

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2024

**Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 23 April 2024 at 6.00pm in Council Chamber, Monaghan Row,
Newry**

Chair: Councillor T Andrews

Committee Members

In Attendance in Chamber: Councillor J Brennan Councillor W Clarke
Councillor K Feehan Councillor D Finn
Councillor J Jackson Councillor G Kearns
Councillor M Larkin Councillor O Magennis
Councillor K Murphy Councillor H Reilly
Councillor D Taylor Councillor J Truesdale

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

**Officials in attendance
via teams:** Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

SE/043/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillor Enright.

The Chairperson noted that Item 10 had been deferred to a future committee meeting.

The Chairperson also offered his condolences to the family, colleagues and friends of Indigo Wolfsbane following his recent passing.

SE/044/2024: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

There were no declarations of interest.

**SE/045/2024: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 MARCH 2024**

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 20 March 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

SE/128/2023: Upgrade to Town Centre CCTV and Council Facilities CCTV:
Councillor Jackson queried the progress of this in relation to Ballynahinch Town Centre. Mrs Murphy advised that the upgrade was currently addressing legacy Newry and Mourne Council areas, and a business case was under review to address the legacy Down areas.

Following a query from Councillor Truesdale regarding specific locations concerning CCTV Mrs Murphy reiterated the intention to present a business case for legacy Down Council areas.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 20 March 2024.**

NOTICE OF MOTION

SE/046/2024: **NOTICE OF MOTION – NEWRY MARKET C/063/2024**

Read: Report dated 23 April 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Director of Sustainability and Environment, regarding Notice of Motion – Newry Market. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Finn thanked officers for the detailed report and stated she was saddened by the decline in yearly figures. She noted differing trends in shopping habits which had an impact on the figures, however stated that Council must support the existing market and traders who attend every week. She queried further detail regarding the expression of interest process and called for applications received to be actioned to ensure revitalisation work continued. She emphasised the prime location of the market and noted a number of potential uses that could help assist in footfall to the area. She called for the local Councillors to be invited to any promotional activities that the Chairperson was involved.

Councillor Kearns noted her Party's recognition of the significance of Newry Market and the support it provided to the local economy. She commended past activities held within the market in attracting visitors but stressed that it was yet to reach its full potential. She suggested some areas of improvement alongside those contained within the Officer's Report to include a review of toilet facilities, the development of an ambitious publicity plan and ongoing engagement with stakeholders over various issues and concerns.

Councillor Reilly supported the motion, noting the significance of the market over the years and stated it had offered many entrepreneurs the chance to start their business. He queried whether the price of a stall was prohibitive and whether it could be hired on an ad-hoc basis or required a contract.

Ms Murphy responded that the price of a stall varied depending on its location and confirmed they could be hired on an ad-hoc basis each month.

Councillor Taylor spoke of the importance of the market on the economy of the area, both historically and present. He noted his disappointment in the decline of the market over the years and referenced the change in shopping habits of many. He commended the diversification of events held within the market area and stressed the importance of Council maintaining this and further queried what research was being carried out into the success of other markets.

Ms Murphy advised that Council was carrying out ongoing research as it recognised the importance of the historical asset of the market.

Councillor Feehan thanked Councillor Finn for bringing the motion. He commended the planned work on behalf of the Communications and Marketing team and queried whether targets could be included within the work to assist in measuring any progress made. He further noted that additional visitors to the market would have the opportunity to continue their shopping in nearby shopping locations, which would have a positive impact on the area.

Ms Murphy advised that measurable statistics could be provided by the Communications and Marketing department in relation to number of engagements on social media and that this could be measured against any recorded increase in footfall and generated income.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to approve the continuing commitment of Officer to revitalise the market through engagement with traders, the business community, and other potential stakeholders.**

It was also agreed that Officers reach out to other local councils with successful markets and explore additional uses to encourage footfall, including with arts and community groups.

It was further agreed that a report would be brought to committee in 6 months outlining the progress to date.

FOR DECISION

SE/047/2024: **REVIEW OF CARAVAN SITE LICENCE CONDITIONS**

Read: Report dated 23 April 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Caravan Site Licence Conditions. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Murphy highlighted that the current licence conditions had last been reviewed in 2019, and if approved, a new review would be conducted in consultation with current site owners, and any amendments would be brought back to Committee.

Councillor Taylor proposed the report and highlighted the importance of these sites for the local economy and tourism.

Councillor Truesdale stated there was a need for a motorhome site or for caravan sites to have capacity to accommodate motorhomes. She noted that motorhomes had been parked overnight in Castle Park in Newcastle with no facilities such as sluice or electric and that it was also against Council by-laws to have overnight stays. She noted an increase in waste relating to this and highlighted the loss of available parking spaces for residents, visitors and employees of nearby office or retail space. She further noted a recent weekend of good weather had resulted in increased waste from visitors to the area. She commended the refuse team in maintaining the area but noted that they had struggled to do so and further noted the solar powered compactor bins were a help to the refuse team. She queried what provisions Council would put in place relating to issues such as street cleansing, waste collection, dog wardens and enforcement with the potential increase in footfall during the summer months.

Ms Murphy noted the parked motorhome issue and advised that as she was new in the role of Director she would speak to officers and respond to the Member directly. She welcomed the comments on the solar powered bins and work of the refuse team and confirmed that a review of litter bins was underway which would be fed back to Committee. She highlighted a large number of bins in the Newcastle area and noted the benefit of the solar powered compactor bins which could help address the waste generated during summer. She noted an increase in staff resources in the summer period with extended working hours to combat the increased waste. She noted that not all caravan site owners were customers of Council in terms of waste collection provision but would engage with all caravan site owners during the review regarding recycling. She further noted that all Council customers have a residual and recycle collection on alternate weeks and additional collections could be facilitated during busy periods.

Councillor Reilly supported the review and highlighted a particular issue in Cranfield relating to anti-social behaviour which could impact on future tourism potential. He queried the role of Community Safety Officer as being a potential aid to this issue.

Ms Murphy advised that she would raise the issue with PCSP colleagues to query what role the Community Safety Officer would have.

Councillor Clarke noted that motorhome bays had been installed at Castle Park as there were problems at the Downs Road and Glen River car parks, with barriers being placed to prohibit motorhome parking. He referenced a Notice of Motion he had tabled previously relating to a motorhome strategy and proposed that the previous report regarding motorhome strategy be reviewed, working in partnership with all relevant Directorates, alongside addressing the relevant by-laws to ensure that a strategy could be developed that suited the needs of the motorhome community and the local population. This was seconded by Councillor Magennis.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to approve a review of Council's Caravan Site Licence conditions for Residential Caravan sites and for Holiday and Touring Caravan sites.

It was further agreed to revisit the motorhome strategy in partnership with all relevant Directorates, alongside addressing the relevant by-laws, to ensure a strategy could be developed that suited the needs of the motorhome community and the local population.

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, 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 Kearns, seconded by Councillor Brennan, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

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

RESTRICTED – FOR DECISION

SE/048/2024: CHRISTMAS ILLUNINATION DISPLAYS 2024-2026

Read: Report dated 23 April 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding a business case for Council Christmas Illuminations Displays. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Brennan, it was agreed to note the content of the report and

associated Business Case. It was also agreed to accept the recommendations as contained within the officer's report.

It was further agreed that a report would be brought back to a future Committee meeting on the re-establishment of the Sustainability & Environment Working Group

SE/049/2024: STA – LUBRICANTS FOR FLEET WORKSHOPS

Read: Report dated 23 April 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding the procurement of Lubricants for Fleet Workshops. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to approve the STA for the procurement of fleet related lubricants for the Fleet Workshops.

SE/050/2024: DISTRICT COUNCIL COLLABORATIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT RESOURCE

Read: Report dated 23 April 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Director Sustainability & Environment, regarding District Council Collaborative Waste Management Resource. **(copy circulated)**

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

- To note the update on discussions at a national level with regard to UK-wide proposals in respect of draft regulations for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging scheme.
- To approve the proposed annual financial contribution in 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 to appoint a District Council collaborative waste specialist to deal with the implications of EPR.

SE/051/2024: STA – WASTE MANAGEMENT

Read: Report dated 20 March 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding the Allocation of Moorings at Newcastle Harbour. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to approve the extension of the STA for the collection, treatment and processing of residual waste, rigid plastics and mixed paper from Downpatrick, Ballynahinch and Castlewellan Recycling Centres as outlined in the Officer's Report.

SE/052/2024: OCCASIONAL HIRE OF HOOK LIFT VEHICLE AND DRIVER

AGREED: It was agreed to defer this item to a future Committee meeting.

SE/053/2024: CONSULTATION ON RETHINKING RESOURCES – CLIMATE ACTION

Read: A verbal update was provided by Ms S Murphy, Director Sustainability and Environment, regarding a Consultation on Rethinking Resources – Climate Action.

Ms Murphy advised that a consultation was currently open from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) regarding rethinking resource measures for climate action. She noted that DAERA have agreed to extend the deadline due to the extensive consultation. She highlighted that proposed models could dramatically change Council's delivery in terms of kerbside collections and as such Council wanted to give careful consideration to any changes in policies. She advised that a paper would be tabled at the following Committee meeting

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Clarke, to note the verbal update.

Following a query from Councillor Jackson, Ms Murphy advised that the next meeting of the Cleansing and Refuse Task Force would be held in the next month.

Councillor Reilly queried if Council was aware of any issues of fish coming from Great Britain into Warrenpoint. Ms Murphy advised that she was not aware of any issues but would look into the matter.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 06:58pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday 7 May 2024.

Signed: **Councillor Terry Andrews**
Chairperson

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