



January 8th, 2024

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 8th January 2024** at **6:00 pm** in **Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre & MS Teams.**

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 4 December 2023

[Action Sheet Council Meeting 2023 12 04 \(002\).pdf](#)

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Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing

4.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 4 December 2023

For Approval

[Council Minutes 2023 12 04.pdf](#)

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Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption

5.0 Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2023

For Approval

[Economy Regeneration and Tourism Minutes 2023-12-11.pdf](#)

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6.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 14 December 2023

For Approval

[Strategy Policy Resources Meeting Minutes 2023-12-14.pdf](#)

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7.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 18 December 2023

For Approval

[Active and Healthy Communities Minutes 2023 12 18.pdf](#)

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8.0 Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 20 December 2023

For Approval

[Minutes_Sustainability_and_Environment_Minutes_2023_12_20.pdf](#)

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9.0 Planning Section

There were no issues arising.

Correspondence

10.0 Response from Department of Health re: Notice of Motion C/203/2023 Daisy Hill Hospital

For Information

Letter dated 12 December 2023 from the Department of Health attached.

Letter dated 8 January 2024 from the Department of Health attached.

 *Response from Dept of Health Daisy Hill Hospital.pdf* *Page 55*

 *Letter to MLAs - CONSULTATION FINDINGS REPORT ON THE CLOSURE OF THE EMERGENCY GENERAL SURGERY SERVICE AT DAISY HILL HOSPITAL SSUB-0669-2023.pdf* *Page 56*

11.0 Response from Department of Health re: Notice of Motion C/225/2023 Southern Health and Social Care Trust Smear Tests

For Information

Letter dated 8 December 2023 from the Department of Health attached.

 *Response from Dept of Health NOM Cervical Screening.pdf* *Page 58*

12.0 Response from NIO and Department of Health re: Notice of Motion C/223/2023 Prostate Cancer Drug In NI

For Information

Letters dated 1 December and 8 December 2023 from NIO and Department of Health attached.

 *Response from NIO NOM Prostate Cancer Drug.pdf* *Page 59*

 *Response from Dept of Health NOM Prostate Cancer Drug.pdf* *Page 62*

13.0 Response from Education Authority re: Notice of Motion C/195/2023 Transport & Availability of Places for Children with Additional Needs

For Information

Letter dated 11 December 2023 from the Education Authority attached.

14.0 Response from Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office re: Notice of Motion C/224/2023 Violence in Gaza and Southern Israel

For Information

Letter dated 8 December 2023 from Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office attached.

 *Response from Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office.pdf*

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15.0 Response from Education Authority Re: Notice of Motion C/226/2023 Bereavement Support

Letter dated 14 December 2023 from Education Authority attached.

 *Response from Education Authority regarding Notice of Motion - Bereavement Support.pdf*

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Conferences/Events

16.0 APSE Conference - Local Government Strategic Policy Symposium

Date: Friday 19 January 2024

Venue: Glasgow Marriot Hotel, 500 Argyle Street, Glasgow, G3 8RR

Please contact Democratic Services if you wish to attend and for further information.

 *Full Association Flyer - Glasgow.pdf*

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 *Full Meeting Papers - APSE.pdf*

Not included

Notices of Motion

17.0 Notice of Motion - Climate Change

Notice of Motion was received from Councillor McMurray:

“That this Council acknowledges the work done to date to help address the climate emergency; reaffirms previous motions regarding the degenerating

global situation; and again, reiterates that the crisis is the biggest threat posed to our constituents, our district, and our planet.

Further acknowledges, however, that recent data collated by Climate Emergency UK ranks NMDDC 8th out of the 11 Councils within NI; and thus, pledges to include ambitious targets in the forthcoming Sustainability and Climate Strategies and Action Plans to expedite implementation.

Considers that political instability hinders a transition to a greener economy and thus agrees to write to the Secretary of State for NI, the Shadow Secretary of State for NI, and the Irish Republic's Minister of Foreign Affairs to press the urgent need to reform the institutions of the Good Friday Agreement and accept the recommendations contained within the report of the Westminster's Northern Ireland Affairs Committee evaluating their effectiveness".

18.0 Notice of Motion - Geographical Disparity in Northern Ireland

Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Sharvin:

"Expresses grave concern at the significant geographic disparities in the economy of Northern Ireland between those areas which have experienced economic prosperity and those areas which have been left behind. "

"Recognises that too many of our communities are still trapped in levels of poverty. Expresses concern that the proportion of the population in Newry, Mourne and Down who are living in households where income is below 60% of the NI average (15.3%) is higher than the Northern Ireland average (13.1%) and is the third highest in Northern Ireland after Derry and Strabane and Fermanagh and Omagh."

"Welcomes the publication of an action plan by Invest Northern Ireland (NI) to implement the recommendations of the recent review which revealed the scale of failure of Invest NI to work as a partner on a sub-regional basis."

"Welcomes the proposal for legislation to address these regional economic imbalances through a Regional Jobs and Investment Bill. "

"Resolves to take all possible measures to alleviate regional economic imbalances in order to give every citizen equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of geography."

"Commits to responding to the consultation on this legislation which is currently open."

19.0 Notice of Motion - Kilbroney Park Playing Pitches

Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Tinnelly:

"This Council shares the frustration and disappointment of the wider Crotlieve football & sporting fraternity, that almost three years after a planning application was submitted to upgrade the existing playing pitches @ Kilbroney Park, information remains outstanding that would allow the planning department to complete their deliberations and bring forward a recommendation."

"Council remains very concerned at the unacceptable delay and inertia that has enveloped this process throughout 2023 and the inability of the project managers to progress the application to the stage where the planning department can conclude their work."

"Council notes the latest correspondence on the planning portal dated December 7th 2023, between the planning department and the project managers and agrees that an intervention from elected members is both appropriate and necessary to help break the logjam."

"Council now instructs the project managers to withdraw the pavillion/changing room element from this current application and to immediately provide the remaining outstanding information as requested by the planning department so a recommendation regarding the upgrading the pitches themselves can be made without further delay."

"Furthermore, project managers will immediately seek to identify an alternative site for the pavillion and will submit a separate planning application for a pavillion within three months of this meeting."

"Project managers will also provide a monthly update to council regarding the other outstanding matters as requested by the planning department."

20.0 Notice of Motion - BBC Programme Farm Gate & Agricultural issues

Notice of Motion was received from Councillor McAteer:

" That this Council views with deep concern, BBC Northern Ireland's move to axe the agricultural feature segment programme, "Farm Gate" from their Radio Ulster schedule.

And further demands that BBC NI fulfills it's obligations and responsibilities as a public service broadcaster to the farming and rural community. We also call on BBC NI to formally commit to providing regular, adequate, and bespoke coverage of live agricultural issues, including market and produce trends." If passed this motion will be sent to Mr Adam Smyth, BBC Northern Ireland Director.

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews
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Cllr Callum Bowsie
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Mrs Fionnuala Branagh
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Cllr Jim Brennan
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Cllr Pete Byrne
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Mr Gerard Byrne
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Cllr Philip Campbell
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Mr Andrew Cassells
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Cllr William Clarke
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Mrs Linda Cummins
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Cllr Laura Devlin
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Ms Louise Dillon
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Cllr Cadogan Enright
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Cllr Killian Feehan
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Cllr Doire Finn
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Cllr Aoife Finnegan
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Ms Joanne Fleming
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Cllr Conor Galbraith
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Cllr Mark Gibbons
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Cllr Oonagh Hanlon
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Cllr Glyn Hanna
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Cllr Valerie Harte
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Cllr Roisin Howell
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Ms Catherine Hughes
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Cllr Jonathan Jackson
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Cllr Geraldine Kearns
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Miss Veronica Keegan
.....
Mrs Josephine Kelly
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Cllr Tierna Kelly
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Mrs Sheila Kieran
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Cllr Cathal King
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Cllr Mickey Larkin
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Cllr David Lee-Surginor
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Cllr Alan Lewis
.....
Cllr Oonagh Magennis
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Mr Conor Mallon
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Cllr Aidan Mathers
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Cllr Declan McAteer
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Cllr Leeanne McEvoy
.....
Jonathan McGilly
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Cllr Andrew McMurray
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Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston
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Cllr Declan Murphy
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Cllr Kate Murphy
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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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Mr Peter Rooney
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Donna Starkey
.....
Sarah Taggart
.....
Paul Tamati
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Cllr Jill Truesdale
.....
Mrs Marie Ward
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ACTIONS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
<i>C/178/2019</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – C/131/2019: Live Animals in Circuses</i>	<i>At the request of Councillor McAteer it was agreed the motion remain on the action sheet.</i>	<i>Democratic Services</i>		<i>N</i>
<i>C/084/2022</i>	<i>Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 28.03.22 – with NIAS & SHSCT</i>	<i>It was agreed to bring forth problem solving solutions to the NIAS in all facets of their work and for this action to be retained on the Action Sheet to keep track of progress</i>	<i>Democratic Services</i>		<i>N</i>

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 4 DECEMBER 2023

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
<i>C/230/2023</i>	<i>Action sheet from meeting held on 06.11.2023</i>	The action sheet was noted. In response for an update regarding difficulties experienced with booking of facilities at the Newry Leisure Centre, the Chief Executive advised a report would be presented at the next Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting on 18 December 2023.	<i>Democratic Services</i> <i>P Tamati</i>	Noted	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/231/2023</i>	<i>Minutes of Council Meeting held on 06.11.2023</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	<i>Y</i>

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
<i>C/232/2023</i>	<i>Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 30.10.2023</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	Y
<i>C/233/2023</i>	<i>Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 06.11.2023</i>	<p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.</p> <p>It was agreed that a Council write to DfI Roads to request a review of the maintenance and infrastructure of the Mourne DEA.</p> <p>It was that Council write to the Department of Economy who were designing the Scheme and put on record that Council want them to reexamine funding for those businesses that had missed out and try and get relief for them.</p>	<p><i>Democratic Services</i></p> <p><i>C Boyd</i></p> <p><i>C Boyd</i></p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Correspondence sent</p> <p>Correspondence sent</p>	Y
<i>C/234/2023</i>	<i>Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 13.11.2023</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	Y
<i>C/235/2023</i>	<i>Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 16.11.2023</i>	<p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.</p> <p>It was agreed that a report be brought back the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee to be held on 18 January 2024 regarding the allocation of resources to deal with planning applications.</p>	<p><i>Democratic Services</i></p> <p><i>J Kelly</i></p> <p><i>C Mallon</i></p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted for January SPR Committee Agenda</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
<i>C/236/2023</i>	<i>Appendix 1 – Newry City Park – Contract for funding.</i>	It was agreed to note the contents of the contract for funding.	<i>P Tamati</i>	Noted	Y
<i>C/237/2023</i>	<i>Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting 20.11.2023</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted. In response for a timeline in relation to the rollout of more inclusive autism friendly swimming sessions from Councillor Sharvin, the Chief Executive advised an officer would revert to him on the matter.	<i>Democratic Services P Tamati</i>	Noted	Y
<i>C/238/2023</i>	<i>Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting 22.11.2023</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted. Mr Cassells advised he would bring back a report to the Sustainable and Environment Committee in relation to those green issues and related matters raised.	<i>Democratic Services A Cassells</i>	Noted	Y
<i>C/239/2023</i>	<i>Planning Section</i>	There were no issues arising.	<i>Democratic Services</i>		Y
<i>C/240/2023</i>	<i>Letters from Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council And Lisburn And Castlereagh Borough Council</i>	It was agreed to note the correspondence received.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
	<i>and DfI re: reprioritisation of the A1</i>				
<i>C/241/2023</i>	<i>Letter from Ards and North Down Borough Council re: Lifelong Learning Campaign</i>	The correspondence was noted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	Y
<i>C/242/2023</i>	<i>Correspondence regarding Barclay's, Newry Branch</i>	The correspondence was noted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	Y
<i>C/243/2023</i>	<i>Notice of Motion: Flood Defences</i>	Recent flooding has exposed the clear inadequacy of flood defences within the District. To address this, and in the absence of a functioning Stormont Executive to swiftly invest in flood defence infrastructure, Council will work with Louth County council, the Irish Government and relevant Stormont Departments to submit a funding application to the Shared Island unit for upgrades to relevant flood defence systems in the district. In particular this work will consider: The ongoing Newry Flood Alleviation projects; The Shimna and Burren River Flood Alleviation Schemes in Newcastle; The lack of capital investment in Downpatrick with particular reference to water flow at the New Belfast Road Bridge and the lack of capacity and ability of the Quoile Barrier to release enough water between high tides; To seek a replacement for the Quoile Barrier in a similar manner to the Lagan River Barrier with a design suitable for the next 100 years; Examine the outcome of work undertaken in the past in areas like	<i>A Cassells</i>	Will be brought to Sustainability and Environment Committee in January 2024.	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>Rostrevor, Flurry Bridge and other areas to assess the effectiveness of investment and any future plans; Seek an update on the adequacy of the schedule of rivers maintenance work across the District.</p> <p>The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee</p>			
<i>C/244/2023</i>	<i>Notice of Notion: Flood Preparedness</i>	<p>That this Council explores the Purchasing and storing of sand-less sandbags and flood barriers and exploration of other forms of more environmentally conscious flood defences suitable for a range of flooding incidents and sewage protection.</p> <p>-Writes to the NIEA calling for the immediate implementation of a flood warning system in line with England, Scotland and Wales, and fully implement the creation of Community Flood Plans such as those used by the Environment Agency.</p> <p>-Meets with the Drainage and Flooding Council and Rivers Agency to explore the adequacy and performance of their flood-defence capital investments in the District.</p> <p>- Examines the maintenance schedules in NM&D District for shores, road sheughs, gullies and major drains like the plank or Saul drains in Downpatrick between the different agencies.</p> <p>The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee</p>	<i>A Cassells</i>	<i>Will be brought to Sustainability and Environment Committee in January 2024.</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/245/2023</i>	<i>Notice of Motion: Utilising Green Spaces</i>	<p>This Council recognises the importance of utilising green spaces and enhancing them for the benefit of our local communities; Council notes the positive impact that green spaces can have on people's mental health and well-being; Council further notes</p>	<i>P Tamati</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		<p>The Woodland Trusts assessment that trees can act as a natural flood mitigation measure; Council therefore will look at options to deliver a native tree planting scheme in Dunleath park which will not only enhance civic greenspace for the local community but will also assist with potential future flooding incidents.</p> <p>The Motion was referred to the Active and Healthy Communities Committee</p>			
<i>C/246/2023</i>	<i>Notice of Motion: Emotional Health and wellbeing of Young People</i>	<p>It was agreed that this Council notes that young people experiencing emotional problems may find it difficult to engage with the education process to reach their full potential, especially those aged 16 – 18, and may require sustained contact with a qualified counsellor who is not directly involved with their education or training and can provide necessary therapies; welcomes the work undertaken by the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) as well as the support in further education to support the emotional health and wellbeing of young people, supports the need for schools, colleges and other youth providers to bring in external agencies with necessary expertise when there is limited access to support and will write to all schools, colleges and youth providers in the District to ascertain the challenges they are facing in obtaining these resources, and commits to revisit this matter once responses have been received to determine if additional financial support may be required.</p>	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted Correspondence sent	<i>Y</i>

