

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 1 July 2024 at 6.00pm in Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor P Byrne

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Bowsie
Councillor J Brennan	Councillor P Campbell
Councillor W Clarke	Councillor C Enright
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor D Finn
Councillor A Finnegan	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor V Harte
Councillor R Howell	Councillor T Howie
Councillor G Kearns	Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Murphy	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor G Sharvin
Councillor J Truesdale	Councillor H Young

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

C/114/2024

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Devlin, Galbraith, Gibbons, Jackson, King, Larkin, Lewis, Magennis, McAteer, McEvoy, O'Hare, S Murphy, Reilly, Rice, Taylor, Tinnelly and Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities.

The Chairperson mentioned the sad passing of Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh, one of the legendary voices of Gaelic games, whose passion and distinctive commentary brought the spirit of the games to life for countless supporters and requested a letter of condolence be sent to his family.

The Chairperson thanked Kerri Morrow and officers for organising a fantastic Wildlife in the Park event and commented how it was great to see ideas from the DEA structures within Council being built upon.

The Chairperson spoke of the 40th anniversary of Cuan Mhuire, one of his nominated Chairperson Charities for the year ahead and highlighted the remarkable work undertaken to help families across the District.

Congratulations were extended to all local primary schools who took part in the poster competition for the Right To Food Campaign, with a special mention for each of the following winners:

- Gil McFerran (P4) and Poppy Baggley (P7), St Colmcille's Primary School
- Katherine Napier (P5), Downpatrick Primary School

- Xavier Joseph (P6), Abbey Love (P7) and Eliza Oakes (P7), Our Lady & St Patricks Primary School
- Enya Nelson, Bunscoil Mhuir agus Phádraig

The Chairperson thanked Councillor Galbraith who brought the Right to Food motion to Council and thanked Eurospar for their sponsorship.

Congratulations were extended to the Down Triathlon Club on the recent Beyond the Wall Event with the club and Councillor Gareth Sharvin expressed his thanks to Frank Quinn and his team for their help in sorting the Audleystown Road ahead of the event where over 300 participants took part.

The Chairperson congratulated the Crisis Cafe for its extensive youth pride events and mentioned the upcoming Newry Pride Event that was due to take place would be exciting event being held in the District after a number of years.

The Chairperson acknowledged Paddy Duffy from Newry, who had received an MBE in recognition for his community and voluntary activism over many years.

Congratulations were extended to all the girls from St Joseph's Convent Primary School who were All County Champions in the Cumann na mBunscol 11 aside after defeating Carrick Primary School, Burren in the County Final.

C/115/2024 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C/116/2024 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3 JUNE 2024

Read: Action sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 3 June 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 3 June 2024 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy.**

C/117/2024 COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 3 JUNE 2024

Read: Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 3 June 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 3 June 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor K Murphy.**

C/118/2024

**COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING
OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3 JUNE 2024**

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 3 June 2024 (copy circulated).

Councillor Sharvin enquired if Council had received any further clarity on when additional funds were to be released by the Department for the Enhanced Payments Scheme for flooding.

Mrs Ward advised there had not yet been any clarity and that officers were still working through processing the current calls and had enquired and would continue to do so.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Andrews that Council write back to the Department expressing its frustration at the time being taken to allocate funding.

Agreed: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 3 June 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Campbell.

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/119/2024

**MINUTES OF ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 JUNE 2024**

Read: Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 10 June 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: The Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 10 June 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Kearns.

C/120/2024

**MINUTES OF STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2024**

Read: Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 June 2024 (copy circulated).

SPR/099/2024: Peaceplus Project, Theme 1.3 Building Positive Relations

Councillor Bowsie asked for an update on and timescale for the Ulster Scots review that Council was currently undertaking and commented that the Ulster Scots Community network were insisting Council was currently not fulfilling its statutory obligation. He asked for confirmation that there was a will to establish an Ulster Scots Forum after having previously said that it would not be establishing any more task groups.

The Chairperson pointed out by way of information that the agreed proposal was to bring a report to Equality & Good Relations Forum on establishing an Ulster Scots Forum to the next meeting, which could not be held before ratification at full council.

Mrs Kelly confirmed this was something Mr Colin Moffet, Head of Corporate Policy would be taking forward and once ratified by Council would follow due process and a report brought to the next Equality & Good Relations Forum.

Mrs Kelly further advised the Chief Executive and herself had met with the Ulster Scots Agency to hear about the work they were doing and that would be brought forward to a Forum meeting in August.

Councillor Bowsie enquired if a report would be brought before Council by the end of the year to which Mrs Ward stated she could not pre-empt the Equality & Good Relations Forum and that any decisions would come back before the Committee depending on discussions.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 June 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Sharvin.**

C/121/2024 **MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 2024**

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 17 June 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 17 June 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Young.**

C/122/2024 **MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 JUNE 2024**

Read: Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 19 June 2024 (copy circulated).

