

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 13 June 2024 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre

In the Chair: Councillor T Howie

In Attendance in Chamber:

Councillor P Byrne	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor C King
Councillor A Lewis	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor D McAteer	Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor G Sharvin
Councillor D Taylor	

Non-Committee Members

In Attendance via Teams: Councillor C Bowsie

**Officials in Attendance
in Chamber:**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy Regeneration & Tourism
Ms S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director: Capital & Procurement
Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance and Performance
Ms V Keegan, Assistant Director: Digital & Communications
Ms M Hughes, HR and OD Manager
Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/092/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Enright, Quinn and Rice.

Councillor Howie thanked members for the honour of being chairperson of the Committee and spoke of her excitement for the Committee to be a space for respectful debate and scrutiny.

SPR/093/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In response to a query from Councillor King regarding whether he required to declare an interest in Item 8 – PeacePlusProject – Theme 1.3., the Chief Executive advised it was up to individual Members to decide whether they had a conflict.

**SPR/094/2024 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY &
RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 16 MAY 2024**

Read: Action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held Thursday 16 May 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to approve the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held 16 May 2024.

SPR/095/2024 **ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM SPECIAL STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 30 MAY 2024**

Read: Action sheet of Special Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 30 May 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

Following a query from Councillor Sharvin regarding the allocation of the funding, Mr Mallon advised that Council were currently preparing the Letters of Offer to the successful applicants which would be issued in the coming week.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to approve the action sheet of Special Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held 30 May 2024.

SPR/096/2024 **TO AGREE START TIMES FOR STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2024-2025**

Read: Copy of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting Dates and Times. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, the dates and times for the Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meetings 2024-25 were agreed.

SPR/097/2024 **CORPORATE SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN**

Read: Report from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive, and Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Corporate Services Business Plan. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Kelly presented the reports and highlighted that in 2024/2025 the Chief Executive and Corporate Services Directorate had been combined and would consist of one report moving forward.

Following a query from Councillor Reilly regarding how the Newry, Mourne and Down Citizens Panel would be selected, as outlined within the Corporate Plan, Mrs Ward advised that she would respond to the Member following the meeting.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to approve the following:

- **The assessment of the Chief Executive's Business Plan and Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2023-2024**
- **The Chief Executive and Corporate Services Business Plan 2024-2025**

SPR/098/2024

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024-2025

Read: Report from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance, regarding the Performance Improvement Plan 2024-2025. **(Copy circulated)**

In proposing the Report, Councillor Sharvin queried whether the target for Leisure should be amended given the challenges regarding Newry Leisure Centre.

Mr Byrne advised that this had been discussed when the targets had been agreed and advised that the NI Audit Office recommended not reducing a target after it had been set, provided an explanation could be given when reviewing targets at end of year.

Mrs Ward advised that she would encourage the target to remain unchanged as it would help Council monitor the impact of the ongoing closure.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to approve the following recommendations:**

- **The Performance Improvement Plan 2024-2025 (including the five performance improvement objectives), Consultation and Engagement Report 2024-2025 and Objective Delivery Plans 2024-2025.**
- **That the Performance Improvement Plan 2024-2025 is published before 30 June 2024, ahead of full Council ratification, in order to meet the statutory deadline.**

SPR/099/2024

PEACEPLUS PROJECT – THEME 1.3 BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONS

Read: Report from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding PeacePlus Theme 1,3 – Building Positive Relations. **(Copy circulated)**

In proposing the Report, Councillor Hanlon noted that Foras na Gaeilge carry out a large amount of work across the island and it would be a positive step to assist them in any way possible.

In seconding the Report, Councillor Reilly expressed his concerns on spending money on academia that would not assist with any work on the ground. He noted that the legacy Newry and Mourne Council had an Ulster Scots Committee that received Cross-Party support and proposed that Newry, Mourne and Down Council look at the possibility of recreating a similar forum. This was seconded by Councillor Hanlon.

Mr Moffett interjected to advise that the Report was to agree on whether Council become an associate partner and was to develop a continuous personal development course for employees which would deal with awareness for Ulster Scots and the Irish Language. He further advised that Council had already agreed to consider language and culture in terms of Ulster Scots and had been liaising with the Ulster Scots Agency and Ulster Scots Community Network and was awaiting further information being returned, and once received a Report would be brought through the Equality and Good Relations Forum.

Councillor Taylor spoke in support of the proposal and noted as a member of the previous Ulster Scots Forum that the meetings were productive, and he was keen to see forward movement on this proposal to promote the culture and see the benefits that it could bring to the District.

Mrs Ward advised members that Mr Moffett had referenced the ongoing work in relation to Ulster Scots and confirmed that a Report would be brought to the Equality and Good Relations Forum in order to establish the formation of a new Ulster Scots Forum.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Reilly, it was agreed that Council agree in principle to be an Associate Partner of Foras na Gaeilge / Ulster University Consortium PeacePlus Project under Theme 1.3 Building Positive Relations.**

It was further agreed on the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that a Report would be brought back to the Equality and Good Relations Working Group on establishing an Ulster Scots Forum.

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Clarke, 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 O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

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

SPR/100/2024

REVISED PAY PROTECTION ARRANGEMENTS

Read: Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Revised Pay Protection Arrangements. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to approve the amended Pay Protection Arrangements as outlined at Appendix 1 of the Officer's Report.

SPR/101/2024 **NO 4 DAISY HILL**

Read: Report from Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital and Procurement, regarding No 4 Daisy Hill. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to defer any decision and to bring a paper back to the August Committee with further detail.

SPR/102/2024 **CORPORATE GRAPHIC DESIGN AND PRINT MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Read: Report from MS V Keegan, Assistant Director of Digital and Communications, regarding Corporate Graphic Design and Print. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to begin the tender process for the provision of Corporate Graphic Design and Print Management Services with the Business Case being amended.

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

SPR/103/2024 **NMDDC RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON LGSC DRAFT MODEL DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE.**

Read: Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding NMDDC Response to Consultation on LGSC Draft Model Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to note the contents of the Report.

SPR/104/2024 **INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS UPDATE**

Read: Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding an Industrial Relations Update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to note the contents of the Report.

SPR/105/2024 **YEAR END MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

Read: Report from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding Year End Management Accounts 2023-2024(Draft). **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to note the year end 2023-2024 Management Accounts

Councillors Reilly and Taylor left the meeting at this stage – 6.52pm

SPR/106/2024 **MINUTES OF STRATEGIC FINANCE WORKING GROUP MEETING OF 2 MAY 2024**

Read: Minutes of Strategic Finance Working Group Meeting of 2 May 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to note the minutes.

SPR/107/2024 **SPECIFIC DELEGATED AUTHORITY – NEWRY LEISURE CENTRE**

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Specific Delegated Authority – Newry Leisure Centre. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to note that delegation had been exercised by the Chief Executive regarding a legal matter in the best interests of the Council and is being reported in accordance with section 3.1.11 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation for Officers.

It was also agreed that an update report be brought back to a future committee meeting.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 7.05pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 1st July 2024.

Signed: **Councillor Tierna Howie**
Chairperson

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