based approach, collaborative and participative working.

Given the scale of fuel poverty here, and the need for a just transition to lower carbon homes with affordable energy bills, any new scheme will need to scale up retrofit spend far beyond what is offered by the existing Affordable Warmth Scheme. Substantial work and funding will be needed to alleviate fuel poverty and meet the statutory net zero target by 2050.

My officials are developing a much more ambitious fuel poverty intervention to replace the existing scheme when it comes to an end in March 2026. This intervention will ensure people living in owner-occupied or private-rented homes experiencing fuel poverty receive vitally important energy efficiency improvements.

I trust you find this information useful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Lyons', written in a cursive style.

**Gordon Lyons MLA**  
**Minister for Communities**

**Northern Ireland Water**

PO Box 1026  
Belfast  
BT1 9DJ  
[www.niwater.com](http://www.niwater.com)

Tel: 0345 7440088

Ms. Marie Ward  
Chief Executive Officer  
Newry & Mourne District Council  
Newry Office  
Monaghan Row  
Newry  
BT35 8DJ



30 September 2024

Email: [marie.ward@nmandd.org](mailto:marie.ward@nmandd.org)

Dear Ms. Ward,

**Re: NI Water Economic Constraints**

Thank you for your letter of 11<sup>th</sup> September in response to my recent correspondence regarding NI Water Economic Constraints. Since the letter was issued NI Water has been working through the detail of the areas involved and continuing our discussions with the developers affected.

We are now able to provide you with more detailed information in relation to the specific areas affected within your Council area. The PDF document attached to this letter provides detail of the developments/proposed developments within the Newry Mourne and Down District Council area which will be impacted (within the 19,000 units province wide) that are outside of developer funded solutions. This may be for one or more of the following reasons:

1. An area within the wastewater network that is 'closed' to any further connections due to high polluting assets.
2. The Wastewater Treatment works within the catchment operating at or over its design capacity.
3. The availability of funding to undertake the required capital upgrades to existing assets.

We estimate that approximately 1,300 units within the Newry Mourne and Down District Council area are impacted within some areas of the following towns:

- Ardglass
- Ballyhornan
- Bessbrook
- Cloughoge
- Darragh Cross
- Downpatrick
- Drumaness



- Jerretspass
- Kilkeel
- Killyleagh
- Newry
- Saintfield

Please note that the closed areas will not cover the entirety of each of these towns and NI Water will continue to consider each planning application on a case-by-case basis depending on the location within the catchment.

These units include homes in private and social ownership schemes, commercial and public buildings. The current budget allocation means that at present, NI Water will not be able to make the necessary investments to enable connections for these units. In the current funding scenario, the solutions required to address these capacity constraints will take several fully funded Price Control periods to resolve.

For all proposed sites in these areas, developers should in the first instance continue to apply through the pre-development enquiry process and we will advise next steps. We will also continue to support developments in these areas where it can be proven that:

- The site has extant planning with no conditions relating to capacity constraints or
- The site is a redevelopment and there is no intensification of foul sewage discharge post development compared to the sewage discharge from the site within the last 5 years.

In relation to your query on a timeframe for moving forward with development currently being held up in areas such as Kilkeel and Warrenpoint. The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has provided NI Water with a total indicative budget allocation of almost £0.5 billion for 2024/25, representing just under 40% of the total non-ring-fenced budget for the Department. However, this current budget allocation is less than the levels the Utility Regulator determined were necessary for both RDEL (operating costs) and CDEL (capital investment). In terms of capital investment, the shortfall in investment ranges between £0.5bn - £0.9bn in the last three remaining years of this regulatory settlement (PC21 i.e. 2021/22 to 2026/27). To ensure our delivery plans are aligned with the allocated budget from DfI, NI Water are working through a process of prioritising the asset investment that may progress, seeking to protect the environment and maximising outcomes for customers. We are liaising with DfI, the Utility Regulator, NI Environment Agency, Consumer Council NI & the Drinking Water Inspectorate as part of this process. Inevitably this means there is investment that has been planned that is now being deferred.

To accommodate such significant capital investment budget reductions from the level set by the Utility Regulator NI Water has maintained its base maintenance investment but is sacrificing many PC21 new asset builds and asset upgrade projects. This is so existing assets can remain operational and provide service level stability for the population of Northern Ireland.





Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Curran". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'G' and 'C'.

Dr Gary Curran  
Director Engineering & Sustainability

