



November 4th, 2024

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 4th November 2024** at **6:00 pm** in **Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre.**

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

Apologies received from Councillors McEvoy,

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 7 October 2024

For Information

 [Action Sheet Council Meeting 2024 10 07.pdf](#)

Page 1

Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing

4.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 7 October 2024

For Approval

 [Council Minutes 2024 10 07.pdf](#)

Page 5

Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption

5.0 Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 14 October 2024

 [Economy Regeneration and Tourism Minutes 2024 10 14.pdf](#)

Page 16

6.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 17 October 2024

 [Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting Minutes 2024-10-17.pdf](#)

Page 22

7.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 21 October 2024

 [Active and Healthy Communities Minutes 2024 10 21.pdf](#)

Page 30

8.0 Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on 23 October 2024

 [Sustainabilty_and_Environment_Committee_Minutes_2024_10_23.pdf](#)

Page 35

9.0 Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held 19 September 2024

Correspondence

10.0 Correspondence Report

For Information

 *Correspondence Report Council 2024 11 04.docx*

Page 48

10.1 Correspondence from Voice of Young People in Care

For Information

 *Correspondence from Voice of Young People in Care.pdf*

Page 51

10.2 Correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council

For Information

 *Correspondence from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.pdf*

Page 53

10.3 Correspondence from BBC NI and Department for Communities

For Information

 *Correspondence from BBC NI.pdf*

Page 54

 *Correspondence from Department for Communities.pdf*

Page 56

10.4 Correspondence from Executive Office

For Information

 *Correspondence from Executive Office.pdf*

Page 57

10.5 Correspondence from NILGOSC

For Information

 *Correspondence from NILGOSC.pdf*

Page 59

10.6 Correspondence from Department for Infrastructure

For Information

 *Correspondence from Department for Infrastructure.pdf*

Page 60

10.7 Correspondence from National Association of Councillors

For Information

 *Correspondence from NAC UK.pdf*

Page 61

11.0 Notice of Motion - Section 76 Order, Downpatrick Eastern Distributor Road

Notice of Motion from Councillor Enright:

"Council notes Council minutes of 9th April 2018 and file note of meeting with DfI Permanent Secretary of 9th March 2018. Council unanimously supported the Permanent Secretary's suggestion that Council's Section 76 powers be used to help build out the Downpatrick Eastern Distributor Road.

The Chief Executive undertook to bring forward a policy paper using Council's section 76 power to levy developers on the Eastern and Southern side of Downpatrick for a contribution to the cost of the Downpatrick Eastern Distributor Road. Council notes that the DEDR is intended ultimately to connect the Downe Campus, Council HQ and Hospital to the Belfast Road per the Area Plan and will largely be delivered by private finance according to DfI.

Council directs that this paper be brought forward in the current financial year so as to create a fair and equitable balance between those developers who are voluntarily building out sections of this road and those who are making no contribution. Council notes that several hundred units have been completed on zoned land in the area relevant to the DEDR since 2018. Council regrets the loss of potential hypothecated income needed to build out the road".

12.0 Notice of Motion - Failure of Raise Programme in Tackling Educational Underachievement

Notice of Motion received from Councillor O'Hare:

"That this Council recognises that socio-economic background is the biggest predictor of educational underachievement; acknowledges that a range of targeted interventions across government are required to tackle the issue and give children and young people the opportunity to reach their potential; welcomes the allocation of over £20 million from the Shared Island fund to help tackle educational underachievement; regrets that the resulting RAISE programme's eligibility formula excludes many schools in some of the most deprived working class communities; further regrets that, by design, this programme will not deliver based on objective need; and calls on the Minister of Education to replace the RAISE programme with a new programme which will target support to the schools and children that, based on objective evidence, need it most".

13.0 Notice of Motion - Establishment of a Newry Canal Regeneration Taskforce

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Feehan:

"Council recognises the poor condition of Newry Canal and the significant untapped potential of our inland waterways as tourism, heritage and ecological assets, calls for a multi-agency response to lead the regeneration of Newry Canal, and will request the support of ABC Council in writing to both the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to request the urgent establishment of a Newry Canal regeneration taskforce that will work in partnership to deliver on the potential of our inland waterways".

14.0 Notice of Motion - Daisy Hill Maternity Services

Notice of Motion received from Councillor S Murphy:

"This Council notes with concern the serious issues affecting maternity services across the Southern Trust, with a potential risk to Daisy Hill maternity services.

This Council supports the retention of Maternity services at Daisy Hill Hospital, and acknowledges the work of the management and staff who provide excellent care to mothers and babies.

That this Council agrees to write to the Minister for Health and CEO of The Southern Trust, to note NMD Council's support for full retention of Maternity services at Daisy Hill; further calls on the Southern Trust to fully commit to protecting maternity services, to ensure mothers and babies across the Southern Trust have access to a safe and equitable service".

15.0 Notice of Motion - Vaping

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Kearns:

"That this Council recognises that the 2024 Northern Ireland Audit Office report on tackling the public health impacts of smoking and vaping, shows an increase in 11-16 year olds vaping;

This 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;

We agreed to write to the Minister of Education and Minister for Health urging them to bring forward a plan to end vaping in school grounds and to reduce the number of young people vaping;

We will also write to all other Councils in the North asking for their support in tackling this issue".

16.0 Notice of Motion - Professional Running Track

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Devlin:

"Acknowledging the sterling contribution made on the international athletic stage by local athletes from Newry Mourne and Down, this Council regrets the current lack of a professional running track within the east of the district, and commits to carrying out a desktop review of all publicly available land in East Down that could accommodate a professional running track, with a view to delivering on this much needed sports

amenity for current and future athletes within our district."

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Fionnuala Branagh

Cllr Jim Brennan

Cllr Pete Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Cllr Doire Finn

Cllr Aoife Finnegan

Ms Joanne Fleming

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tiarna Howie

Ms Catherine Hughes

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Josephine Kelly

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Cllr Cathal King

Mr Harry Korkou

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Cllr Andrew McMurray

Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston

Cllr Declan Murphy

Sinead Murphy

Cllr Kate Murphy

Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Cllr Áine Quinn
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Cllr Michael Rice
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Ms Alison Robb
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Donna Starkey
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Nicola Stranney
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Sarah Taggart
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Cllr Jill Truesdale
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Mrs Marie Ward
.....
Cllr Helena Young
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ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 7 OCTOBER 2024

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
<i>C/128/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Council Meeting held on 01.07.2024</i>	It was agreed item C/058/2024: Twinning Newry with City of Ramallah should remain on the action sheet.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Ongoing	
<i>C/150/2024</i>	<i>Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 02.09.2024</i>	It was agreed to note the action sheet.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	
<i>C/151/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Council Meeting held on 02.09.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	
<i>C/152/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Special Council Meeting 27.08.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	
<i>C153/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Special Council Meeting 23.09.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	
<i>C/154/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 09.09.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	
<i>C/155/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12.09.2024</i>	<i>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.</i>	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
C/156/2024	<i>Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16.09.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	Democratic Services	Noted	
C/157/2024	<i>Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18.09.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	Democratic Services	Noted	
C/158/2024	Correspondence Report	<p>It was agreed to note the Correspondence report.</p> <p><i>Correspondence from the Department for Communities: Public Consultation Summary Report, Section 10 Regulations, Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022</i></p> <p>An update report to be presented to the Sustainability and Environment Committee regarding clarification on what sanctions there would be if there was failure to comply with Section 10 Regulations (Electrical Safety Standard), Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022.</p> <p><i>Correspondence from NI Water: Economic Constraints</i></p> <p>It was agreed that Council write to NI Water to request a breakdown of how much of the £109 million Capital Investment had been spent to date (as it was now halfway through that period), when the remainder was going to be spent and if the full £109million was to be spent would that address all the issues raised within the correspondence received or was additional capital required.</p>	<p>Democratic Services</p> <p>S Murphy</p> <p>Democratic Services</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Party Representatives Forum updated on 10 October 2024 regarding proposed enforcement and sanctions. Report to be brought to S&E Committee in January 2025 when regulations are finalised.</p> <p>Correspondence issued</p>	

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
C/159/2024	Notice of Motion: Programme for Government	<p><i>That this Council welcomes publication of the draft Programme for Government (PfG) by the NI Executive; agrees that the PfG should include a standalone Mission on Peace and Peacebuilding; further agrees that peacebuilding, reconciliation, equality and inclusion are vital to achieving the key ambitions in the Programme for Government; notes that political instability and societal division are major barriers to growing Northern Ireland's economy, improving public services, tackling poverty and supporting communities; and agrees to write to the First and deputy First Minister to call for the inclusion of a Mission on Peace and Peacebuilding in the Programme for Government before the PfG public consultation deadline on 4 November 2024.</i></p> <p>The Motion was withdrawn.</p>	Democratic Services	Noted	
C/160/2024	Notice of Motion – Sign Language	<p><i>It was agreed to note with regret the recent decision taken by BBC Northern Ireland to remove sign language from its lunchtime news bulletin, and the decision to move this feature solely to its digital edition, this Council stands in solidarity with members of our deaf community, will write to the Director of BBC Northern Ireland and the Director General at BBC calling for the reinstatement of sign language to the lunchtime bulletin, and will also write to the Minister for Communities seeking an update on the development of the awaited Sign Language Bill, so as to enshrine the right of deaf people to access services in one's own language into law.</i></p>	Democratic Services	Noted Correspondence issued	

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
C/161/2024	Emergency Notice of Motion – NILGOSC Bonds	<i>It was agreed that Council notes that Northern Ireland Local Government pension provider NILGOSC purchased government bonds from the Israeli government which are being used by the Tel Aviv administration to fund its operations both within Israel and other territories. As the pension provider for all local council workers, the Education Authority, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, NI Libraries and many others including schools, it is a shock to many of the 176,000 members of this pension scheme that it is directly funding the Netanyahu-led government. Given the widespread horror felt by people of all political backgrounds at the targeting of civilians and children by the Israeli government in the war in Gaza the use of workers' and public sector money in a loan to the Israeli government is unacceptable. Newry Mourne and Down District Council expresses its deep concern at the decision to purchase these bonds and calls on NILGOSC to dispose of them immediately and engage with pension holders about disposal of the bonds and work to develop an ethical investments framework to consider for all future investment.</i>	Democratic Services	Noted Correspondence issued	
END					

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

**Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 7 October 2024 at 6.00pm in
Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick**

In the Chair: Councillor P Byrne

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor J Brennan
Councillor W Clarke	Councillor L Devlin
Councillor C Enright	Councillor K Feehan
Councillor A Finnegan	Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor M Gibbons	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor V Harte
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor G Kearns
Councillor C King	Councillor M Larkin
Councillor D Lee-Surginor	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor O Magennis	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor D McAteer	Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor D Murphy	Councillor S Murphy
Councillor A Quinn	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Rice	Councillor M Ruane
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J Truesdale	Councillor H Young

In attendance via Teams: Councillor R Howell (unable to take part in discussions)

Officials in attendance:

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
 Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism
 Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability and Environment
 Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

C/148/2024

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Andrews, Campbell, Finn, Howie, McEvoy, K Murphy and Tinnelly.

The Chairperson advised that a request for an emergency notice of motion had been received which would require a suspension of Standing Order 16.1 by a qualified majority vote, which would require 80% of those Members present and voting. He advised that this would be dealt with when the motions were being discussed.

The Chairperson welcomed Corey Brownfoot and his family to the meeting who were in attendance following an invitation from Councillor Alan Lewis. Members were advised Corey, unfortunately, had been the victim of an incident of bullying however, Corey was not going to let this incident affect him and had committed to walk with the Chairperson in the St Patricks Day parade in Downpatrick.

The Chairperson expressed condolences on behalf of Council to the family of Daniel Greer, who had sadly passed away following a long battle at 16 years of age.

The Chairperson thanked all staff that worked tirelessly on the fantastic Eats and Beats Festival and spoke of how it was going from strength to strength every year with Newcastle a hub of activity. He also spoke of the Irish Open and how it had been a fantastic way to showcase and promote the area and extended his thanks to all the staff that had worked on the event.

The Chairperson highlighted the work of the Ann McGeeney Charitable Trust which had been set up in memory of Ann who sadly passed away 10 years ago. Ann had been a fierce advocate in South Armagh community work and the Trust was open for small grants for people to promote positive work and programmes across the community and details would be released within a few weeks.

Congratulations were extended to the Confederation of Community Group on celebrating its 50th anniversary.

The Chairperson thanked members who had nominated recipients for the Civic Award. He spoke of the great night that was had with a diverse array of recipients and the unselfish work that people did across this District. Congratulations were extended to everybody who had received a Civic Award and thanks were extended Mrs Kieran and Ms Taggart for organising the event.

The Chairperson joined Councillor Campbell in congratulating Saul GAC ladies and management team on winning the recent Intermediate Football Championship also highlighting the league win and subsequent promotion.

Councillors Lewis and Hanna along with the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson had attended a recent event to celebrate the success of Olympians right across the North at the SSE Arena, Belfast.

The Chairperson also congratulated everybody who was either nominated or won an award at the recent Minority Recognition Awards ceremony in the Titanic Centre, Belfast.

C/149/2024 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C/150/2024 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2024

Agreed: **The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 2 September 2024 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Finnegan.**

C/151/2024 COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2024

Read: **Minutes of Council Meeting held on 2 September 2024 (copy circulated).**

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 2 September 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Magennis.**

C/152/2024 **SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 27 AUGUST 2024**

Read: Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 27 August 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 27 August 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Hanlon.**

C/153/2024 **SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Read: Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 23 September 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 23 September 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Harte.**

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/154/2024 **MINUTES OF ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Read: Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 9 September 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 9 September 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor.**

C/155/2024 **MINUTES OF STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Read: Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 September 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 September 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Quinn.**

C/156/2024 **MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16 September 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16 September 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Magennis.**

C/157/2024 **MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Read: Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2024 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Brennan.**

C/158/2024 **CORRESPONDENCE REPORT**

Read: Report dated 7 October 2024 from Mrs Ward, Chief Executive, regarding an update on correspondence received for the attention of Council.

Correspondence from the Department for Communities in response to Notice of Motion, Winter Fuel Payment, Anti-Poverty and Fuel Poverty Shortages (C/147/2024)

On behalf of her party, Councillor Finnegan welcomed the Minister's response, which echoed Council's frustration with Labour government for its decision to limit Winter Fuel payments and whilst the commitment to develop the Anti-Poverty Strategy was appreciated she said there was a need to concentrate and act to protect the most vulnerable in society.

Councillor Finnegan stated the Affordable Warmth Scheme referred to by the Minister, which was introduced to tackle fuel poverty, was stretched to its limits due to underfunding and that had rendered the Scheme non targeted and slow in delivering much needed assistance. She said it was crucial the Minister focused on delivery to protect those who narrowly miss out on the Winter Fuel Payment and pressure must be applied on the British Government to ensure that people here could live in warm and safe homes.

Councillor Sharvin spoke of concerns at the response and how it was unlikely the Fuel Poverty Strategy would be ready before March 2026 and questioned what the most vulnerable were to do within that period of time, particularly those that would not benefit from the Winter Fuel Payment.

In response to a query from Councillor Sharvin it was confirmed all Executive Parties had been written to and to date this was the only response that had been received.

Correspondence from NI Water in relation to Economic Constraints (C/143/2024)

Councillor Hanna strongly voiced his disappointment at the response from the NI Water and referred to the 1,300 units within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area that were to be impacted as detailed within the correspondence. He voiced his concern as a Planning Committee Member and the impact these constraints had for the Local Development Plan making the Plan irrelevant.

Councillor Hanna spoke of how in Annalong sewers could not cope due to overdevelopment and how there were problems with rainfall and overflow. He stated it was unacceptable that NI Water could not give an indication how to move forward with such problems, where excrement was overflowing in places including a Council owned harbour and that was unacceptable.

Mrs Ward advised every Council in Northern Ireland was saying the same and assured Members that Council would continue to work with and liaise with NI Water.

Councillor Feehan echoed Councillor Hanna's frustration and concerns and made reference to a statement from NI Water in 2023 in which it was stated that in the Price Control 21 period (2021/22 – 2026/27) the Newry Mourne and Down District Council area would benefit from approximately £109million of capital investment in upgrading water and wastewater assets.

Councillor Feehan proposed Council write to NI Water to request a breakdown of how much of the £109 million Capital Investment had been spent to date (as it was now halfway through that period), when the remainder was going to be spent and if the full £109million was to be spent would that address all the issues raised within the correspondence received or was additional capital required.

Councillor Hanna seconded Councillor Feehan's proposal.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Hanna that Council write to NI Water to request a breakdown of how much of the £109 million Capital Investment had been spent to date (as it was now halfway through that period), when the remainder was going to be spent and if the full £109million was to be spent would that address all the issues raised within the correspondence received or was additional capital required.**

Correspondence from the Department for Communities in relation to Public Consultation Summary Report: Section 10 Regulations, Private Tenancies Act (NI)

In welcoming that private landlords needed a qualified electrician to provide inspections and Reports, Councillor D Murphy said clarity was needed on if there would be sanctions on landlords to carry out necessary work.

Mrs Ward advised clarification would be sought on what sanctions there would be if there was failure to comply and an update report would be presented to the Sustainability and Environment Committee.

Noted: **An update report to be presented to the Sustainability and Environment Committee regarding clarification on what sanctions there would be if there was failure to comply with Section 10 Regulations (Electrical Safety Standard), Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022.**

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor McAteer to note the correspondence report and the following correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Department for Communities in relation to Public Consultation Summary Report: Section 10 Regulations, Private Tenancies Act (NI)
- Correspondence from the Department for Communities in response to Notice of Motion, Winter Fuel Payment, Anti-Poverty and Fuel Poverty Shortages (C/147/2024)
- Correspondence from NI Water in relation to Economic Constraints (C/143/2024)

C/159/2024 NOTICE OF MOTION – PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

The following Motion was received from Councillor Truesdale:

"That this Council welcomes publication of the draft Programme for Government (PfG) by the NI Executive; agrees that the PfG should include a standalone Mission on Peace and Peacebuilding; further agrees that peacebuilding, reconciliation, equality and inclusion are vital to achieving the key ambitions in the Programme for Government; notes that political instability and societal division are major barriers to growing Northern Ireland's economy, improving public services, tackling poverty and supporting communities; and agrees to write to the First and deputy First Minister to call for the inclusion of a Mission on Peace and Peacebuilding in the Programme for Government before the PfG public consultation deadline on 4 November 2024".

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Truesdale stated there were important objectives and priorities within the Draft Programme for Government however, believed, as a Party, that there was a significant gap in the lack of a dedicated mission on peace and peace building. She stated this would ensure the reconciliation, diversity, equality and inclusion were embedded in everything the Executive did.

Councillor Truesdale outlined that division was costing Northern Ireland millions of pounds each year and directly depleted the resources that the country had to tackle waiting lists, provide social housing reform, deliver special educational needs provision, increase police numbers and deliver many of the other objectives contained within the Programme for Government. She stated the economic growth depended on values, peaceful communities and political stability.

Following lengthy discussions and confusion expressed by Members as to the meaning behind the motion, Councillor Truesdale agreed to withdraw the motion and explore the matter through NILGA instead.

Agreed: **The motion was withdrawn by Councillor Truesdale.**

C/160/2024 NOTICE OF MOTION – SIGN LANGUAGE

The following Motion was received from Councillor Devlin:

"Noting with regret the recent decision taken by BBC Northern Ireland to remove sign language from its lunchtime news bulletin, and the decision to move this feature solely to its digital edition, this Council stands in solidarity with members of our deaf community, will write to the Director of

BBC Northern Ireland calling for the reinstatement of sign language to the lunchtime bulletin, and will also write to the Minister for Communities seeking an update on the development of the awaited Sign Language Bill, so as to enshrine the right of deaf people to access services in one's own language into law."

The Motion was seconded by Councillor McAteer.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Devlin spoke of how the deaf community in Northern Ireland faced various unique challenges that highlighted the necessity for tailored support and services. She stated the decision by BBC NI to withdraw sign language from their lunchtime news broadcast sent a really poor message to those who were deaf or hearing impaired and relied on sign language to communicate with others.

Councillor Devlin spoke of how at a recent party conference she had spoken with a representative of the National Deaf Children's Society about the impact this decision had on not only those who were deaf but their wider families. She highlighted that approximately 6% of the population here were deaf with British Sign Language their primary language and yet they could not access the TV news at the same time as others. This segment was only 90 seconds, a very small proportion of the day and Councillor Devlin believed this decision should be reversed.

Councillor Devlin pointed out the Communities Minister was yet to publish the long awaited Sign Language Bill which would enshrine the rights of deaf people to access services in one's own language. Social integration and community engagement were vital and addressing these needs through targeted policies and community initiatives would enhance the quality of life for deaf individuals in Northern Ireland.

Councillor Devlin said she believed the community deserved their needs to be met by Government and this began in their ability to access the news in their own language as well as the publication of the overdue Sign Language Bill.

Councillor McAteer joined Councillor Devlin by saying that what was being witnessed once again was diminution of services to those less well off in terms of disabilities in Northern Ireland.

He spoke of his disappointment that the media was driven by commercial terms and how the BBC should be obliged to support minorities and in a more respectful manner. He pointed out that there was no consultation on this and the escape clause of the news being signed on the digital platform was not acceptable as this was not available for everybody. Councillor McAteer said it was essential that Council write to the BBC to ensure that this be looked at again.

Councillors Taylor, Sharvin, Hanna, Hanlon and Truesdale all spoke in support of the motion on behalf of their respective parties and voiced their dismay at the decision taken by the BBC.

Councillor Truesdale proposed an amendment that Council also write to the Director General at the BBC. Councillor Devlin agreed to Councillor Truesdale's amendment.

Councillor Devlin thanked Members for their support for the Motion and looked forward to responses back from the various bodies and hoped that it would make a difference.

The Motion was unanimously agreed.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor McAteer to note with regret the recent decision taken by BBC Northern Ireland to remove sign language from its lunchtime news bulletin, and the decision to move this feature solely to its digital edition, this Council stands in solidarity with members of our deaf community, will write to the Director of BBC Northern Ireland and the Director General

at BBC calling for the reinstatement of sign language to the lunchtime bulletin, and will also write to the Minister for Communities seeking an update on the development of the awaited Sign Language Bill, so as to enshrine the right of deaf people to access services in one's own language into law.

EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION

The Chairperson advised an Emergency Notice of Motion had been received, the wording of which had been emailed to all Councillors and to enable it to be heard, it would be necessary to suspend Standing Order 16.1 for which a qualified majority vote was required. (80% of Members present and voting).

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Galbraith to suspend Standing Order 16.1 at this point of the meeting to allow the tabling of the emergency Notice of Motion received by the Chairperson from Councillor Feehan.

The Chairperson put the matter to a recorded a vote, the results of which were as follows: (copy attached)

FOR:	27
AGAINST:	6
ABSTENTIONS:	0

It was agreed by a qualified majority vote to suspend Standing Orders 16.1.1 (copy attached)

C/161/2024

EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION – NILGOSC BONDS

The following Motion was received from Councillor Feehan:

“This Council notes that Northern Ireland Local Government pension provider NILGOSC purchased government bonds from the Israeli government which are being used by the Tel Aviv administration to fund its operations both within Israel and other territories.

As the pension provider for all local council workers, the Education Authority, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, NI Libraries and many others including schools, it is a shock to many of the 176,000 members of this pension scheme that it is directly funding the Netanyahu-led government. Given the widespread horror felt by people of all political backgrounds at the targeting of civilians and children by the Israeli government in the war in Gaza the use of workers' and public sector money in a loan to the Israeli government is unacceptable. Newry Mourne and Down District Council expresses its deep concern at the decision to purchase these bonds and calls on NILGOSC to dispose of them immediately.”

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Galbraith.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor Feehan spoke of his shock when it was reported in the press that these bonds formed part of an investment portfolio, as he was sure were too the tens of thousands of other workers that were paying their pension contributions into the fund.

Councillor Feehan continued that the bonds in essence acted as an investment loan to the Israeli Government that had overseen the death of more than 42,000 Palestinians, more than half of whom were women and children over the past year.

Councillor Feehan stated NILGOSC said they had a fiduciary duty which allowed them to defend the purchase which essentially sees the North's public sector workers, its public employees and employers contributing to the Tel Aviv administration.

Councillor King spoke in support of the motion and referred to Sinn Féin recently tabling an Ethical Procurement Policy Motion proposing that no Council awards any contracts or utilises services provided by companies involved in breaching human rights and international law. This Initiative came at a time when corporations were profiting from protracted armed conflict and systematic violations of human rights.

Councillor King continued that his party deplored any business that should profit from these conflicts or violations of human rights or that local councils would be in any way, potentially directly or indirectly, complicit with such profiteering. He stated this policy needed to be reviewed and implemented as a matter of priority and encourage companies to meet their human rights, obligations and empower Councils to meet international human rights principles and guidelines.

Councillors Hanna, Taylor, Jackson and Reilly advised they would not be supporting the Motion and spoke of their disappointment that it had been brought on the anniversary of the Massacre and when Israelis and families were mourning and remembering their loved ones as well as those still held in captivity.

Councillor Taylor said that the scheme was one which if not compelled to remain within it and if someone had concerns or wished to take a principle stand on it they could remove themselves from it at any stage without tying every Councillor into it as they had different views on the Middle East political situation.

Councillor Jackson stated he felt this was grandstanding at its finest and that NILGOSC was under a fiducial duty not to invest or invest for political reasons. He stated that the small holding of Israeli government bonds represented less than 0.007% of the total fund and that disposing of these investments purely out of hatred for Israel would not be legal. Councillor Jackson also spoke of how it could generate significant uncertainty for pension scheme owners themselves.

Councillor Reilly spoke of his heartbreak at the sight of children, regardless of what side they were on, suffering and being killed as part of deliberate acts of violence.

In reply, Councillor Sharvin asked Councillors to be mindful that this was the first Council meeting since the information had been shared and it was not to be insensitive in any way as the SDLP as a party had called out what it was a horrific incident to occur this time a year ago.

Councillor Truesdale on behalf of her party thanked Councillor Feehan for bringing the Motion however expressed concern that immediate divestment could immediately place pensions in jeopardy.

Councillor Truesdale proposed an amendment to the motion, the wording of which was circulated to Members to read as follows:

"This Council notes that Northern Ireland Local Government pension provider NILGOSC purchased government bonds from the Israeli government which are being used by the Tel Aviv administration to fund its operations both within Israel and other territories. As the pension provider for all local council workers, the Education Authority, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, NI Libraries and many others including schools, it is a shock to many of the 176,000 members of this pension scheme that it is directly funding the Netanyahu-led government. Given the widespread horror felt by people of all political backgrounds at the targeting of civilians and children by the Israeli government in the war in Gaza the use of workers' and public sector money in a loan to the Israeli government is unacceptable. Newry Mourne and Down District Council expresses its deep concern at the decision to purchase these bonds and

calls on NILGOSC to dispose of them immediately and engage with pension holders about disposal of the bonds and work to develop an ethical investments framework to consider for all future investment”.

Councillor Feehan accepted Councillor Truesdale’s amendment.

Councillor Feehan wished to make it clear that he unequivocally condemned the actions of Hamas on the 7 October 2023 and was against all violence in all of its forms, against all innocent people.

The Chairperson put Councillor Feehan’s amended Motion to a vote by a show of hands, the results of which were as follows:

FOR:	27
AGAINST:	6
ABSTENTIONS:	0

The Motion was carried.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Galbraith that Council notes that Northern Ireland Local Government pension provider NILGOSC purchased government bonds from the Israeli government which are being used by the Tel Aviv administration to fund its operations both within Israel and other territories. As the pension provider for all local council workers, the Education Authority, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, NI Libraries and many others including schools, it is a shock to many of the 176,000 members of this pension scheme that it is directly funding the Netanyahu-led government. Given the widespread horror felt by people of all political backgrounds at the targeting of civilians and children by the Israeli government in the war in Gaza the use of workers’ and public sector money in a loan to the Israeli government is unacceptable. Newry Mourne and Down District Council expresses its deep concern at the decision to purchase these bonds and calls on NILGOSC to dispose of them immediately and engage with pension holders about disposal of the bonds and work to develop an ethical investments framework to consider for all future investment.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 19.32pm.

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

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 7th October 2024

VENUE: Downshire Civic Centre

MEETING: Council

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Suspension of Standing Order 16.1 to hear Councillor Feehan's Motion

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews				1
C Bowsie		1		
J Brennan	1			
P Byrne	2			
P Campbell				2
W Clarke	3			
L Devlin	4			
C Enright	5			
K Feehan	6			
D Finn				3
A Finnegan	7			
C Galbraith	8			
M Gibbons	9			
O Hanlon	10			
G Hanna		2		
V Harte	11			
R Howell				4
T Kelly				5
J Jackson		3		
G Kearns	12			
C King	13			
M Larkin	14			
D Lee-Surginor	15			
A Lewis		4		
O Magennis	16			
A Mathers	17			
D McAteer	18			
L McEvoy				6
D Murphy	19			
K Murphy				7
S Murphy	20			
S O'Hare	21			
A Quinn	22			
H Reilly		5		
M Rice	23			
M Ruane	24			
G Sharvin	25			
D Taylor		6		
J Tinnelly				8
J Truesdale	26			
H Young	27			
TOTALS	27	6		8

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

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

22

Minutes of Special Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 17 October 2024 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre

In the Chair: Councillor T Howie

In Attendance in Chamber:

Councillor W Clarke	Councillor C Enright
Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor C King
Councillor A Lewis	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor M Rice
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor D Taylor

Non-Committee Members

In Attendance:

Councillor J Truesdale	Councillor T Andrews
Councillor H Young	

Officials in Attendance in Chamber:

Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
 Ms C Mallon, Director Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
 Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment
 Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
 Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital Projects & Procurement
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
 Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/158/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Byrne and McAteer, and Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive.

Councillor Howie stated that she expected a respectful discussion on items that had been tabled at the Committee Meeting.

SPR/159/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Sharvin requested guidance with regard declaring an interest in item 10 – Financial Assistance, as his club had applied for financial assistance. He asked although the paper was anonymised, was it appropriate for him to remain within the chamber during discussions.

Mrs Kelly advised that it was for the Member to decide whether they had a perceived conflict of interest.

SPR/160/2024 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 12 SEPTEMBER 2024

Read: Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 12 September 2024 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to approve the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 12 September 2024.**

FOR CONSIDERATION

SPR/161/2024 **OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – GOOD RELATIONS**

Read: Report from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Officer Report on Notice of Motion – Good Relations. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Kelly outlined the Report, advising that the Notice of Motion had been referred to the Equality and Good Relations Forum following the September 2024 Council meeting. She informed Members that it had been discussed at the Forum on 26 September 2024 where, following discussions, it had been proposed to amend the Notice of Motion as below.

In proposing the Report, Councillor Sharvin highlighted the fruitful conversations that had taken place at the forum meeting.

Councillor Truesdale also noted the constructive discussion at the forum meeting, stating that it was one of the things that Council did well.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Howie, the following was agreed:**

- **To amend the notice of motion which was considered and discussed at the Councillor's Equality and Good Relations Reference Group on 26 September 2024 to read as:**

"That this Council recognises the vital role of Good Relations programmes in supporting the reconciliation in a society recovering from conflict, bringing communities together, creating shared spaces, challenging sectarian, racism and other forms of prejudice, and promoting respect for all cultural identities; strongly condemns the recent violence and targeting of businesses; encourages greater support and investment for sporting and cultural events as a mechanism for uniting local communities; registers its disappointment that an enhanced and fully-funded regional Good Relations Strategy has not been prioritised since the restoration of the NI Assembly; further records its disappointment that the reduction in good relations funding granted in 2023/24 to Councils by the Executive Office has not been reinstated to previous levels."

- That Council respond to the 'Consultation on the Executive Office budget allocation 2024-2025' outlining the concerns raised in the above Notice of Motion

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 Quinn, 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 O'Hare, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

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

SPR/162/2024

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT – RESOURCES REPORT

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment, regarding Sustainability & Environment Resources. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Howie, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to approve the recommendations as outlined in the Officer's Report.

SPR/163/2024

CONTRACTOR PROCUREMENT AND APPOINTMENT

Read: Report from Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital, Estates & Procurement, regarding Contractor Procurement and Appointment. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to commence the Invitation To Tender (ITT) procurement process to appoint a contractor and commence construction delivery.

SPR/164/2024

CONSULTANT FEES REPORT

Read:

Report from Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital, Estates & Procurement, regarding Consultant Fees. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to approve the additional fees for the enhanced capital project value and works identified through progression of the works on site and continued statutory consultation.

SPR/165/2024

MOURNE MOUNTAIN GATEWAY PROJECT

Read:

Report from Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital, Estates & Procurement, regarding Mourne Mountain Gateway Project. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Sharvin proposed to accept the Officer's Report, this was seconded by Councillor Lewis. The Alliance Party members advised that as they were against the project they would be voting against the proposal. Councillor Howie requested a recorded vote on the proposal, a copy of which is appended to these minutes.

The results of the vote were as follows:

FOR	11
AGAINST	2
ABSTENTIONS	0

AGREED:

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

- To approve the appointment of a specialist Gondola Consultant for the Mourne Mountains Gateway Project.**
- To approve the updated ICT fee as set out in section 4.2 of the Officer's Report.**

SPR/166/2024

AHC CAPITAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT

Read:

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

AGREED:

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

- To approve the Capital Budget requirement for year 1 delivery of the Play Strategy Review as outlined within the Officer's Report.**
- To undertake year 1 projects utilising the Council's current contractor framework.**

SPR/167/2024

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Read:

Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Financial Assistance. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to allocate Letters of Offer to the groups recommended for funding awards under Financial Assistance Call 2 for Sports Capital Facility grants utilising the budget allocation as set out in the Officer's Report, and to implement a scored and ranked list.

SPR/168/2024

APPROVAL OF TENDER AWARD AND FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Read:

Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding an Approval of Tender Award and Funding Application. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to award the tender for delivery of the Capital Project and to accept the two grant offers from external funders as detailed in the Officer's Report.

Councillor Enright declared an interest in the following item and left the Chamber at this stage – 7.07pm

SPR/169/2024

FUNDING TO SPORTS CLUB

Read:

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Funding to Sports Club. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

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

- **To note the sanction panel's decision to apply a sanction that the club cannot apply or be in receipt of Council supported funding until the full amount is paid.**
- **To note the repayment plan as set out in the report.**
- **To note that the matter would be reviewed after 12 months.**

Councillor Clarke left the meeting at this stage – 7.15pm

Councillor Clarke rejoined the meeting at this stage – 7.23pm

Councillor Enright re-entered the Chamber at this stage – 7.28pm

SPR/170/2024

SURPLUS ASSET REPORT

Read:

Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding a Surplus Asset Report. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, the following was agreed:

- **To approve the marketing of the asset detailed in the Officer's Report through the D1 process for a further period of 6 months to identify any interested parties.**
- **That at the end of the 6-month period if there is no interest shown, to progress disposal of the asset through sale on the open market.**

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

SPR/171/2024

MINUTES FROM STRATEGIC FINANCE WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD 10 OCTOBER 2024

Read:

Minutes of Strategic Finance Working Group meeting held 10 October 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to note the minutes.

Councillor Reilly left the meeting– 7.34pm.

FOR NOTING

SPR/172/2024

STATUTORY REPORTING: SECTION 75 POLICY SCREENING REPORT FOR QUARTERLY PERIOD JULY – SEPTEMBER 2024

Read:

Report from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Statutory Reporting. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Sharvin requested that the layout of the website be reviewed in relation to the statutory reporting, stating that it was difficult to find the relevant report amongst the other years' statutory reporting.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period July – September 2024.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 7.37pm

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

Signed: **Councillor Tierna Howie**
 Chairperson

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

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 17/10/24 **VENUE:** Downshire Civic Centre **MEETING:** SPR Committee

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Recorded Vote requested on Item 8 – Mourne Mountain Gateway Project

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
P Byrne				1
W Clarke	1			
C Enright		1		
O Hanlon	2			
T Howie		2		
C King	3			
A Lewis	4			
A Mathers	5			
D McAteer				2
S O'Hare	6			
A Quinn	7			
H Reilly	8			
M Rice	9			
G Sharvin	10			
D Taylor	11			
TOTALS	11	2		2

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AHC/2024

**Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on
Monday 21 October 2024 at 6.00pm in the Mourne Room,
Downshire Civic Centre**

Chairperson: Councillor C Galbraith

In attendance in Chamber: Councillor L Devlin Councillor D Finn
 Councillor A Finnegan Councillor R Howell
 Councillor D Lee-Surginor Councillor A Lewis
 Councillor O Magennis Councillor A Mathers
 Councillor L McEvoy Councillor D Murphy
 Councillor H Young

**Non-Committee Members
in Chamber:** Councillor T Andrews

**Committee Members
in attendance (via Teams):** Councillor K Murphy

Officials in Chamber: Mr A Patterson, Director, Active and Healthy Communities
Mrs A Robb, Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development
Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

AHC/085/2024: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON’S REMARKS

An apology was received from Mr H Korkou, Assistant Director, Healthy Living (Acting).

AHC/086/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**AHC/087/2024: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER
2024**

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting
held on Monday 16 September 2024. **(Copy circulated).**

AHC/068/2024: Attendance Matters, Department of Education
Councillor Lee-Surginor enquired if there had been an update from the Department of
Education regarding expansion of the RAISE programme beyond Newry.

Mr Patterson advised no update had been received however he would revert to Councillor
Lee-Surginor directly on the matter.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 16 September 2024.

AHC/088/2024: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE REPORT

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on District Electoral Area (DEA) Forums. **(Copy circulated)**

Mournes DEA: Donard Car Park

On behalf of her colleague Councillor Truesdale, Councillor Young made reference to a meeting that was to take place to discuss mitigations regarding Donard Car Park. She referred to a car meet and PSNI's response to it and providing social media warnings of their attendance, it had passed without incident. Councillor Young thanked the PSNI and urged Council to act swiftly on the issue.

Councillor Devlin spoke of how the noise levels were causing havoc for residents and how the problem required a multi-agency approach.

Mr Patterson confirmed anti-social behaviour in Donard Park was something officers were looking into with regards to mitigations within the vicinity and through the PCSP Forum would continue to work with PSNI to deal with those issues.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Howell, to note the report and approve the actions in the action sheets attached for:

- Newry DEA Forum Private Meeting held on 5 September 2024
- Crotlieve DEA Forum Private Meeting held on 10 September 2024
- Slieve DEA Gullion Forum Private Meeting held on 10 September 2024
- Slieve Croob DEA Forum Private Meeting held on 17 September 2024
- Mournes DEA Forum Private Meeting held on 24 September 2024

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

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 7 and 8, which related to exempt information by virtue of para. 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

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

AHC/089/2024: SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding a Service Level Agreement. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Young, to approve a Service Level Agreement between Council and the organisations detailed within the officer's report, subject to grant funding being awarded.

AHC/090/2024: FITNESS EQUIPMENT SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding the appointment of a specialist supplier via Direct Award contract for fitness equipment servicing and maintenance. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Magennis, to approve the re-appointment of a specialist supplier via Direct Award Contract for equipment maintenance, parts, servicing and associated call out fees as detailed within the officer's report.

AHC/091/2024: LEISURE FACILITIES – PLUMBING AND HEATING SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE REPORT

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding the appointment of a supplier to undertake essential servicing and maintenance of plumbing and heating systems in Council's leisure facilities. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to approve the appointment of a contractor via Direct Award Contract for Plumbing and Heating servicing and maintenance requirements as detailed within the officer's report.

AHC/092/2024: DEPARTMENTAL PROCUREMENT

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding a procurement review. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, to approve the appointment of specialist procurement support services via a framework to meet the procurement requirements as set out in the officer's report.

AHC/093/2024: UPDATE ON PEACE PLUS FUNDING

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the East Border Region Application to 2.4 Peace Plus, Smart Towns and Villages (Mini-Digi Hub Project). **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Devlin, to note the contents of the officer's report.

AHC/094/2024: UPDATE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the Community Development Strategy. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Robb provided an overview of the report for Members.
Mr Patterson confirmed Members would be consulted upon as part of development of the Strategy and it was envisaged that process would start within the year.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor to note the contents of the officer's report.

AHC/095/2024: LETTER TO MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND OFFICIAL RESPONSE

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding responses received from the Department for Communities following correspondence issued by Council in relation to the Community Planning Strategic Stakeholder Forum.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to note the officer's report and correspondence.

It was agreed correspondence would be shared with Members of the Strategic Stakeholder Forum.

AHC/096/2024: PCSP/NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL UPDATE REPORT

Read: Report dated 21 October 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on PCSP and Neighbourhood Renewal.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor to note the report and the following:**

- **Minutes of the Policing Committee & PCSP held on 30 July 2024, approved at the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting on 24 September 2024.**
- **Minutes of the Newry NRP Meeting held on 26 June 2024, approved at the Newry NRP Meeting on 11 September 2024.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.44pm.

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

Signed: Councillor Galbraith
Chairperson

Signed: Andrew Patterson
Director Active and Healthy Communities

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2024

**Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 6.00pm in Council Chamber, Monaghan Row, Newry**

Chair: Councillor G Kearns

In attendance in Chamber: Councillor P Campbell Councillor Enright
Councillor J Jackson Councillor M Larkin
Councillor O Magennis Councillor D Taylor
Councillor H Young

In attendance via Teams Councillor J Brennan Councillor V Harte
Councillor M Ruane

Officials in Chamber: Mrs S Murphy, Director Sustainability and Environment
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability
Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director Environment
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (acting)
Mrs N Stranney, Democratic Services Officer

SE/121/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Andrews, Feehan and Reilly.

The Chairperson expressed condolences on behalf of Council to the family of Joe Corr, attendant at the Household Recycling Centre in Ballynahinch, who had passed away recently.

The Chairperson advised that an invitation had been extended to Members of the Sustainability & Environment Committee from Habitat Restore Newry for a business breakfast on Friday 25th October 2024.

SE/122/2024: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

There were no declarations of interest.

**SE/123/2024: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 September 2024**

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2024.

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 Campbell, 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 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)

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

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

FOR DECISION

SE/124/2024: PUBLIC CONVENIENCE PROJECT – DUNDRUM TOILETS

Read: Report dated 23 October 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Public Convenience Project **(Copy circulated)**

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

SE/125/2024: FLEET OPERATOR'S LICENCE – FLEET MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Read: Report dated 23 October 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding the Fleet Operator's Licence **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Magennis it was agreed to approve the revised fleet Operator License Action Plan update October 2024.

SE/126/2024: BUSINESS CASE FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF LITTER BINS

Read: Report dated 23 October 2024 from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding a business case for the procurement of litter bins. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Larkin, it was agreed to approve the business cases as outlined within the officer's report.

SE/127/2024: ACTION SHEET FROM THE SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP – 18 SEPTEMBER 2024

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment working group held on 18 September 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Working Group held on 18 September 2024.

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

SE/128/2024: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 29 AUGUST 2024 and ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN HELD ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2024

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee "in committee" minutes of meeting held 29 August 2024 and to note the Arc21 Joint Committee Members' bulletin held on 26 September 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to note the Arc21 Joint Committee "In Committee" minutes of meeting held 29 August 2024 and to note the Arc21 Joint Committee Members' bulletin held on 26 September 2024.

FOR NOTING

SE/129/2024: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF 29 AUGUST 2024

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Committee Minutes of 29 August 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Jackson, to note the minutes of the Arc21 Joint Committee meeting of 29 August 2024.

SE/130/2024: PROPOSED DISPOSAL AND ABANDONMENT OF LAND AT 18 CHURCH STREET, JONESBOROUGH

Read: Correspondence received from the Department for Infrastructure regarding disposal and abandonment of land at 18 Church Street, Jonesborough. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Jackson, to note the proposed abandonment of land at 18 Church Street, Jonesborough.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.31pm.

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

Signed: Councillor Geraldine Kearns
Chairperson

Signed: Mrs Sinead Murphy
Director of Sustainability & Environment

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AC/2024

Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on Thursday 19 September 2024, at 2.00pm, in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

Chairperson: Ms B Slevin, Independent Chairperson

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor C King
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor G Sharvin	

Officials in attendance in Chamber:

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
 Mrs J Kelly, Director Corporate Services
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
 Ms S Murphy, Director Sustainability & Environment
 Mr A Patterson, Director Active & Healthy Communities
 Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director Capital Projects & Procurement
 Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
 Ms C Hughes, Head of Performance and Improvement (Acting)
 Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance in chamber:

Ms K Doey	NIAO
Ms L Kerr	NIAO

AC/069/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Devlin, Hanna, Howie and K Murphy, and from Mr S Wade, NIAO Director.

Mrs Kelly noted that Councillor Hanna had replaced Councillor Bowsie on the Committee.

AC/070/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared.

AC/071/2024: ACTION SHEET OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 31 JULY 2024

Read: Action Sheet arising from Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on Thursday 31 July 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AC/033/2024 – Audit Committee Self-Assessment:

Councillor O'Hare spoke of the difficulty in assessing how the Committee added value to the organisation when reports were added late, stating that it was difficult to find time to read and understand the documents and requested that this be considered moving forward.

Mrs Kelly noted the point, advising that it was difficult to upload some reports as Audits were still in progress and any reports would be heavily caveated if these were not completed.

Ms Slevin noted that adding value could be difficult to quantify and queried whether officers could consider ways the Committee added core value to the organisation.

Ms Slevin queried whether Members were interested in further training, given the addition of a new Committee Member, and asked whether Officers could consider both internal and external training opportunities for Committee Members.

Councillor O Hare confirmed she would be keen to avail of any training that was on offer and stated that this would be beneficial to all Members of the Committee.

Mrs Kelly noted that training had been completed in the past by NILGA and the NIAO and advised that this was something that would be considered prior to the next meeting.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet for Audit Committee Meeting held on 31 July 2024.**

It was further agreed that any training opportunities for Members be considered and tabled at a future Committee Meeting.

PERFORMANCE

AC/072/2024: ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE 2023/24

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Procurement, regarding the Assessment of Performance 2023/24. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Hughes outlined the Assessment of Performance and noted that it had been agreed and approved at a recent Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting on 12 September 2024 and would be published on the Council website by 30 September 2024, in line with statutory obligations.

Ms Slevin thanked the team for the hard work involved in completing the assessment.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to note the Assessment of Performance 2023-24, including the summary document "Our Performance Looking Back going Forward".**

CORPORATE SERVICES – OPEN SESSION

AC/073/2024: UPDATE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding the Corporate Risk Register. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Kelly advised that Members' Registers of Interest were updated every six months through Democratic Services, noting the most recent update had been requested on 10 September 2024.

Councillor Sharvin queried whether there was an easier way of completing the form that would make the task less onerous on everyone, suggesting an online form as an option.

Mrs Kelly acknowledged the point, and advised she would discuss the request with Democratic Services to investigate but advised that the forms still needed to be completed in the usual form until advised otherwise.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to note the six-month review report.**

AC/074/2024: **CORPORATE RISK REGISTER – AHC DIRECTORATE RISK REGISTER ALSO TO BE TABLED**

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding the Corporate Risk Register. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Kelly highlighted that the risk register was a live document that had been updated as recently as the weekend, following the recent Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) announcements, confirming 12 Corporate Risks with no changes to the overall scoring of those risks and brought Members' attention to the addition of risk owners and actions taken regarding those within the register.

Ms Slevin requested a brief update on the risks facing Council following the recent announcements regarding BRCD funding.

Mrs Ward noted her delight that the decision had been made to wholly reverse the removal of funding and that all funding was proceeding as originally planned.

Councillor Hanlon welcomed the assurance from the treasury regarding funding, noted the increased risk to all projects proceeding with BRCD funding and queried as to who was liable should the funding decision be reversed again as Council had allocated ratepayer money on the projects. She further queried whether the risk should be increased or how this could be kept on the Audit Committee's radar.

Mrs Ward noted the point raised and confirmed that this had been discussed at project board level relating to the BRCD partnership. She further noted that the Finance Minister had advised that it had now been confirmed in writing that all BRCD funding projects and programme of works was secure. Mrs Ward did note that the announcement did highlight there were risks associated with any project, advising that there were provisions within all contracts regarding funding and would clarify to Members what they were.

Mrs Ward further advised that following the announcement, the Senior Management Team (SMT) collated the detail relating to the contractual position of each BRCD contract,

including financial liability, and considered any potential impacts moving forward. The BRCD Programme Board would be discussing the issue at the next Executive Board Meeting and Members would be advised in due course of any implications.

Councillor Sharvin noted that the announcement enabled Council to collate all the contractual positions, which would be beneficial across the progress of the projects. He further noted that this issue highlighted to Council what benefits could have been lost to the District, and what added value the projects would bring to the District.

Mr Patterson outlined the AHC Risk Register, highlighting the addition of risk AHC05 from the previous financial year from the Corporate Services Risk Register, which covered safeguarding children and adults across the Council, and ensuring that all relevant legislative and statutory requirements within facilities were up to date.

Following a query from Councillor Sharvin regarding a reason for not achieving the Leisure Safe Accreditation and what steps were being taken to correct that, Mr Patterson advised that the accreditation spanned two elements, one which ensured safe systems of work and having the right protocol and procedures in place for operational rules, which he confirmed were in place. He advised that the second element was in relation to compliance with regard to risk assessments and remedial works relating to asbestos and Legionella, which had been highlighted in historic audit reports, and he advised that some contracts coming into place through the Sustainability and Environment Department would alleviate some of those non-compliance issues. He confirmed that once these had been addressed, Council would be applying for the Accreditation again.

Following a further query from Councillor Sharvin in relation to the availability of staff to deliver fitness classes and the potential impact on income from the leisure facilities, Mr Patterson confirmed that a new contract had recently been implemented that allowed the use of coaches if employees were unavailable to facilitate fitness classes. He further advised that following a trial period of this contract, an update would be tabled at a forthcoming AHC Committee meeting.

Councillor Hanlon queried the use of the delivery partner in this new contract, and asked if other options were available to ensure classes were not cancelled at the last minute.

Mr Patterson confirmed he was aware of the complaints and this contract was an attempt to address the concerns and advised that following a trial period, an update would be tabled at an AHC meeting prior to the Christmas period.

AGREED:

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

- **To approve the updates to the Corporate Risk Register highlighted within the summary at Appendix 1. Full Corporate Risk Register can be evidenced at Appendix 2.**
- **To note the revised AHC Directorate Risk Register summary at Appendix 3 and detailed AHC Risk Register at Appendix 4.**

AC/075/2024:

NMDDC STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding NMDDC Statement of Accounts 2023/24. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Slevin highlighted that in line with best practice, the Report to Those Charged With Governance (RTTCWG) needed to be undertaken prior to approving the NMDDC Statement of Accounts and requested this item be deferred until later in the meeting.

AGREED: It was agreed to postpone discussion on the item until later in the meeting.

Items restricted in accordance with Part 3 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during the following items which related to exempt information by virtue of Part 3 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during these items of business.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

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

NIAO (CLOSED SESSION)

AC/076/2024: **REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE 2023/24 - DRAFT**

Read: Correspondence from NIAO regarding Report to Those Charged with Governance (RTTCWG). **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to note the Report.

CORPORATE SERVICES (CLOSED SESSION)

AC/077/2024: **UPDATE ON AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Ms E Cosgrove, Assistant Director of Administration (Acting), regarding an Update on Audit Recommendations. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the update in relation to legacy audit recommendations.

AC/078/2024: DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital Projects & Procurement, regarding Direct Award Contracts. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor King, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to note the Q1 update in relation to Direct Award Contracts and the Q2 Direct Award Contract activity to date.

AC/079/2024: PROCUREMENT ACTION PLANS

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding procurement action plans. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the update in relation to the Directorate Procurement Action Plans.

AC/080/2024: UPDATE ON FRAUD AND WHISTLEBLOWING INCLUDING RAISING CONCERNS POLICY & NFI 2024 UPDATE

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding Fraud and Raising Concerns Update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to:

- Note the update in relation to Fraud and Raising Concerns cases which have been detailed at Appendix 1.
- Note the progress on actions arising from the NIAO Internal Fraud Risk self-assessment.
- To approve the revised Raising Concerns Policy detailed at Appendix 2.

AC/081/2024: PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration, regarding a Planning department Update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to note the contents of the Report.

INTERNAL AUDIT (CLOSED SESSION)

AC/082/2024: SUMER NI SUMMARY REPORT

Read: Summary Report dated 19 September 2024 regarding a Summary Report to the Audit Committee. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to accept the SUMER NI Summary Report.

AC/083/2024: INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25

Read: Internal Audit Plan 2024/25 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve the Internal Audit Plan 2024/25.

AC/084/2024: FLEET AND ASSET MANAGEMENT – FINAL REPORT

Read: Fleet and Asset Management Report **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to accept the Fleet Asset Management Report.

AC/085/2024: PCSP AUDIT 2023/24 – SUMER NI

Read: PCSP AUDIT 2023/24 – SUMER NI AUDIT **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to accept the PCSP Audit 2023/24

AC/086/2024: PCSP AUDIT 2020/21, 2021/22 AND 2022/23 – EY

Read: PCSP AUDIT 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 – EY **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to accept the PCSP Audit 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.

At this stage of the meeting, it was agreed to resume discussions around
AC/075/2024: NMDDC Statement of Accounts 2023/24

AC/075/2024: NMDDC STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24

Read: Report dated 19 September 2024 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding NMDDC Statement of Accounts 2023/24. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Kelly thanked Mr Byrne and his team, to the finance team and to the NIAO, for their ongoing hard work in completing this report.

Mr Byrne advised that the draft accounts had been submitted to NIAO and Department for Communities on 20 June 2024 and highlighted a small amendment to be made on the report regarding one reclassification of a debtor, which had no impact on the overall income and expenditure report. He drew Members' attention to two small changes on the Annual Governance Statement, one being the inclusion of the soil sample fraud issue, which all Councils were to include in their governance statements, and the updated wording in relation to the BRCD funding following the recent announcement.

Mr Byrne further advised that the NIAO were still reviewing the audit file, and the RTTCWG still needed to be reviewed for factual accuracy, but Council was broadly content with the points raised, confirmed that a management response would be tabled in January, and following the completion of the audit, Members would be advised of any material changes or amendments.

Ms Slevin noted her thanks to Mr Byrne and his team, and to the NIAO staff members involved in the audit.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the NIAO RTTCWG and approve the Statement of Accounts for year ending 31 March 2024 for signing by the Chief Executive and Chairperson.

FOR NOTING

AC/087/2024: **NFI INSTRUCTIONS 2024/25**

Read: NFI Instructions 2024/25 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to note the document.

AC/088/2024: **NI AUDIT OFFICE REPORT – DEVELOPING THE SKILLS FOR NI'S FUTURE**

Read: NI Audit Office Report – Developing the Skills for NI's Future **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed note the document.

AC/089/2024: **NI AUDIT OFFICE REPORT – PUBLIC BODIES RESPONSE TO MISREPRESENTED SOIL SAMPLE ANALYSIS**

Read: NI Audit Office Report – Public Bodies Response to Misrepresented Soil Sample Analysis. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor O’Hare, it was agreed note the document.

AC/090/2024: **NI AUDIT OFFICE REPORT – REVIEW OF WASTE MANAGEMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

Read: NI Audit Office Report – Review of Waste Management in Northern Ireland. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor O’Hare, it was agreed note the document.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 3:43pm.
For consideration at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 November 2024.

Signed: **Ms J Kelly**
Director Corporate Services

Signed: **Ms B Slevin**
Independent Chairperson

Report to:	Council
Date of Meeting:	4 November 2024
Subject:	Correspondence to Council
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-			
For decision	x	For noting only	

1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	To provide an update on correspondence received for attention of Council.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	This paper refers to correspondence to be brought to the attention of Council. Items are referred to in 3.0 below.
3.0	Recommendations
	That Council considers and notes the following correspondence:
3.1	Correspondence from Voice of Young People in Care Council received correspondence from Voice of Young People in Care in relation to Care Day 25 on 21 February 2025.
3.2	Correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council. Council received correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council in relation to a Motion - Racism.
3.3	Correspondence from BBC NI and Department for Communities Council received a response from BBC NI and the Department for Communities in relation to Notice of Motion C/160/2024 - Sign Language.
3.4	Correspondence from Executive Office Council received a response from the First Minister and Deputy First Ministers in relation to Emergency Notice of Motion – Winter Fuel Payments.
3.5	Correspondence from NILGOSC Council received a response from NILGOCS in relation to Emergency Notice of Motion – NILGOSC Bonds.

3.6	Correspondence from Department for Infrastructure Council received a response from DfI in relation to C/143/2024 – Meeting with the Minister to discuss the Newry Southern Relief Road.
3.7	Correspondence from National Association of Councillors Council received a list of National Association of Councillors Conferences for 2024/25.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Not applicable.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/> The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a

	<p>policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	Appendices
8.0	Background Documents
	None



Celebrating and connecting the
care experienced community



T: 028 9024 4888
E: info@voypic.org

MAIN OFFICE: BELFAST

100 Great Patrick Street
Belfast
BT1 2LU

BALLYMENA

1st Floor, 6 Garfield Place
Ballymena BT43 6EH

DERRY-LONDONDERRY

9 Queen Street
Derry-Londonderry
BT48 7EG

LURGAN

Flat 12, Mount Zion House
Edward Street
Lurgan BT66 6DB

Cllr Peter Byrne
Chair
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

CARE DAY 25 - Request

Friday 11 October

Dear Chair

CARE DAY is the world's biggest celebration of children and young people with care experience. This group includes children and young people who are or were cared for by foster carers, or other family members, and those who live in children's homes. They deserve to be celebrated, on CARE DAY, and every day.

CARE DAY in the UK and Ireland is a joint initiative across five children's rights charities, and led in Northern Ireland by VOYPIC – Voice of Young People in Care. CARE DAY 25 will take place on Friday 21 February, and will be the tenth CARE DAY in the UK and Ireland.

To celebrate this milestone, we are asking your council to mark the occasion with the following activities:

1. We would be grateful if your council would light civic buildings on the evening of Friday 21 February 2025. Where possible, we would ask it

to be multi-coloured, to reflect the Care Day halo. If this is not possible, we would ask it to be yellow, the main colour of the VOYPIC logo.

2. In recognition of this being the tenth CARE DAY, we are asking councils to plant a tree in a public space, in honour of the care experienced community. This includes those currently in care, those who have been in care, and those who will experience care in the future.

I would be grateful if these requests could be shared with members of your council at your meeting of 4 November, just following Care Leavers' Week (23 October – 3 November 2024).

VOYPIC is the charity for children and young people with lived experience of care in Northern Ireland. Created in 1993 by a group of young people in care and the professionals that supported them, VOYPIC has over 30 years of experience promoting the rights and voice of children in care and care leavers.

We work to ensure every child in care feels safe, valued and loved, and that every young person leaving care does so with dignity and respect, and thrives into adulthood.

I would like to thank you for your consideration of our request, and for your support for our work and the young people we serve.

Yours sincerely



Lee Kane
Engagement Manager
lee.kane@voypic.org / 07808777970

cc: Ms Marie Ward, Chief Executive
All Elected Members

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

53

Our Ref: R&C/September 2024/8.1

Date: 21 October 2024

Email: fiona.dillon@fermanaghomagh.com

Ms Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Monaghan Row
NEWRY
BT35 8DL

Dear Chief Executive,

Re: Motion - Racism

At the Regeneration and Communities Committee meeting held on 10 September 2024, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council unanimously adopted the following Motion:

That Fermanagh and Omagh District Council unreservedly condemns and deplores the racist attacks and intimidation that so many have experienced in recent times.

There is no place in our society for racism, intimidation, hatred and discrimination.

Therefore, this council will work together with all other councils, government departments, the executive and the PSNI to oppose racism and deliver a shared, peaceful and inclusive society.

The Council looks forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



BBC Northern Ireland

Broadcasting House,
Ormeau Avenue,
Belfast BT2 8HQ

028 9033 8000
bbc.co.uk/northernireland

22 October, 2024

Dea Mairé

Editorial Enquiry – BBC Newsline

I'm replying to your recent letter (15 October) to Adam Smyth on behalf of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (ref: C/160/2024).

We understand the importance of making the BBC's local news services as accessible as possible, including on different platforms.

BBC Newsline's lunchtime bulletin has become part of an extended, UK-wide news programme. This was the immediate context for the transfer of its BSL sign language summary to our digital news platforms/services in May 2024.

Our sign-interpreted BBC Newsline summary is now available each weekday afternoon in a dedicated (and prominent) slot on the BBC News NI website. This is in addition to its availability on the website's 'rolling news' section, the BBC News NI app and BBC Newsline Facebook page – all of which have helped to maintain its broad reach and easy accessibility.

The bulletin's format, duration and presentation have been unaffected by its move to a new digital home. And we think that there is significance also in the fact that our sign-interpreted news summary has its own distinct identity (and place) within our portfolio of local news services, underscoring the value that we attach to it.

We're continuing to work with our team of on-screen translators to promote awareness of the different ways in which local BBC audiences can access this bulletin (which has included on-air mentions and signposting) and are keen to ensure its success – meeting the needs of existing viewers and hopefully finding many new ones as well.

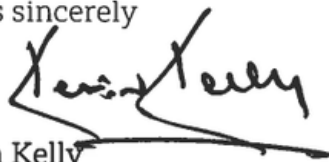
Our digital platforms attract large audiences and are now a mainstream (and fast developing) part of the BBC's work – reflecting changes in technology and how people engage with our output.

What we are doing is intended to safeguard a BBC news service that we care about. And we'll keep all of this under review over the next period, including audience engagement with/consumption of this service and suggestions about how it might be further developed and/or improved.

We note the points that the Council has raised and welcome its interest in/support for local BBC news provision in this area.

I hope this is useful and appreciate your interest in this aspect of our local news service and the benefits that it provides.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Kelly', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kevin Kelly
Head of News and Current Affairs - BBCNI



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
Pobal

Department fur
Communities

56

Maire Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Level 7
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG
Tel: +44 (0) 28 90823120

Date: 25 October 2024

Via Email only:
Fionnuala.branagh@nmandd.org

Our Ref: TOF-1904-2024

Dear Maire,

Thank you for your email to the Minister of 17 October 2024 regarding the motion passed by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council at a meeting on 7 October 2024. I have been asked to reply.

Regarding the update on the Sign Language Bill, the Minister has committed to introduce a Bill at the earliest opportunity. The Bill will offer members of the Deaf community the same rights and opportunities available in the hearing community, through access to services by way of British Sign Language and Irish Sign Language.

The Minister has asked me to thank you for your email and for your support for the introduction of the Sign Language Bill.

If you require anything further, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

IAIN GREENWAY
Director of Culture



Stormont Castle
BELFAST
BT4 3TT
Tel: 028 9037 8806
Email: ps.ministers@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Downpatrick Office
Downshire Civic Centre
Downshire Estate, Ardglass Road
Downpatrick
BT30 6GQ

democratic.services@nmandd.org

23 October 2024

Dear Marie

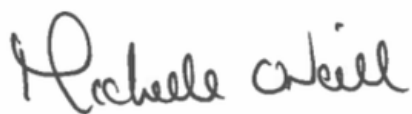
Emergency Notice of Motion- Winter Fuel Payments

You wrote to us on 11 September, conveying the Council's deep concern about the recent decision by the government to cut Winter Fuel Payments and informing us that an Emergency Notice of Motion had been unanimously agreed in relation to this issue.

Executive Ministers have written to the Prime Minister to express our collective concern at the policy, noting that the Winter Fuel Payment has been a critical support for many, and that the changes to its eligibility criteria risk diminishing its impact. We formally expressed our strong opposition to the measure and urged an immediate review of the Pension Credit threshold.

In the meantime, it is important that people ensure they are receiving all of the benefits to which they are entitled. The Department for Communities Make the Call Wraparound Service enables people to check the benefits, supports and services to which they may be entitled, and it is important that those impacted by this policy check their entitlement to Pension Credit at their earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely



Michelle O'Neill MLA
First Minister



Emma Little-Pengelly MLA
deputy First Minister



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59

www.nilgosc.org.uk

Ms Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
By email to democratic.services@nmandd.org

25 October 2024

Dear Ms Ward

Divestment of Israeli Government Bonds

Thank you for your letter dated 15 October 2024.

NILGOSC notes the Council's view and its request that NILGOSC divest of any holdings in Israeli bonds and it develops an ethical investments framework.

NILGOSC has no holdings of Israeli government bonds.

NILGOSC has a fiduciary duty to its beneficiaries which typically means acting in the best *financial* interests. It is therefore our policy not to divest (or invest for that matter) for *political* reasons. A recent Supreme Court case held that it is not appropriate for political preferences, whether local or national, to take precedence over what is required under the fiduciary duty. The only exception is government sanctions, whereby we are required to comply with the UK Government sanctions listed per the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018.

All investment decisions are made on investment grounds by our fund managers. However our fund managers are required to take environmental, social and governance (ESG) matters into account subject to the overriding fiduciary duty to maximise financial returns. Further details on NILGOSC's responsible ownership practices are set out in its Statement of Responsible Investment, available from the NILGOSC website at <https://nilgosc.org.uk/pension-fund/being-a-responsible-investor/>

Yours sincerely

David Murphy
Chief Executive



From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure
JOHN O'DOWD MLA

Marie Ward
 Chief Executive
 Newry Mourne and Down District Council
 15 Trevor Hill
 NEWRY
 BT34 1DN
Donna.Starkey@nmandd.org

Private Office, 3rd Floor,
 James House, Gasworks Site,
 2 - 4 Cromac Avenue,
 Belfast, BT7 2JA
 Telephone: (028) 9054 0540
 Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference:
 Our reference: INV-1420-2024
 25 October 2024

Dear Ms Ward,

NEWRY SOUTHERN RELIEF ROAD

Thank you for your invitation to DfI Minister John O'Dowd MLA.

The Minister has advised that he would be pleased to meet with a delegation of Council representatives at mutually convenient time and place.

I would be grateful if you could contact the Ministers diary secretary Jaime Bradley at Private.Office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk in order to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

EMMA STOCKMAN
 Private Secretary to the Minister

		NAC CONFERENCES 2024 25	
DATE	SUBJECT	LOCATION	HOTEL
27TH-29TH SEPTEMBER 2024	SAFETY & WELLBEING FOR COUNCILLORS AND STAFF	EASTWOOD Nr NOTTINGHAM	EASTWOOD HALL
22ND-24TH NOVEMBER 2024	Blue Light Services	East Kilbride	Macdonald Crutherland House
24th -26th January 2025	Youth Services, Safeguarding, Radicalisation & Knife Crime	SOUTH SHIELDS	LITTLE HAVEN HOTEL
28TH Feb - 2nd Mar 2025	TBC	SCOTLAND OR ENGLAND	TBC
11TH-13TH APRIL 2025	TBC	SCARBOROUGH	ROYAL HOTEL
27TH-29TH JUNE 2025	NATIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCE	HARROGATE or Wolverhampton	TBC
26TH -28TH SEPTEMBER 2025	ENGLISH AGM/CONFERENCE	TBC	TBC
14TH -16TH NOVEMBER 2025	NATIONAL AGM/CONFERENCE	TBC	TBC