

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting
held on Monday 14 October 2024 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, Monaghan Row**

Chairperson: Councillor A Lewis

**Committee Members
in attendance:**

Councillor W Clarke	Councillor K Feehan
Councillor O Hanlon	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	

Committee Members

in attendance via Teams: Councillor C Galbraith

Officials in attendance:

Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration
Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

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

Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

ERT/090/2024: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Andrews.

ERT/091/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

**ERT/092/2024: ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2024**

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

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 9 September 2024.

FOR DECISION

ERT/093/2024: LOCAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS / TOWN AND CITY CENTRE TASKFORCE

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism regarding Local Economic Partnerships – Town and City Centre Taskforce. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Mallon advised that following the launch of the Department for Economy's Sub Regional Economic Plan, local communities would be empowered to identify their own economic priorities through establishing a local economic partnership. He reminded Members that a similar paper had been tabled the previous month where it was agreed that Council would establish a Town and City Centre Task Force, noted that the aims of this task force and the local economic partnership would be similar and therefore it was proposed that one group be established to deliver on the aims of both, with the key proposed membership being detailed at section 2 of the report. He further advised that other stakeholders may be identified through the establishment of the partnership and invites would be extended as and when required.

In proposing the report, Councillor Hanlon stated that these partnerships would unlock potential for the district and a locally led approach would empower the community. She noted the lack of representation from Rowallane and Slieve Croob areas and queried whether the local DEA forums could be approached to advise on ideas for the partnership working and further queried whether the local colleges had been approached, such as SERC or SRC. She noted that Council had a good foundation for establishing the task force as the Labour Market Partnership and the Community Planning Partnership were established.

Mr Mallon confirmed that local colleges were represented in the groups proposed and welcomed the engagement through each DEA to propose potential groups that could participate in under-represented areas.

Councillor Truesdale welcomed the paper and queried at what stage would there be an opportunity for the local community to engage with the task force as they weren't specifically mentioned within the report.

Mr Mallon noted that there was community representation within the proposed members as the Chamber of Commerce and the Regeneration Working Groups etc. already had community representation and reminded Members that the proposed list was not exhaustive.

Following a query from Councillor Hanna regarding the number of representatives from each area, Mr Mallon advised that any potential suggestions were welcome but advised it was best that they were groups already established.

Following a query from Councillor Lee-Surginor regarding how suggestions should be made to Council, Mr Mallon advised that email was best and reminded Members that the guidance from the Department regarding representatives was to consider local education authorities, enterprise agencies, local businesses, Civic Society but to also remember that the size of the partnership be adequate to the local area.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed that Council agree the membership and progress the establishment of the NMDDC Local Economic Partnership / town and City Centre Taskforce as set out in the Officer's Report.

ERT/094/2024: NEWRY CANOE TRAIL – INLAND WATERWAY ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding the Inland Waterway Association of Ireland. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Smyth outlined the request received from the Inland Waterway Association of Ireland (IWAI) and detailed the proposal for the development of a canoe trail, including access steps, with any funding requirements to be met by the IWAI.

In proposing the report, Councillor Hanna noted that any improvement in relation to access would be welcomed within the local area.

In seconding the report, Councillor Harte stated that it would be a welcome boost to the Newry area to see the canal being utilised in such a manner.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Harte, it was agreed for Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI) to undertake the planning and phased development of a canoe trail including canoe steps along sections of Newry Canal owned by NMDDC subject to conditions as outlined in section 2.1 of the Officer's Report.

ERT/095/2024: PEACEPLUS THEME 1.1

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Smyth advised that the report contained a number of items to consider, including previous minutes of partnership meetings alongside details regarding a recent application for funding submitted by Council to SEUPB. She outlined that Council was in receipt of a confirmation letter regarding the grant funding and advised that a formal letter of offer was to follow.

Councillor Hanna noted that previous PeacePlus meetings had resulted in diary clashes which left him unable to attend meetings.

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

- To agree the minutes of PEACEPLUS partnership 29 August 2024 and 19 September 2024 (draft) which included the following recommendation: To develop and deliver training aimed at Voluntary and Community sector on how to identify and apply for tenders.
- To note that SEUPB have issued an approval letter to confirm that Council's application under Theme 1.1 was approved for grant funding, and a formal Letter of Offer would follow within 8 weeks.
- To approve accepting and signing the Letter of Offer and Partnership agreement upon receipt from SEUPB.

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

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

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

FOR DECISION

ERT/096/2024: **MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT – COMMUNITY AND PLACE FUNDING**

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding MHCLG Community and Place Funding. **(Copy circulated)**

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

- Subject to funding approval, Members agreed to progress the necessary procurements and appointments to progress the projects within the available funding.
- To approve the attached Business Cases for Regeneration Showcase Events, Decals for Bin Lorries and Accessible Benches.
- To engage with the Mae Murray Foundation regarding the delivery of accessible beach enhancements at Cranfield and Tyrella.

ERT/097/2024: **TOURING IN THE TREES**

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding Touring in the Trees at Castlewellan Forest Park. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Galbraith, seconded by Councillor Lewis, the following was agreed:

- To approve the operation of the Touring in the Trees site at Castlewellan Forest Park from January 2025 under the same terms and conditions and opening hours as the existing caravan parks.
- The Touring in the Trees site will be bookable on the existing Castlewellan CampManager system and charges will be reflective of similar facilities.

ERT/098/2024: TREE TOPS WALK PROPOSAL

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding Tree Tops Walk – Castlewella Forest Park. **(Copy circulated)**

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

- To agree the Letter of Intent at Appendix 1 of the Officer's Report.
- To arrange a familiarisation visit with key stakeholders to the Treetop Walks experience at Avondale, Co. Wicklow.

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

ERT/099/2024: CASTLEWELLAN FOREST PARK GATES

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding Castlewella Forest Park Gates. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to engage a specialist consultant to advise on repair options for the gates at the entrance of Castlewella Forest Park and seek statutory approval for a preferred option.

ERT/100/2024: BUILDING CONTROL SIX MONTHLY REPORT

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director Regeneration, regarding the Building Control Six Monthly Report. **(Copy circulated)**

Following a query from Councillor Lee-Surginor regarding an increase in applications alongside a reduction in inspection fees, Mr McGilly advised that fees were dependent on the type of application submitted as not all applications warranted a fee.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the contents of the report.

ERT/101/2024: DUBLIN BELFAST ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (DBEC) PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Read: Report dated 14 October from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding a Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC) update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the update regarding the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor Partnership.

ERT/102/2024: **LICENSING SIX MONTHLY REPORT**

Read: Report dated 14 October 2024 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director Regeneration, regarding the Licensing Six Monthly Report. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Clarke queried the delay between street signs being approved and subsequently erected and noted that he was aware of some that had been approved for over a year and were still in storage.

Mr McGilly advised that the query would be addressed, and an update report would be tabled at a future meeting.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the contents of the report.

It was further agreed that an update report regarding street signs be tabled at a future meeting.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.38pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4th November 2024.

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

Signed: Conor Mallon
Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism
