

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 12 December 2024 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre

In the Chair: Councillor T Howie

In Attendance in Chamber:

Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor C Enright	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor C King	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor D McAteer	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Rice	Councillor G Sharvin

Committee Members in Attendance via Teams:

Councillor P Byrne	Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor A Quinn	Councillor D Taylor

Officials in Attendance in Chamber:

Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration (Acting)
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/190/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive.

SPR/191/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

SPR/192/2024 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 14 NOVEMBER 2024

Read: Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 14 November 2024 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Bowsie, it was agreed to approve the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 14 November 2024.**

FOR CONSIDERATION

Read: Report from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Improvement, regarding S95 Audit and Assessment Report 2024-2025. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Byrne presented the Report, which related to the NI Audit Office's (NIAO) assessment of Council's assessment of performance for 2023-2024 and the Improvement Plan for 2024 – 2025. He confirmed that the Report provided the performance arrangements within the Council with an unqualified audit opinion without modifications, further highlighting that there were no issues that required a formal recommendation for improvement.

Councillor Bowsie queried why a target had not been set in relation to the number of capital leisure projects progressed for 2024-25, as there had been targets set for previous years.

Mr Byrne advised he revert to the Member on the issue once he sought clarification.

Councillor McAteer asked for confirmation that the Report certified all processes and plans of Council for the year and the previous year were in order, as far as NIAO was concerned.

Mr Byrne confirmed that the financial audit report and the Report To Those Charged with Governance both achieved an unqualified audit opinion with a number of recommendations for improvement, stating that an unqualified audit opinion confirmed that all financial statements, documents and processes were in order, accurate and compliant.

Mrs Kelly stated it was not unusual to have recommendations for areas of improvement and highlighted the achievement of two unqualified audit opinions from NIAO.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, the Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment Report 2024-25 (Appendix 2) was agreed.**

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

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

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

SPR/194/2024

NEWRY CITY PARK

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Newry City Park. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve the recommendations as contained within the Officer's Report.**

SPR/195/2024

AHC CAPITAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding AHC Capital Budget Requirement **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to approve the recommendations as contained within the Officer's Report.**

SPR/196/2024

DISPOSAL OF LAND

Read: Report from Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding the Disposal of Land. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Bowsie proposed to defer the item to allow for discussion on an amendment to section 2.4 of the officer's report. This was seconded by Councillor Reilly.

The proposal was put to a vote, with the results as follows:

FOR	3
AGAINST	12
ABSTAIN	0

The proposal was declared lost.

The officer's recommendations were put to a vote, with the results as follows:

FOR	12
AGAINST	0
ABSTAIN	3

The proposal was declared carried.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to sell the lands outlined in red on Map 2 to the party outlined within the Officer's Report at market value.**

Councillor Byrne left the meeting at this point – 6.40pm

SPR/197/2024

**PROPOSED LEASE OF LANDS UNDER COUNCIL'S
SPORTS & COMMUNITY LEASING POLICY**

Read:

Report from Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding Lease of Lands under Council's Sports & Community Leasing Policy. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Rice, seconded by Councillor McAteer, the following was agreed:

- **To enter into a lease with the successful group noted in the Officer's Report in respect of that portion of the lands known as Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel as coloured yellow on map 1 attached for a term of 25 years as a peppercorn rent, subject to Departmental Consent.**
- **To enter into a lease with the successful group noted in the Officer's Report in respect of the portion of lands known as St Anne's Park, Mayobridge as coloured yellow on map 2 attached for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent, subject to Departmental Consent.**
- **To enter into a lease with the successful group noted in the Officer's Report in respect of the portion of lands known as Killough Playing Fields, Killough as outlined in blue on map 3 attached for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent, subject to Departmental Consent.**

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

SPR/198/2024

**STRATEGIC FINANCE WORKING GROUP ACTION SHEET
13 NOVEMBER 2024**

Read:

Action sheet of the Strategic Finance Working Group meeting held 13 November 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Rice, it was agreed to note the action sheet.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 6.50pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 13 January 2025.

Signed: Councillor Tierna Howie
Chairperson

Signed: Josephine Kelly
Director of Corporate Services