SE/077/2024: DAERA Consultation – Rethink Our Resources

In response for an update from Councillor Andrews, Mrs Murphy advised the consultation response had only been submitted on 26 June 2024 and as yet no feedback had been received.

SE/071/2024: Irish Open Car Parking Provision

In voicing concerns for parking availability for local shoppers and the business community within Newcastle during the Irish Open Councillor Clarke enquired what discussions had taken place to date.

Mr Mallon advised discussions were ongoing with DP World Tour and it was envisaged finalised proposals for traffic management, car parking and park and ride facilities would be provided later that week.

Mr Mallon advised he had made a proposal to the Tour that once the Transport and Park and Ride Plans were finalised that they would attend discussions with members on any implications of that.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 19 June 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Kearns.**

Read: Report dated 1 July 2024 from Mrs Ward, Chief Executive, regarding an update on correspondence received for the attention of Council.

Appendix 11: Correspondence from Ards and North Down Borough Council in relation to enforcement powers regarding bins.

Councillor Hanlon voiced concern that the request to support the call for introduction of enforcement powers for Councils to deal with instances of bins causing obstruction was generic and would need filtered down e.g. to take into account those who had difficulty bringing bins in.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Harte to defer the correspondence from Ards and North Down Borough Council in relation to enforcement powers regarding bins to the Sustainability and Environment Committee for further consideration.

Appendix 4: Response from Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in relation to Notice of Motion C/088/2024, Inclusion of Counties Armagh and Down in Irelands Ancient East.

Councillor Andrews enquired if there had been any further discussion with the Irish Tourism Minister regarding the Tourism Strategy etc. Mrs Ward referred to confirmation from the Minister for the Economy to meet with a delegation from Council and that would be included as part of that.

Appendix 6 and 7: Response from Department of Finance and Department for Infrastructure in relation to Notice of Motion C/095/2024, Roads Maintenance.

The Chairperson welcomed the response from the Department of Finance and Department for Infrastructure regarding the motion he brought to Council in May 2024 and the acknowledgement that both Ministers supported a multi-year budget.

He added there were items of correspondence such as the response from the Prime Minister in relation to funding for public services for roads where Council had received a generic response stating an adequate response could not be provided due to constraints of the pre-election period.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Andrews that following the election that Council write back to the UK Government to address the issues originally raised in relation to giving commitment to fulfil the demand for all parties and adequately fund public services in Northern Ireland.

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

Appendix 1: Response from Department for Communities in relation to Notice of Motion C/096/2024, Right to Food.

Appendix 2: Response from Department of Education, in relation to Notice of Motion C/096/2024, Right to Food.

Appendix 3: Response from Department of Health in relation to Notice of Motion C/094/2024 Notice of Motion, Mental Health Service.

Appendix 4: Response from Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in relation to Notice of Motion C/088/2024, Inclusion of Counties Armagh and Down in Irelands Ancient East.

Appendix 5: Response from Prime Minister in relation to Notice of Motion C/095/2024, Roads Maintenance.

Appendix 6: Response from Department of Finance in relation to Notice of Motion C/095/2024, Roads Maintenance.

Appendix 7: Response from the Department for Infrastructure in relation to Notice of Motion C/095/2024, Roads Maintenance.

Appendix 8: Correspondence from Derry City and Strabane District Council in relation to Vaping.

Appendix 9: Correspondence from NI Water in relation to Notice of Motion C/104/2024.

Appendix 10: Response from Department for Communities in relation to the Financial Assistance Call SPR/090/2024.

Appendix 11: Correspondence from Ards and North Down Borough Council in relation to enforcement powers regarding bins.

C/124/2024

NOTICE OF MOTION – CAR PARKING STRATEGY

The following motion was received from Councillors Feehan and Mathers:

“This Council recognises concerns in relation to car parking across the District. We call, therefore, for a new parking strategy to be developed by Council for NMD District. This strategy should consider and prioritise;

- The provision of adequate levels of car parking for the District*
- The introduction of 1-hour free on-street parking in Newry*
- The retention of existing free car parking spaces in Newry City Centre*
- Review the introduction of 1-hour free parking at Council parking sites*
- The identification and evaluation of waste ground and sites currently owned by Council that could be made available for car parking, park and share/ park and ride*
- Partnership working with government departments to explore the potential for development of bespoke car parking sites, including multi-storey facilities, where viable*
- The review of Seasonal Passes to ensure an affordable offering for local service users*
- A robust communication plan and engagement process with the public, including commuters, retailers, and business owners”*

Agreed:

The Motion was referred to the Strategic Finance Working Group in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.30pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 5 August 2024.

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive