

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2024

**Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 21 August 2024 at 6.15pm in Council Chamber, Monaghan Row, Newry**

Chair: Councillor G Kearns

**Committee Members
in Attendance:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor J Brennan
Councillor P Campbell	Councillor D Finn
Councillor V Harte	Councillor J Jackson
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor O Magennis
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
Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director Environment
Mr D Hanna, Head of Refuse and Cleansing
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer
Mrs N Stranney, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in Attendance
(Via Teams)** Miss Sarah Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

SE/088/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Enright, Feehan and Reilly.

SE/089/2024: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

There were no declarations of interest.

**SE/090/2024: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 JUNE 2024**

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 12 June 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 12 June 2024.

FOR DECISION

SE/091/2024: NOTICE OF MOTION – DOG FOULING

Read: Report dated 21 August 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Director: Sustainability and Environment, regarding a Notice of Motion on Dog Fouling. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Howie thanked the officers for their detailed report and supported the recommendations. She highlighted that dog fouling was a persistent issue affecting community safety and cleanliness and welcomed the new online reporting form, hoping it will encourage more residents to report issues.

Councillor Howie emphasised the importance of responsible dog ownership and praised the Council's efforts through social media, billboards, and upcoming campaigns. She requested that the online form be promoted through social media once operational to maximise awareness.

Councillor Howie inquired about the current number of enforcement officers, the areas they cover, and whether there was a timeline for filling vacancies to improve dog fouling management.

Ms Murphy stated that the Council would pilot the online form, notify members of its availability, and ensure it was processed through the standard channels. She also mentioned that there were several vacancies and temporary posts for enforcement officers, which would be prioritised for recruitment.

Councillor Campbell welcomed the report's recommendations, acknowledging that the issue was something Councillors address regularly.

Councillor Finn emphasised the daily complaints Councillors received and suggested the launching a campaign similar to the recent "Right to Food" initiative. She inquired about potential collaboration between DEA coordinators and local schools, noting the success of similar efforts in other council areas, where schools effectively engaged children, who then influenced and educated their parents.

Mrs Murphy advised that the annual poster campaign run by the sustainability team covered various environmental and sustainability issues, with dog fouling having been highlighted by the children in the past. She stated that the winning posters from the campaign could be used to deliver messages on the sides of new bin lorries.

Councillor Taylor stated the issue of dog fouling had been discussed many times over the years. And welcomed the potential to reduce or eliminate the problem across the District. He stated that online reporting could encourage more reports and highlighted that current figures probably did not fully reflect how widespread the problem was. He asked that the online system be reviewed three to six months after its launch to assess its impact on reporting complaints and offered to add this amendment for consideration.

Mrs Murphy acknowledged that the statistics did not accurately reflect the on the ground situation. She highlighted the frustration of the cleansing teams, who often found new dog fouling appearing shortly after the streets had been cleaned. She suggested that exploring different apps and providing staff with devices to capture a comprehensive view of the problems would ensure hotspots were quickly identified and addressed more swiftly.

Councillors Andrews, Magennis, Taylor, Young, and Jackson all reported never having received complaints from residents about bin storage and expressed doubts about the enforceability of the proposal. Consequently, they all agreed not to support the proposal from Ards and North Down Borough Council.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed that members would NOT support Ards and North Down Borough Council's proposal regarding additional Enforcement Powers and Newry, Mourne and Down Council will write to DAERA requesting similar enforcement powers.

SE/093/2024: PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF HEIGHT RESTRICTING BARRIERS AT COUNCIL CAR PARKS

Read: Report dated 21 August 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Proposed Installation of Height Restricting Barriers at Council Car Parks. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Ruane proposed the officer's recommendation and welcomed the reinstallation of the barrier. He also asked for an update on the motorhome strategy. Mr Sage advised that the AHC Directorate had a draft strategy in place and agreed to revert to the Member on the matter.

Councillor Young highlighted the ongoing issue of camper vans in Castle Park carpark stating the byelaws were not being followed despite the presence of signage. She stated that a temporary barrier was appreciated, however, only a permanent barrier would effectively address the overall issue.

Mr Sage stated that a permanent barrier needed to be considered alongside the motorhome strategy, as making the barrier permanent raised concerns about where the motorhomes would be displaced. He emphasised that the motorhome strategy would need to be reviewed before a decision on the barrier could be presented to Committee.

Councillor Finn agreed that the decision regarding a more permanent barrier should be considered within the framework of the motorhome strategy to ensure that the problem was not relocated to another area.

Mr Sage provided committee with an update following additional discussions with Amgen , the parking arrangements at Downs Road in Newcastle had been reviewed and 70 spaces were now being made available for public parking during the Irish Open event.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed to approve the proposal to reinstate height restricting barriers at the Square, Warrenpoint and installation of temporary height restricting barriers at Castle Park, Newcastle for the duration of the Amgen Irish Open.

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 Ruane, 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:

SE/094/2024: **CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS 2024, DIRECT AWARD CONTRACT FOR TESTING**

Read: Report dated 21 August 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Christmas Illuminations 2024, Direct Award Contract for Testing. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to approve a Direct Award Contract for the testing of the 2024 Christmas Illuminations in November 2024.

It was also agreed to investigate the locations as highlighted by Councillor Harte regarding reported issues with Christmas illuminations and street lighting.

SE/095/2024: **DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS – FACILITIES SERVICE CONTRACTS**

Read: Report dated 21 August 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding fixed firefighting equipment and intruder/fire alarm maintenance contracts. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed to approve the Direct Award Contracts for a 6-month period.

SE/096/2024: **BUSINESS CASE FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF SPECIALIST TECHNICAL ADVICE**

Read: Report dated 21 August 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Director: Sustainability and Environment, regarding a business case to procure a contract for specialist technical advice to assist with the development of business cases and contracts for more complex requirements. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to approve the business case to procure a contract for specialist technical services.

SE/097/2024: DIRECT AWARD CONTRACT EXTENSIONS – WASTE MANAGEMENT

Read: Report dated 21 August 2024 from Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding the extension of two direct Award Contracts that exceed the Director's delegated limit of £30,000. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed to approve two Direct Award Contracts as detailed at Appendix 1 of the Officers report.

SE/098/2024: BUSINESS CASE FOR INSURANCE BROKERAGE SERVICES

Read: Report dated 21 August 2024 from Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding a business case to procure professional insurance brokerage services for Council. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to approve the business case to procure a contract for Insurance Brokerage Services.

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

SE/099/2024: REPORT FROM SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP ON 19 JUNE 2024

Read: Report from the Sustainability and Environment Working Group on 19 June 2024 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to note the report.

SE/100/2024: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN HELD ON 23 JULY 2024 AND IN COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THURSDAY 30 MAY 2024

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin Held On 23 July 2024 and In Committee Minutes of Thursday 30 May 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Young, to note the arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly bulletin of meeting held on 23 July 2024, and "in committee" minutes of meeting held 30 May 2024.

FOR NOTING

SE/101/2024: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY 30 MAY 2024

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Committee Minutes of Thursday 30 May 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Ruane, to note the minutes of the Arc21 Joint Committee meeting of Thursday 30 May 2024.

SE/102/2024: PROVISIONAL NI LOCAL AUTHORITY COLLECTED MUNICIPAL WASTE MAN STATISTICS JANUARY-MARCH 2024

Read: Provisional NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Man Statistics January-March 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Ruane, to note the statistics from January-March 2024.

SE/103/2024: ABANDONMENT AND DISPOSAL OF LAND AT CARNEYHOUGH INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, RATHFRILAND ROAD, NEWRY

Read: Correspondence received from the Department for Infrastructure re: abandonment and disposal of land at Carneyhough Industrial Estate, Rathfriland Road, Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Harte asked whether the abandonment occurred within the confines of the industrial estate. Mrs Murphy agreed to provide clarification on the matter and that she would revert to the member with the information.

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Ruane, to note the proposed abandonment.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.22 pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 2nd September 2024.

**Signed: Councillor Geraldine Kearns
Chairperson**

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