

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2024

**Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 18 December 2024 at 6.15pm in Council Chamber,
Monaghan Row, Newry**

Chair: Councillor G Kearns

**In attendance in
Chamber:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Enright
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor D Finn
Councillor V Harte	Councillor J Jackson
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor H Young

Officials in Chamber: Mrs S Murphy, Director Sustainability and Environment
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability
Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director Environment
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Mrs S Kieran, Democratic Services Officer

SE/147/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Brennan, Campbell, Magennis and Taylor.

SE/148/2024: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

There were no declarations of interest.

**SE/149/2024: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2024**

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee
Meeting held on 20 November 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

SE/138/2024 – Repair of Corry's Corner, Drumaness Bus Shelter and Adoption by Translink
In response to a query from Councillor Andrews, Mr Sage confirmed that he would revert to the
Member on the matter.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by
Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to note the Action
Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment
Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2024.**

FOR DECISION

SE/150/2024:

NOTICE OF MOTION – VAPING

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Director: Sustainability and Environment, regarding a Notice of Motion on Vaping (**Copy circulated**)

Mrs Murphy presented the report stating it had been illegal since 2021 to sell vapes to anyone under the age of 18 in Northern Ireland. She stated that Northern Ireland were also set to ban the supply of single-use vapes by April 2025 in order to try to stop the disposal of vapes due to the huge litter problems they caused. She advised the recommendations included writing to the Ministers of Education and Health urging them to bring forward a plan to end vaping in school grounds and to reduce the number of young people vaping. Mrs Murphy said it was also recommended that officers write to all other Councils in the North asking for their support in tackling this issue.

Councillor Kearns thanked officers for the report stating the issue of disposal of vapes within schools was causing huge problems and it would be good to see vaping banned in schools.

Councillor Young thanked Councillor Kearns for bringing the motion forward and stated a harsh clampdown was required on shops selling to young people. She stated there were growing concerns around the amount of illicit substances and vapes that had been found on school premises. She proposed an amendment to the motion as follows: "and eradicate the sale of vapes to children."

This was accepted by Councillor Kearns.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed that the Council recognised the 2024 Northern Ireland Audit Office report on tackling the public health impacts of smoking and vaping that showed an increase in 11-16 year olds vaping; that Council is concerned that children vaping in schools is detrimental to a child's health and educational outcomes; agrees that greater awareness must be raised with children in schools about the risks of vaping; acknowledges that teachers and school staff must have the support and resources they require to raise awareness and inform children on the risks of vaping; agree to write to both the Minister of Education and Health urging them to bring forward a plan to end vaping in school grounds, to reduce the number of young people vaping and to eradicate the sale of vapes to children. It was also agreed to write to all Councils in the North asking them for support in tackling this issue.

SE/151/2024:

NOTICE OF MOTION – NEWRY CANAL

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Director: Sustainability and Environment, regarding a Notice of Motion on Newry Canal (**Copy circulated**)

Mrs Murphy presented the report and stated it was recommended to request support from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council to write to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for the urgent establishment of a multi- agency Newry Canal regeneration taskforce to work in partnership to deliver on the potential of inland waterways across both Council areas.

Councillor Feehan thanked officers for the report and advised he had brought the motion forward as he had worked with several third-party stakeholders in relation to the enhancement of Newry Canal. He said it was critical to have a joint approach with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council to rejuvenate Newry Canal and he was happy to accept the officer's recommendation.

Councillors Enright and Young spoke in support of the motion and welcomed the potential of the establishment of a taskforce to rejuvenate Newry Canal.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Finn it was agreed to request support from support from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council to write to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for the urgent establishment of a multi- agency Newry Canal regeneration taskforce to work in partnership to deliver on the potential of inland waterways across both Council areas.**

SE/152/2024:

DRAFT BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ASSOCIATED ACTION PLAN FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director, Sustainability and Environment, regarding the final draft copy of the new Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (**Copy circulated**)

Councillor Reilly requested an officer to investigate the illegal use of quads at Dunavel beach area. Officers agreed to contact the Member outside of the meeting.

