

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 13 February 2025 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre

In the Chair: Councillor T Howie

**In Attendance
in Chamber:**

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

**Committee Members in
Attendance via Teams:**

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

Non-Committee Members

In Attendance: Councillor T Andrews

Non-Committee Members in

Attendance via Teams: Councillor G Hanna

**Officials in Attendance
in Chamber:**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in Attendance
Via Teams:**

Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy

SPR/018/2025:

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Economy and Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities.

SPR/019/2025:

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SPR/020/2025:

**ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY &
RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 23 JANUARY
2025**

Read: Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 23 January 2025 **(Copy circulated)**

SPR/054/2024 – Notice of Motion – Ethical Procurement:

Councillor Hanlon queried when an update to the item would be provided, to which Mrs Kelly advised that an update report would be tabled at March Committee Meeting.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Bowsie, it was agreed to approve the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 23 January 2025.**

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

SPR/021/2025: FUEL POLICY

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Fleet Fuel Management Policy. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Kelly presented the Report, advising that its aim was to ensure Council was compliant with health and safety, environmental and governance requirements in relation to fuel used in Council vehicles.

Following a query from Councillor Enright regarding a change to electric as a fuel source, Mrs Kelly advised that policies were continually kept under review and would be updated as new fuel sources were utilised.

Councillor Reilly noted that it would be inadvisable to prioritise one fuel source over another in the changing times, and queried if Council could avail of cheaper fuel sources in other locations or if a company account was required.

Mrs Kelly advised she would revert to the Member on the query but stated that an account was usually required to obtain fuel.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to approve Council's Fleet Fuel Management Policy as presented at Appendix 1 of the Officer's Report.**

SPR/022/2025: OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF VE AND VJ DAY

Read: Report from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Officer Report on Notice of Motion – 80th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Moffett outlined the Report, noting that there had been two productive meetings to discuss the detail of the Notice of Motion and advised that due to the tight timeline for the implementation of the recommendations, approval was being sought to proceed with the recommendations prior to ratification at full Council meeting of 3 March 2025.

On proposing the Report, Councillor Bowsie noted that it was right that Council provided a way to remember this significant event in history, and it would be a way to remember the sacrifice and victory that allowed the way of life that was led today.

In seconding the Report, Councillor Sharvin noted the lengthy discussions involved at the reference group in agreeing the recommendations, stating he believed it was a fair and balanced approach to commemorating the event.

Councillor Hanlon spoke in support of the Report, noting that commemoration of these anniversaries would be welcome.

Following a query from Councillor McAteer regarding the recipients of the commemorative bowl detailed within the report, Mr Moffett confirmed that it would be presented to the organisers of any commemorative event that the Chairperson would be invited to.

Councillor Taylor spoke in support of the Motion, noting the importance of marking the momentous occasion and further commended the educational element of the recommendations. He proposed a slight amendment to the recommendations that a commemorative plaque be placed in Newry and Mourne Museum, not just Down County Museum. This was seconded by Councillor Bowsie.

Mr Moffett advised that there was an outline of a soldier within the Down County Museum grounds, which lent itself to the placing of a commemorative plaque there but stated that a plaque within Newry and Mourne Museum could be investigated.

Councillors Reilly and Hanna spoke in support of the Report, welcoming the opportunity to recognise the sacrifice of so many for the benefit of everyone, and the importance of Council recognising the outcome of World War II.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to note that the Notice of Motion had been considered and discussed at the Councillor's Equality & Good Relations Reference Group on 31 January 2025 and 12 February 2025 and that the consensus was to recommend the following:

- **Establishment of an 80th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day financial assistance programme with a fund of £35,000; and where the chairperson receives an invitation to attend a Council funded event that a commemorative bowl acknowledging the 80th anniversary be presented by the Chairperson.**
- **The development and delivery of a programme of events by the Museums and where possible this to include an education leaflet on World War II.**
- **Council to place a plaque within Down County Museum to acknowledge the 80th anniversary of VE and VJ Day.**

In addition, approval is sought to proceed to open the 80th Anniversary of VE and VJ financial

assistance theme call week beginning 17 February 2025 prior to the ratification of the decision at Council meeting on 3 March 2025.

It was also agreed on the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Bowsie, to explore the placing of a commemorative plaque within Newry and Mourne Museum.

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

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

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

SPR/023/2025: BELFAST LEGAL SERVICES

Read: Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Belfast Legal Services. **(Copy circulated)**

As there was dissent within the chamber the proposal to accept the officer's recommendations were put to a vote, with the results as follows:

FOR	12
AGAINST	0
ABSTENTIONS	3

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to enter into a one-year SLA with Belfast City Council Legal Services Department from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026 on a non-profit / cost recovery basis by virtue of the provisions of section 105 of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972 in relation to the legal services as outlined within the Officer's Report.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 6.57pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 3 March 2025.

Signed: **Councillor Tierna Howie**
 Chairperson

Signed: **Josephine Kelly**
 Director of Corporate Services