Councillor Enright raised the issue of sand dune habitats within the area and asked that this be included within the Biodiversity Strategy. Officers advised these habitats were contained within the high-level, overarching Theme 1 of the Strategy and actions arising out of this would be actioned within the Biodiversity Action Plan.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to approve the final draft of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan**

SE/153/2024: AMENDED WARRENPOINT AND NEWCASTLE PUBLIC CONVENIENCE OPENING TIMES

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director, Sustainability and Environment, regarding a revision to the closing times of public toilets in Newcastle and Warrenpoint, implemented following the adoption of the new schedules approved by the S&E Committee on 20th December 2023 **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Ruane requested appropriate visible signage be installed within Warrenpoint in order that members of the public know what times the toilet facilities were opened.

Councillor Reilly requested an update on the toilet facility opening times at Cranfield Beach. Mr Sage advised the opening times were on the Council website, but he would also revert to the Member on the issue.

AGREED: **It was agreed to adjust the closing times of the toilet facilities at Newcastle and Warrenpoint on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Reilly. It was also agreed to install visible signage to update members of the public as to the opening times of the toilet facilities.**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 8-13, which related to exempt information by virtue of para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local /Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Ruane seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to come out of closed session.**

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

RESTRICTED – FOR DECISION

SE/154/2024: BUSINESS CASE FOR ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENT AND TREE SURGERY

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director, Sustainability regarding Business Case for Arboricultural Assessment and Tree Surgery **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to note the contents of the report and approve the business case to progress with a tender for two separate contractors as detailed within the officer's report.

SE/155/2024: **BUSINESS CASE FOR MECHANICAL BUILDING SERVICES CONTRACT**

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Business Case for Mechanical Building Services Contract **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Harte, it was agreed to approve the recommendations contained within the officer's report.

SE/156/2024: **PERSONAL/PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Business Case for Personal/Protective Equipment **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to approve the recommendation to proceed with option 5 as detailed within the officer's report.

SE/157/2024: **LANTRA NATIONAL HIGHWAY SECTOR SCHEME TRAINING BUSINESS CASE**

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding LANTRA National Highway Sector Scheme Training Business Case **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to approve the business case to procure a suitably qualified trainer to deliver essential LANTRA National Highway Sector Scheme Training for staff within the Sustainable and Environment Directorate.

SE/158/2024: **BUSINESS CASE FOR REPLACEMENT OF SKIPS AND CONTAINERS AT HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE'S**

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding Business Case for Replacement of Skips and Containers at HRCs **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to approve the recommendations as contained within the officer's report.

SE/159/2024: ECONOMIC APPRAISAL – LIQUID FUEL REQUIREMENTS

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability regarding Economic Appraisal – Liquid Fuel Requirements (**Copy circulated**)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Reilly, it was agreed to approve the recommendations as contained within the officer's report.

SE/160/2024: HARBOUR SURVEYS

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability regarding Harbour Surveys (**Copy circulated**)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to approve the recommendations as contained within the officer's report.

SE/161/2024: WASTE CONTRACTS

Read: Report dated 18 December 2024 from Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment regarding Waste Contracts (**Copy circulated**)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to approve the recommendations as contained within the officer's report.

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

SE/162/2024: CLEANSING AND REFUSE TASK GROUP ACTION SHEET - 20 NOVEMBER 2024

Read: Action Sheet arising from Cleansing and Refuse Task Group held on 20 November 2024. (**Copy circulated**)

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to note the report from the Cleansing and Refuse Task Force Meeting held on 20 November 2024.

SE/163/2024: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2024 and ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 31 OCTOBER 2024

Read: ARC21 – Joint Committee Members' Monthly bulletin of meeting held on 3 December 2024 and "in committee" minutes of meeting held on 31 October 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

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

FOR NOTING

SE/164/2024: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER 2024

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting In Committee Minutes of Thursday 31 October 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Larkin, to note the minutes of the arc21 Joint Committee meeting of Thursday 31 October 2024.

SE/165/2024: LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RE: POLICY PROPOSALS PUBLIC HEALTH BILL

Read: Letter dated 21 November 2024 from the Department of Health Re: Policy Proposals Public Health Bill **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Larkin, to note letter dated 21 November 2024 from the Department of Health Re: Policy Proposals Public Health Bill.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.16pm

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

**Signed: Councillor Geraldine Kearns
Chairperson**

**Signed: Mrs Sinead Murphy
Director of Sustainability & Environment**