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
<i>C/247/2023</i>	<i>Notice of Motion: Supporting Fair Play for Workers</i>	It was agreed that this Council extends solidarity to education workers who recently took part in strike action; Acknowledges that these workers are vital to running our schools with school transport, school meals, special educational needs support, hygiene and other important support services; Supports them in their campaign for fair pay and conditions; And calls on the Department of Education, the Education Authority and the British Government to work together to deliver fair pay for these public sector workers.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted Correspondence sent	Y
<i>C/248/2023</i>	<i>Notice of Motion: Town & City Gift Cards</i>	To support traders in the wake of recent flooding and help stimulate spending in the local economy, Council will explore setting up a local gift card or voucher scheme and, subject to committee approval, support the initial set up costs of such a scheme. This would be similar to the gift card programmes that have been highly successful in Enniskillen, Ballymena, Mid Ulster and elsewhere, which are easily facilitated via a subscription service with a third-party provider. The intention would be to trial this scheme in Downpatrick initially, with potential for expansion to other parts of the District. The Motion was referred to the Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee	<i>C Mallon</i>	Noted	Y
<i>C/249/2023</i>	<i>Notice of Motion: Bank Closures & ATMs</i>	It was agreed that Council notes its concern with Ulster Banks decision to close another ten of its branches resulting in the loss of 21 jobs and removal of access to cash and face to face services; acknowledges that the move towards increased	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	Y

<i>Minute Ref</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Lead Officer</i>	<i>Actions taken/ Progress to date</i>	<i>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</i>
		digitalisation will make it harder for small businesses to access finance and for people to access cash, advice and ATM services; recognises the worrying trend that 52 branches across various banks have closed in the last three years; and calls on this Council to invite the Financial Services Unions (FSU) to make a presentation to the chamber regarding its campaign calling for Ulster Bank to reverse these closures, protect jobs and maintain its branch network; and supports efforts that would protect our local communities and prevent further branch closures in the next few years. The Council recognises that a considerable number of workers travel across the border to work in our local economy in Newry and surrounding areas; We acknowledge the frustration that these workers have with there being only one ATM in Newry that dispenses their wages in Euros; This Council will write to the main banks and ATM providers to request that additional euro dispensing ATMs are provided in the city and further calls on an incoming Executive to set up a banking forum to look at the wider issue of access to cash and banking services. It was agreed that Council also contact Link and the Consumer Council to look at the assessment of cash services and the need for Euro ATMs and that Council look at a banking hub within Newry.		Correspondence sent	
<i>C/250/2023</i>	<i>Notice of Motion: Cystic Fibrosis Medication</i>	It was agreed that Council notes with extreme concern proposals by NICE to remove its NHS recommendations for Kaftiro, Orkambi and Symkevi due to rising costs; calls upon NICE to reconsider this proposal without hesitation to make such medication available to all in need; and will write to	<i>Democratic Services</i>	Noted	<i>Y</i>

<i>Minute Ref</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Lead Officer</i>	<i>Actions taken/ Progress to date</i>	<i>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</i>
		<p>the Department of Health to request an assessment of the efficacy of this drug to help save lives since its introduction in January 2022; and to consider amending the minimum age for recipients of this medication to 2 so as to ensure that all those who suffer from cystic fibrosis have the best start in life.</p> <p>It was also agreed that Council would write to the other 10 Councils in Northern Ireland and the Prime Minister highlighting Council's opposition to the removal of these drugs and to reverse the decision.</p>		<i>Correspondence sent</i>	
<i>END</i>					

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**NMD/C/****Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 4 December 2023 at 6.00pm in Downshire Chamber****In the Chair:**

Councillor V Harte

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor J Brennan
Councillor P Byrne	Councillor P Campbell
Councillor L Devlin	Councillor C Enright
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor D Finn
Councillor A Finnegan	Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor G Hanna
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor G Kearns
Councillor C King	Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor A Lewis	Councillor O Magennis
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D McAteer
Councillor A McMurray	Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor D Murphy	Councillor K Murphy
Councillor S Murphy	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Rice	Councillor M Ruane
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor J Truesdale

In attendance via Teams:

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor R Howell	Councillor M Larkin
Councillor L McEvoy	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor J Tinnelly	

Officials in attendance in Chamber:

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
 Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer
 Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

C/228/2023 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Gibbons, Kelly and Taylor and Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services

The Chairperson asked that a letter of condolence be sent to the family of Dylan Vallely, the nephew of colleague Louise Dillon, who tragically lost his life on 15 November 2023.

The Chairperson confirmed the charities that she would be supporting during her term in office had been launched and included the following:

- Down Right Brilliant,
- Life Change Changes Lives,
- Newry All Stars Special Olympic Club,
- Sound Friends
- Well Lane Warriors

Members were advised the charities represented a diverse range of causes and their significant contribution transformed the lives of many individuals and families in the heart of the community. All five charities shared the same challenges with reduced funding and a lack of volunteers, both of which continued to impact their ability to deliver the range of support services.

The Chairperson said she had agreed to support 7 food banks in the area by contributing £500 to each of them and that it was fitting as Chairperson to help and support the most vulnerable within the District.

C/229/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Andrews declared an interest in item 5 of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 13 November 2023 as Chairperson of the East Border Region Board.

C/230/2023 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2023

Read: Action sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023 (copy circulated).

In response for an update from Councillor Finn regarding difficulties experienced with booking of facilities at the Newry Leisure Centre, the Chief Executive advised a report would be presented at the next Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting on 18 December 2023.

Agreed: The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

C/231/2023 **COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING
OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Hanlon.**

C/232/2023 **SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING
OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 30 October 2023 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 30 October 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Campbell.**

C/233/2023 **SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING
OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023 (copy circulated).

Councillor McMurray enquired whether the independent review into flooding had been progressed and spoke of the importance of elected representatives and those directly affected, including business owners and residents having an avenue to feed into the review.

The Chief Executive confirmed the independent review was being progressed centrally between the Departments and Council was included in that. She added the Terms of Reference had not been agreed however Council was still very much in recovery and response mode. She anticipated information regarding the review would be brought forward with Councillors being able to feed into the review.

Councillor McAteer spoke of how the motion agreed that a robust and comprehensive review of Council's response throughout the incidents would be commenced immediately and he was very keen to have the internal review and report details. He also made reference to the £13million fund that remained and asked whether there had been any discussion with Council officers and relevant Government bodies to release those funds.

The Chief Executive responded that Council was still very much in response and recovery mode, and confirmed an internal meeting was scheduled at officer level. She

added Council had been administering funding on behalf of central government, and the second phase was due to be announced soon as this was being worked on with relevant government departments. This required UK Treasury approval and as soon as an update was provided, she would bring that to Elected Members.

In referring to issues that arose regarding the A2 Coastal route and the Shore Road and Newcastle Road, Kilkeel, Councillor Rice voiced concern that road gullies and storm drains were not appropriately cleaned and proposed a review of the infrastructure and maintenance in the Mourne DEA be included within the internal review. This was seconded by Councillor D Murphy.

Councillor Sharvin asked for clarity on Council's role in the administration of monies, as it was being said that Council were being unnecessarily bureaucratic regarding the criteria that had limited the monies that were being released, which he understood was not correct. He also queried whether there was a doubt within an application if Council sought guidance from the Department on those applications to ensure the right decision had been reached.

Councillor Sharvin welcomed that the Chief Executive was continuing to push for phase two money as quickly as possible because on the ground businesses were still struggling and facing challenges in keeping the doors open.

Mrs Ward pointed out that due to the extent of flooding within the District she had been part of the economic recovery subgroup made up of various different departments across central government and the first package was developed jointly however the money required approval through UK Treasury and had to meet their requirements. Councillor Hanlon welcomed the move towards phase two and spoke of the need to allay fears of the business community. She expressed concern at how funding in phase one was allocated and that it was shortsighted due to the impact the flooding had was something that businesses could legislate for.

Councillor Hanlon proposed that Council write to the Department of Economy asking that Council want them to reexamine funding for those businesses that had missed out on the financial assistance. This was seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

Mrs Ward took the opportunity to point out that Council was undertaking its own internal audit process and would also be subject to audit by the Department for the Economy as well as the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

Councillor Reilly advised Mr J McKee from DfI had confirmed provision of a container for sandbags if a location could be located and asked if one could be located within the Mourne area and if the addition of some bags of salt be considered. Mrs Ward advised the matter would be picked up through the emergency planning structures with Rivers Agency.

Agreed: The Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Devlin.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Rice and seconded by Councillor Murphy it was agreed that a Council write to DfI Roads to request a review of the maintenance and infrastructure of the Mournes DEA.**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin that Council write to the Department of Economy who were designing the Scheme and put on record that Council want them to reexamine funding for those businesses that had missed out and try and get relief for them.**

Councillor Andrews left the meeting for the following item - 6.30pm.

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/234/2023 MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2023

Read: Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 13 November 2023 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 13 November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor.**

Councillor Andrews rejoined the meeting at this point – 6.31pm.

C/235/2023 MINUTES OF STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2023

Read: Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 November 2023 and appendix 1, SPR/166/2023 – Newry City Park, Contract for Funding. (copy circulated).

SPR/159/2023: Mid-Year Assessment – Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24

Councillor Byrne referred to his query on the average time taken for a major planning application to be determined, and following discussions with officers it had been explained this was down to how long one application had sat on the system. He spoke of the need for effort to be put in place to address these legacy applications and all other planning applications received.

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer that a report be brought back to the next Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee regarding the allocation of resources to deal with planning applications.

Appendix 1, SPR/166/2023 – Newry City Park, Contract for Funding

Mrs Ward advised Members that the contract for funding which had been tabled at Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee had a slight operational amendment which she asked Members to note.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Sharvin.**

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor McAteer that a report be brought back the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee to be held on 18 January 2024 regarding the allocation of resources to deal with planning applications.

C/237/2023 **MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2023 (copy circulated).

In response for a timeline in relation to the rollout of more inclusive autism friendly swimming sessions from Councillor Sharvin, the Chief Executive advised an officer would revert to him on the matter.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Magennis.**

C/238/2023 **MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 22 November 2023 (copy circulated).

SE/127/2023: Fleet Replacement

Councillor Enright welcomed the news that electric vehicles were to be placed in Downpatrick in 2024 as he believed they were financially a better option for small and medium-sized vans however voiced concern at being informed that electric charging

points could not be installed at the Newry depot. He asked that the Newry depot be examined again and that Council look at the whole life costs of every classification of vehicle to try and learn what the Councils in Great Britain were doing.

Mr Cassells clarified that there were limitations on the number of electric vehicle availability at the Newry Depot which was different to the limitation at Strangford Rd. During discussion Councillors Reilly and Andrews spoke of the need for massive investment in electricity infrastructure across the District.

Mr Cassells advised he would bring back a report to the Sustainable and Environment Committee in relation to those green issues and related matters raised.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 22 November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Andrews.**

C/239/2023 PLANNING SECTION

There were no issues arising.

CORRESPONDENCE

C/240/2023 LETTER FROM ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL AND LISBURN AND CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL RE: REPRIORITISATION OF THE A1

Read: Correspondence from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council regarding reprioritisation of A1 dated 13 October and 1 November 2023 respectively and correspondence from Department for Infrastructure and Northern Ireland Office dated 29 November 2023. (Copy circulated)

Councillor K Murphy voiced her disappointment at the correspondence received stating that the safety improvements on the A1 needed to be delivered as a matter of priority with budget constraints affecting every aspect for delivery of key projects. She spoke of how in 2021 officials had indicated with procurement and construction it could take approximately five years to deliver and two years later there was no progression and it was a matter of public safety.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Finn to note the correspondence received regarding the Reprioritisation of the A1.**

C/241/2023 **LETTER FROM ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL RE: LIFELONG LEARNING CAMPAIGN**

Read: Correspondence from Ards and North Down Borough Council regarding Lifelong Learning Campaign dated 20 November 2023. (Copy circulated)

Councillor O'Hare welcomed the correspondence regarding lifelong learning which she felt was positive as this was an area that needed the support of elected representatives. She urged caution as the focus needed to be on providing the funding required by Education to do the job and provide lifelong learning.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Finn to note the correspondence received regarding Lifelong Learning Campaign.**

C/242/2023 **CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING BARCLAYS, NEWRY BRANCH**

Read: Correspondence from Barclays regarding Newry Branch. (Copy circulated)

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Finn to note the correspondence received regarding Lifelong Learning Campaign.**

C/243/2023 **NOTICE OF MOTION – FLOOD DEFENCES**

The following motion was received from Councillor Enright:

"Recent flooding has exposed the clear inadequacy of flood defences within the District. To address this, and in the absence of a functioning Stormont Executive to swiftly invest in flood defence infrastructure, Council will work with Louth County council, the Irish Government and relevant Stormont Departments to submit a funding application to the Shared Island unit for upgrades to relevant flood defence systems in the district. In particular this work will consider:

The ongoing Newry Flood Alleviation projects; The Shimna and Burren River Flood Alleviation Schemes in Newcastle; The lack of capital investment in Downpatrick with particular reference to water flow at the New Belfast Road Bridge and the lack of capacity and ability of the Quoile Barrier to release enough water between high tides; To seek a replacement for the Quoile Barrier in a similar manner to the Lagan River Barrier with a design suitable for the next 100 years; Examine the outcome of work undertaken in the past in areas like Rostrevor, Flurry Bridge and other areas to assess the effectiveness of investment and any future plans; Seek an update on the adequacy of the schedule of rivers maintenance work across the District".

The motion was seconded by Councillor Truesdale.

Agreed: **The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.**

C/244/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

The following motion was received from Councillor J Truesdale:

*"That this Council explores the Purchasing and storing of sand-less sandbags and flood barriers and exploration of other forms of more environmentally conscious flood defences suitable for a range of flooding incidents and sewage protection.
-Writes to the NIEA calling for the immediate implementation of a flood warning system in line with England, Scotland and Wales, and fully implement the creation of Community Flood Plans such as those used by the Environment Agency.
-Meets with the Drainage and Flooding Council and Rivers Agency to explore the adequacy and performance of their flood-defence capital investments in the District.
- Examines the maintenance schedules in NM&D District for shores, road sheughs, gullies and major drains like the plank or Saul drains in Downpatrick between the different agencies."*

The motion was seconded by Councillor McMurray.

Agreed: **The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.**

C/245/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – UTILISING GREEN SPACES

The following motion was received from Councillor Campbell:

"This Council recognises the importance of utilising green spaces and enhancing them for the benefit of our local communities; Council notes the positive impact that green spaces can have on people's mental health and well-being; Council further notes The Woodland Trusts assessment that trees can act as a natural flood mitigation measure; Council therefore will look at options to deliver a native tree planting scheme in Dunleath park which will not only enhance civic greenspace for the local community but will also assist with potential future flooding incidents."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Finnegan.

Agreed: **The Motion was referred to the Active and Healthy Communities Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.**

C/246/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE

The following motion was received from Councillor Galbraith:

"This Council notes that young people experiencing emotional problems may find it difficult to engage with the education process to reach their full potential, especially those aged 16 – 18, and may require sustained contact with a qualified adult who is not directly involved with their education or training and can provide necessary therapies; welcomes the work undertaken by the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) as well as the support in further education to support the emotional health and wellbeing of young people, supports the need for schools, colleges and other youth providers to bring in external agencies with necessary expertise when there is limited access to support and will write to all schools, colleges and youth providers in the District to ascertain the challenges they are facing in obtaining these resources, and commits to revisit this matter once responses have been received to determine if additional financial support may be required."

The motion was seconded by Councillor O'Hare.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Galbraith advised he had had the privilege of meeting young people who were part of a youth led research project conducted by Gets Active Youth Advisory group in Northern Ireland. This was a diverse collective of young people who met regularly to discuss holiday programmes, how to ensure children get enough healthy food and physical activity and how to improve the lives of those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

He asked Members for support in bringing the motion forward to see what other support was required and ensure that Council played an active role moving forward.

Councillor O'Hare spoke of the importance of supporting of young people experiencing emotional difficulties in schools and colleges and is often underfunded and resourced. She sought clarity on the wording and proposed an amendment to include insert the words qualified counsellor as follows:

*"This Council notes that young people experiencing emotional problems may find it difficult to engage with the education process to reach their full potential, especially those aged 16 – 18, and may require sustained contact with a qualified ~~adult~~ **counsellor** who is not directly involved with their education or training and can provide necessary therapies; welcomes the work undertaken by the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) as well as the support in further education to support the emotional health and wellbeing of young people, supports the need for schools, colleges and other youth providers to bring in external agencies with necessary expertise when there is limited access to support and will write to all schools, colleges and youth providers in the District to ascertain the challenges they are facing in obtaining these resources, and commits to revisit this matter once responses have been received to determine if additional financial support may be required."*

Councillor Galbraith accepted Councillor O'Hare's proposed amendment.

In welcoming the motion Councillor Truesdale voiced concern at the words 'qualified adult' and 'necessary expertise'.

As a qualified academic Counsellor herself, Councillor Truesdale advised she had no client hours other than training with her class group, but because the UK had no statutory regulation of Counsellors she could put a sign on her door and charge for Counselling and this was concerning. She added that unless people asked the right questions the practice was open to exploitation. The Education Authority had provision set up where schools could opt for a company, or person, from the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy and tender for the work, that usually means the cheapest. This meant there was a high turnover of staff which was not what you need when trying to build relationships, it also meant if a child didn't click with the assigned school Counsellor they were not offered another one.

Councillor Truesdale added current counselling training did not incorporate neurodiversity training as part of the overall diversity modules. Autistic people made up approximately 1% of the population, but 11% of suicides, and that was not considering the figures on ADHD diagnosed and undiagnosed. The current NICE guidelines on therapy state that any form of therapy needed to be adapted for autistic clients but did not offer any guidance as to how.

Councillor Truesdale proposed the motion be amended as follows:

*"This Council notes that young people experiencing emotional problems may find it difficult to engage with the education process to reach their full potential, especially those aged 16 – 18, and may require sustained contact with **a professionally trained adult who has recognised qualifications and experience in the field of youth therapy** who is not directly involved with their education or training and can provide necessary therapies; welcomes the work undertaken by the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) as well as the support in further education to support the emotional health and wellbeing of young people, supports the need for schools, colleges and other youth providers to bring in **external agencies with necessary qualifications and expertise recognised by the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society** when there is limited access to support and will write to all schools, colleges and youth providers in the District to ascertain the challenges they are facing in obtaining these resources, and commits to revisit this matter once responses have been received to determine if additional financial support may be required." **And in addition Write to the EA asking for the creation of an accredited Children and Young People register in conjunction with the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society who already have one but which the EA do not recognise. External agencies will also be included on this register with qualifications and accreditations clearly laid out"**.*

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Byrne for the meeting to recess to consider Councillor Truesdale's amendment.

The meeting did then recess – 7pm

The meeting did then resume – 7.11pm

Following discussion, Councillor Galbraith advised he understood what Councillor Truesdale was proposing, however he did not accept the amendment as it took away from the motion that had been inspired by the young people and suggested it could be brought as a motion separately by Councillor Truesdale.

Councillor Truesdale agreed to withdraw the amendment.

The Motion was unanimously approved and Councillor Galbraith thanked Members for their support.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Galbraith, seconded by Councillor O’Hare that this Council notes that young people experiencing emotional problems may find it difficult to engage with the education process to reach their full potential, especially those aged 16 – 18, and may require sustained contact with a qualified counsellor who is not directly involved with their education or training and can provide necessary therapies; welcomes the work undertaken by the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) as well as the support in further education to support the emotional health and wellbeing of young people, supports the need for schools, colleges and other youth providers to bring in external agencies with necessary expertise when there is limited access to support and will write to all schools, colleges and youth providers in the District to ascertain the challenges they are facing in obtaining these resources, and commits to revisit this matter once responses have been received to determine if additional financial support may be required.**

C/247/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – SUPPORTING FAIR PAY FOR WORKERS

The following motion was received from Councillor Hanlon:

"This Council extends solidarity to education workers who recently took part in strike action; Acknowledges that these workers are vital to running our schools with school transport, school meals, special educational needs support, hygiene and other important support services; Supports them in their campaign for fair pay and conditions; And calls on the Department of Education, the Education Authority and the British Government to work together to deliver fair pay for these public sector workers".

The motion was seconded by Councillor D Murphy.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Hanlon stated Sinn Féin stood in solidarity with staff employed by the Education Authority and teachers who were taking strike action to secure a fair pay settlement and the striking workers who were taking industrial action for a fair pay settlement deserved support and solidarity. She spoke of workers including school bus drivers, escorts, maintenance and catering staff, classroom

assistants, playground supervisors, school administrative staff, cleaners, building supervisors and ground maintenance staff were all essential to the running of schools.

Councillor Hanlon said teachers across the north deserved fair pay and conditions and it was disgraceful that teachers were again being forced on to the picket lines at a time when workers, including teachers, are facing a huge squeeze on their finances due to the cost of living crisis. Teachers had consistently seen their wages fall in real terms year after year and were worse off than their colleagues in the rest of these islands.

Councillor Byrne, on behalf of SDLP, spoke in support of the motion and how he had joined the picket line in St Patricks School, Crossmaglen where he spoke to teachers, classroom assistant and other staff and that it was angry frustration at this point at the difference in pay across the regions. He spoke at length about teachers' salaries and pay parity across the islands and how in England starting salaries were just over £31,000 and Wales are just under £30,000 and Scotland would move to £38,000 from the 1 January 2024 and yet Northern Ireland was sitting at £24,000. He referred to the recent announcement of 6.5% pay ward for teachers in England and Wales and how the decision would trigger the Stormont consequential to get the money here but that it was not ringfenced for Education and that it could actually go towards the debt that had been building from the Stormont overspend.

Councillor Byrne pointed out the motion focused on education however there was a knock-on effect right across the board and long term planning through the Executive being formed was needed to fight for the rights of the people that were meant to be represented.

In supporting the motion on behalf of the Alliance Party, Councillor McMurray said all staff members in schools deserved to be paid fairly for their vital work and were supportive of their right to engage in industrial action. He stated the system was untenable and unsustainable and that it was unforgivable to not have an Education Minister in post to support schools and that the boycott of the Executive was having propound impact across all public services.

Councillor Jackson spoke in support of the motion on behalf of the DUP and how they recognised the value of teachers acknowledging how many kept their classrooms going out of their own pocket. He stated the DUP wanted to see a fair deal for Stormont with proper funding to sustain financing and valuable workers and spoke of financial difficulties faced by the Executive should Stormont return. He spoke of how the UK Government must recognise that a fair deal and adequate funding was necessary to support the teachers and school workers and wanted to see a sustainable budget to facilitate better funding, bringing teachers into line with the rest of UK counterparts.

Councillor Hanlon thanked all parties for supporting the motion which was unanimously approved.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor D Murphy that this Council extends solidarity to education workers who recently took part in strike action; Acknowledges that these workers are vital to running our**

schools with school transport, school meals, special educational needs support, hygiene and other important support services;
Supports them in their campaign for fair pay and conditions;
And calls on the Department of Education, the Education Authority and the British Government to work together to deliver fair pay for these public sector workers.

C/248/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – TOWN & CITY GIFT CARDS

The following motion was received from Councillors Lee-Surginor:

"To support traders in the wake of recent flooding and help stimulate spending in the local economy, Council will explore setting up a local gift card or voucher scheme and, subject to committee approval, support the initial set up costs of such a scheme. This would be similar to the gift card programmes that have been highly successful in Enniskillen, Ballymena, Mid Ulster and elsewhere, which are easily facilitated via a subscription service with a third-party provider. The intention would be to trial this scheme in Downpatrick initially, with potential for expansion to other parts of the District."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Enright.

Agreed: The Motion was referred to the Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

C/249/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – BANK CLOSURES AND EURO ATMS

The following motion was received from Councillor Mathers:

"This Council notes its concern with Ulster Banks decision to close another ten of its branches resulting in the loss of 21 jobs and removal of access to cash and face to face services; acknowledges that the move towards increased digitalisation will make it harder for small businesses to access finance and for people to access cash, advice and ATM services; recognises the worrying trend that 52 branches across various banks have closed in the last three years; and calls on this Council to invite the Financial Services Unions (FSU) to make a presentation to the chamber regarding its campaign calling for Ulster Bank to reverse these closures, protect jobs and maintain its branch network; and supports efforts that would protect our local communities and prevent further branch closures in the next few years. The Council recognises that a considerable number of workers travel across the border to work in our local economy in Newry and surrounding areas; We acknowledge the frustration that these workers have with there being only one ATM in Newry that dispenses their wages in Euros; This Council will write to the main banks and ATM providers to request that additional euro dispensing ATMs are provided in the city and further calls on an incoming Executive to

set up a banking forum to look at the wider issue of access to cash and banking services."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Hanlon.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Mathers stated the announced closure of branches in Downpatrick, Newry and Ballynahinch was a blow to Newry, Mourne and Down Districts local communities and surrounding villages particularly the workers and their families. Local branches were a vital service for both small businesses and personal banking and the loss of these branches would cause huge disruption, particularly for people in rural communities who would have to travel further to access a bank, and for people who were unable to use online banking. He spoke of how in recent years, the closure of banks in Warrenpoint and Newcastle had had a huge impact on residents here.

Councillor Mathers pointed out the closure of branches had further highlighted the need for accessible ATM machines and in particular ATMS that dispense Euros with many employees in Newry and surrounding areas working in the South and requiring access to their salary in Euros. It was inadequate to have only one ATM in the city which was often depleted of cash such was the demand from locals and visitors.

Councillor Mathers added there was an amendment to the motion as follows:

That Council writes to the Financial Conduct Authority urging them to intervene to put a block on any further bank branch closures. We support the FSU in their campaign to reverse the closures of these Ulster Bank branches.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Hanlon voiced concern at hearing there may be job losses as a result of the closures and the impact this would have on workers and their families and that efforts must be made by Ulster Bank to redeploy and re-skill workers. She said that whilst the trend was towards digital banking for some customers this was not possible and rural communities important services were disappearing. Banks were the hub of communities and a vital presence to encourage foot flow onto streets.

Councillors Andrews, Lee-Surginor, Finn, Hanna and Brennan all spoke in support of the motion and the devastating effect bank closures were having on communities within the District.

Councillor Finn proposed the following amendment:

"That Council also contact Link and the Consumer Council to look at the assessment of cash services and the need for Euro ATMs and that Council look at a banking hub within Newry".

Councillor Mathers accepted Councillor Finn's amendment.

Councillor Mathers thanked Members for their support of the motion and the motion was unanimously approved.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Hanlon that Council notes its

concern with Ulster Banks decision to close another ten of its branches resulting in the loss of 21 jobs and removal of access to cash and face to face services; acknowledges that the move towards increased digitalisation will make it harder for small businesses to access finance and for people to access cash, advice and ATM services; recognises the worrying trend that 52 branches across various banks have closed in the last three years; and calls on this Council to invite the Financial Services Unions (FSU) to make a presentation to the chamber regarding its campaign calling for Ulster Bank to reverse these closures, protect jobs and maintain its branch network; and supports efforts that would protect our local communities and prevent further branch closures in the next few years. The Council recognises that a considerable number of workers travel across the border to work in our local economy in Newry and surrounding areas; We acknowledge the frustration that these workers have with there being only one ATM in Newry that dispenses their wages in Euros; This Council will write to the main banks and ATM providers to request that additional euro dispensing ATMs are provided in the city and further calls on an incoming Executive to set up a banking forum to look at the wider issue of access to cash and banking services. It was agreed that Council also contact Link and the Consumer Council to look at the assessment of cash services and the need for Euro ATMs and that Council look at a banking hub within Newry.

C/250/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – CYSTIC FIBROSIS MEDICATION

The following motion was received from Councillor Andrews:

"That this Council notes with extreme concern proposals by NICE to remove its NHS recommendations for Kaftiro due to rising costs; calls upon NICE to reconsider this proposal without hesitation to make such medication available to all in need; and will write to the Department of Health to request an assessment of the efficacy of this drug to help save lives since its introduction in January 2022; and to consider amending the minimum age for recipients of this medication to 2 so as to ensure that all those who suffer from cystic fibrosis have the best start in life."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Devlin.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Andrews advised he had been contacted by concerned constituents about the NICE proposals that would have a severe impact on the availability of a drug that helped keep children healthy and live a normal life. He spoke of how the proposals were putting a price tag on the lives of so many children and if enacted, those with cystic fibrosis would be in hospital more frequently and sadly dying younger.

If this decision was taken regarding Kaftiro, this cost cutting decision would be taking away an essential lifeline for many parents and their loved ones.

Councillor Andrews pointed out there were other health conditions that were impacted severely by similar proposals, which he believed was shortsighted and urged Council to write to NICE, the Department of Health, the 10 Councils in Northern Ireland and the Prime Minister sending a message that we oppose this and seek a reversal that this medication and others be allowed to be supplied to the National Health Service.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Devlin thanked Councillor Andrews for raising such an important issue and acknowledged the torment it must be to know that help in the form of medication was out there, but a child could not avail of it due to cost. She stated to put a price on a life was abhorrent and the motion to push for the medication that was so badly needed was really important.

Councillor Campbell spoke in support of motion on behalf of Sinn Féin, and how having researched this, that NICE guidelines were also including Orkambi and Symkevi and proposed an amendment to the motion to include these drugs also.

Councillor Campbell stated that proposing to remove medication from NHS over costs was scandalous and that these drugs significantly improved lung function, helping people with cystic fibrosis to breathe more easily and enhanced their overall quality of life. Parents feared that without it their children would not lead the normal lives they were promised at birth. Children who had been diagnosed had hoped with these medications, they would get a better quality of life and live longer and this would potentially be taken away from them if these recommendations were to go ahead.

Councillor Andrews accepted Councillor Campbell's amendment to include Orkambi and Symkevi.

The Motion was unanimously approved.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Devlin that Council notes with extreme concern proposals by NICE to remove its NHS recommendations for Kaftiro, Orkambi and Symkevi due to rising costs; calls upon NICE to reconsider this proposal without hesitation to make such medication available to all in need; and will write to the Department of Health to request an assessment of the efficacy of this drug to help save lives since its introduction in January 2022; and to consider amending the minimum age for recipients of this medication to 2 so as to ensure that all those who suffer from cystic fibrosis have the best start in life."**

It was also agreed that Council would write to the other 10 Councils in Northern Ireland and the Prime Minister highlighting Council's opposition to the removal of these drugs and to reverse the decision.

The Chairperson took the opportunity to welcome Councillor Killian Feehan to his first Council Meeting.

The Chairperson wished everyone a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.44pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 8 January 2024.

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting
held on Monday 11 December 2023 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, Monaghan Row,
and remotely via Microsoft Teams****Chairperson:** Councillor M Ruane**Committee Members
in attendance in chamber:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor P Campbell
Councillor G Kearns	Councillor S Murphy
Councillor A Quinn	Councillor J Tinnelly

**Committee Members
in attendance via Teams:**

Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor C King
Councillor D Lee-Surginor	Councillor J Truesdale

**Non-Committee Members
Members via Teams:** Councillor O Hanlon**Officials in attendance:** Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration
Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism
Ms Sonya Burns, Head of Programmes – Community Engagement
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer
Ms Linda Cummins, Democratic Services Officer**ERT/150/2023: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

There were no apologies.

ERT/151/2023: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**ERT/152/2023: ACTION SHEET ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION & TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2023****Read:** Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 13 November 2023.
(Copy circulated)**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held**

on Monday 13 November 2023.

NOTICE OF MOTION

ERT/153/2023 – NOTICE OF MOTION – OPEN WATER SWIMMING

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director – Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Notice of Motion – C/219/2023 Open Water Swimming **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Truesdale presented the motion stating the risk was assessed continually by swimmers and costings within the report may never be reached if an executive was restored. She advised that DAERA had agreed to year-round testing, but it needed ministerial approval to go ahead. She asked that Committee consider the decision to test water as an interim decision by Council until an executive was restored.

Councillor Truesdale referenced a publication in May 2023 regarding Individual Bathing Water Profile Bathing, that detailed beaches within the District and their standards. She stated that only the standards at Newcastle out of six beaches across the District had fallen.

In summing up, Councillor Truesdale proposed the following amendment to the motion:

AMENDMENT:

“Council starts interim temporary measure testing at the worst location, which is Newcastle”.

Mr Patterson responded that DAERA had statutory responsibility for water quality monitoring, advising that, with Members approval, Council could write to the Department on the consultation regarding water testing. He drew Members attention to the costs that was not included in the budget, reminding Members that testing that was not remit of Council.

With regard to Councillor Truesdale’s amendment, Councillor Hanna queried whether the cost for one beach would be divisible by the number of beaches across the District. Mr Patterson advised that clarification would need to be sought on costing for one beach rather than all.

Councillor Clarke stated that responsibility sits with DAERA and although he saw merit in the proposed amendment, pressure needed to be kept on the Department with statutory responsibility.

Councillor Truesdale reminded Members that the Department had already agreed to the changes to water testing but can take no action without a restored executive.

Following discussions, the amended proposal was put to a vote by a show of hands, and voting was as follows:

FOR:	7
AGAINST:	8
ABSTENTION:	0

The amendment was not carried.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed Council engage with DAERA who have the statutory responsibility for water quality monitoring, to follow up**

on the 22/23 review which recommended extending the monitoring season to year-round.

ERT/154/2023 – NOTICE OF MOTION – CHILDCARE STRATEGY

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director – Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Notice of Motion – C/220/2023 Childcare Strategy **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor S Murphy presented the motion stating quality childcare and early education provision that puts the best interest of a child at its core, addresses disadvantage, promotes wellbeing and improves the life chances of the next generation was paramount. She highlighted the implications of increasing costs of childcare with a cost-of-living crisis, and the need for two parents to be working, without the childcare infrastructure to support this.

She discussed the requirement of a strategy to consider both the costs for parents, and support for a sector that is already under pressure. Supporting parents was also about supporting sustainability amongst providers, and affordability must be accompanied by accessibility.

Councillor S Murphy reiterated that childcare not only underpinned women's access to employment and professional advancement but was also the largest employer of women here. She stated that the development of a strategy for sustainable childcare by the Department of Education was long overdue; however, the restoration of the executive was imperative to make change happen.

Mr Patterson spoke to the report, detailing the current labour market partnership implementing a Childcare employment academy in the financial year, and next, if budget permitted.

Councillor Andrews agreed with the motion, and proposed the following amendment, seconded by Councillor Feehan:

AMENDMENT:

"That Council write to the Department for Communities to seek an assessment of the impact the lack of an anti-poverty strategy has had on families' access to childcare over the last five years. Assess availability and demand for childcare in the district, to identify areas of most need".

Following discussions, the amended proposal was put to a vote by a show of hands, and voting was as follows:

FOR:	6
AGAINST:	7
ABSTAIN:	2

The amendment was not carried.

Councillor Bowsie spoke of the importance of the issue, however reiterated that DUP position on restoring the executive means they could not support the motion.

Following further discussions, the officer’s recommendation was put to a vote by a show of hands, and voting was as follows:

FOR: 13
 AGAINST: 0
 ABSTAIN: 2

The motion was carried.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor S Murphy, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed Council write to the Department of Education urging them to progress a comprehensive childcare strategy and to note the inclusion of a Childcare Employment Academy in the NMD Labour Market Partnership Action Plan 2023-2024.

FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

ERT/155/2023: LETTER FROM CARRICKMACROSS – CASTLEBLANEY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Read: Letter dated 2 November 2023 from Carrickmacross – Castleblaney Municipal District. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Quinn welcomed the letter, speaking of Councillor’s duties to their border communities to ensure the safety of the road both sides of the border. She advised that Shared Island funding would be ideal for this work, and proposed writing to the Department of Infrastructure and Permanent Secretary to implement a funding stream to work with Irish Government to complete these works. She mentioned that the lack of an Executive hindered the work to ensure the safety of communities.

Councillor Andrews seconded the proposal.

Following discussions, the proposal was put to a vote by a show of hands, and voting was as follows:

FOR: 13
 AGAINST: 0
 ABSTAIN: 2

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to write to the Department of Infrastructure and the Permanent Secretary to encourage them to work with the Irish Government to secure a funding stream to continue with these works on Ballynacarry Bridge.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Andrews, 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 Campbell, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

The Chairperson advised the following had been agreed while in closed session.

RESTRICTED – FOR DECISION

ERT/156/2023: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CALL 3 2024-2025

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding Financial Assistance Call 3 **(Copy circulated)**

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

- 1. To offer funding to applicant 4825 as noted above, as per Council's approved Financial Assistance procedures, subject to applicant meeting all the conditions of the fund.**
- 2. To open Financial Assistance Call 1 for the 2024/25.Financial Year in January 2024 for the themes detailed in this report.**
- 3. To include the multi-sports hub theme in financial assistance call 2.**

ERT/157/2023: FILE MANAGEMENT AND RETENTION CONTRACT

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director: Regeneration, regarding File Management and Retention Contract **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve the following recommendations:

- 1. Council proceed to procure a provider to store and provide files on recall on a weekly basis for 5 year period utilising EPSO framework.**
- 2. Council approve attached Business Case.**

FOR NOTING

ERT/158/2023: PEACE PLUS

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Service Level Agreement UUEPC **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Tinnelly, it was agreed to note the contents of the report.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 19:14.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 8 January 2024.

Signed: **Councillor M Ruane**
 Chairperson
 Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee

Signed: **Mr C Mallon**
 Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on
Thursday 14 December 2023 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic
Centre and remotely via Microsoft Teams**

In the Chair:	Councillor L McEvoy (Chamber)	
In Attendance in Chamber:	Councillor P Byrne Councillor O Hanlon Councillor T Kelly Councillor A Mathers Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor C Enright Councillor R Howell Councillor D McAteer Councillor A Quinn
In Attendance via Teams:	Councillor J Brennan Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor A Lewis Councillor D Taylor
Non-Committee Members in Attendance in Chamber:	Councillor T Andrews	
Non-Committee Members in Attendance via Teams:	Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor K Murphy
Officials in Attendance In Chamber:	<p>Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy Regeneration and Tourism Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director: Capital and Procurement Mr C Moffett, Assistant Director: Corporate Planning and Policy (Acting) Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration (Acting) Mr P Preen, Human Resources Operations Manager Ms C Hughes, Acting Head of Performance and Improvement Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting) Mrs L Cummins, Democratic Services Officer Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer</p>	
Officials in Attendance Via Teams:	<p>Ms V Keegan, Head of Communications and Marketing Ms A Smyth, Programme Manager, DBEC</p>	

SPR/173/2023:

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apology received from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance.

SPR/174/2023:

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SPR/175/2023: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2023

Read: Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 16 November 2023. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Brennan, to approve the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 November 2023.**

CORPORATE PLANNING AND POLICY

SPR/176/2023: DRAFT NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2027

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy regarding draft Newry Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2024-2027. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Enright referred to a previous Notice of Motion in October 2019 C/156/2019 – Climate Change Emergency Declaration stating he did not feel that this had been adequately reflected within the Corporate Plan.

Mrs Ward agreed to add in a paragraph to fact that Council had declared a Climate Emergency in line with the Notice of Motion rather than hold up the Corporate Plan. Clarifying that Page 27 of the report did refer to protect and enhance the environment to secure a sustainable future and did refer to the Sustainable Development Strategy. She added that the business plans for the Directorates would detail what the Council was doing in relation to the Climate Emergency.

Members raised concerns at the figures quoted in the plan in relation to the amount of people in the District who felt they did not have a say stating more engagement and interaction was required to try and counteract some of the figures. It was also suggested that the performance objectives be considered based on the Audit report recommendations with reference to climate change.

Mr Moffett advised that a lot of the queries raised would fall under the Performance Improvement Section and he would direct any concerns raised to the appropriate section and come back to members.

Councillor Kelly concurred with previous comments and queried the Councils' consultation process with regard to consulting and advertising to make engagement better and raised concerns around street cleansing and how these issues would be addressed. She also requested to put on record that as a Party they were not content with the Mourne Gateway Project being included in the Corporate Plan.

Mr Moffett advised that the consultation process would be in line with what would be expected under the online 12 week public consultation process.

Development Trust Northern Ireland (DTNI). That was the same approach Newry Mourne and Down had previously used and was also used for the Equality Scheme, Irish Language Strategy and Disability Action Plan. He stated that through the Community Planning sector they had met with the Youth Sector to look at ways they could further develop consultations to different communities in order to get different opinions, but primarily would be an online approach with 12 week consultations and include some interactive sessions.

In response to query from Councillor McAteer, Mr Moffett advised that Council were already aware of and trying to look at linkages right across the board to deliver and work with partners where it was best and deliver upon that.

Councillor Enright proposed to reference the Climate Change Emergency more robustly within the Corporate Plan, this was seconded by Councillor Kelly.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Byrne, to consider and agree the draft Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027 and to proceed to a 12 week public consultation.**

It was also agreed to include to reference the Climate Change Emergency more robustly within the Corporate Plan in line with the Sustainability section.

SPR/177/2023: OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – LEID WEEK

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy regarding, Leid Week. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Lewis thanked Mr Moffett and his team for the good work already done and proposed that Council hold an event on Leid week every year, this was seconded by Councillor Taylor.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Taylor, to note that the notice of motion had been considered and discussed at the Councillor's Equality and Good Relations Reference Group on 20 November 2023 and that members of the Reference group were supportive of the notice of motion and the talk organised in Newry and Mourne Museum on 22 November 2023.**

It was also agreed that Council hold an event on Leid week every year.

SPR/178/2023: OFFICERS REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION (AMENDED) – CROSSGAR'S TITANIC VICTIM

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Crossgar's Titanic Victim. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Byrne expressed disappointment that there was no mention in the report of the Titanic victim from Forkhill despite being previously discussed and he would have expected the report to have included both the Forkhill and Crossgar victims. He proposed that Forkhill Titanic Victim also be considered, this was seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

Councillor Sharvin confirmed that the person from Forkhill had been mentioned at the Equality and Good Relations meeting however the proposer of the motion felt it would be better if the people of Forkhill brought that matter forward separately and not dilute the original motion regarding Crossgar.

Councillor Andrews thanked the officers for their report and welcomed all efforts that had been put into recognising both victims of the Titanic.

Councillor Bowsie stated the motion had come about through research to uncover the story of the Crossgar Titanic victim who was the last crewman recovered from the ocean. He thanked the local maritime historian for her passion and research into the local figure and stated he was pleased that recognition was being given to the significant connection that Crossgar had with the Titanic.

Councillor Byrne proposed the following amendment, 'that Council should give consideration to the erection of an information panel in Crossgar and Forkhill, this was seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Reilly, to note the amended notice of motion had been considered and discussed at the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group on 20 November 2023 and that members of the Reference Group recommended Council should give consideration to the erection of an information panel in Crossgar and Forkhill referencing the Titanic, explaining Crossgar's link to the Titanic; and that the local community should seek to source funding and submit an application through the appropriate process to place a bench on Council property. Should Council agree to approve the Notice of Motion this will be progressed as per Council's Policy on Naming Council facilities.**

FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION

SPR/179/2023: **S95 AUDIT AND ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023-24**

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance and Performance, regarding S95 Audit and Assessment report 2023-24 **(Copy circulated)**

In response to request from Councillor Byrne, Mrs Kelly advised that quarterly reports would be brought to Committee to update members.

In response to query from Councillors Enright and Hanlon, regarding how much money could

be saved in taking action regarding climate change and how this would fit into the performance objectives, Mrs Ward confirmed that the paper would be looking to try and include some form of targets for Council for the following year and would form part of the basis of the paper for consideration.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, to agree the Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment report 2023-24 (Appendix 2)**

SPR/180/2023: **THEATRE CONFERENCE REVISED ELEVATIONS**

Read: Report dated 15 December 2023 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy Regeneration and Tourism, regarding Theatre Conference Revised elevations. **(Copy circulated)**

In response to query from Councillor McAteer, Mr Mallon advised there had been a range of suggestions from Historical Environment Division, not all had been accepted or implemented. The design team reflected their preference to retain the arched colonnades across all elevations of the building and officers continue to work collaboratively with statutory consultees on all elements of the project.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Byrne, to approve the recommendation of the NCCR Programme Board to formally submit the amended elevations for the project to the planning department, as set out in appendix 1 the report.**

SPR/181/2023: **MID YEAR ASSESSMENTS OF DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANS 2023-24**

Read: Report dated 15 December 2023 from Mrs J Kelly, Director, Corporate Services, regarding Mid Year Assessments of Directorate Business Plans 2023-24 **(Copy circulated)**.

In response to queries raised by Councillor Sharvin and Byrne, Mrs Ward confirmed the following:

- There was a recruitment process ongoing in relation to resource and vacancy issues and she would revert to members on the detail of what stage the process was at currently.
- The Elected Member Development Charter would be picked up in the New Year by the Democratic Services Manager and a paper later on the agenda in relation to conferences, would allow to focus the budgets on that particular aspect if approved.
- The Capital process still had to go through Senior Management Team and would follow to committee at a later stage for approval.

Mrs Kelly advise the corporate website was an internal procedure and an update would be brought to committee within this financial 2023/24 year along with accounts receivable position

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

- **Mid Year Assessment of the Chief Executive's Department Business Plan 2023-24.**
- **Mid Year Assessment of the Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2023-24.**

SPR/182/2023: **OFF STREET CAR PARKING: DECEMBER 2023 CHARGING ARRANGEMENTS**

Read: Report dated 15 December 2023 from Mr A Cassells, Director Sustainability and Environment, regarding Off Street Car Parking: December 2023 Charging Arrangements (**Copy circulated**).

Members thanked officials for taking on board the feedback especially of the Downpatrick Councillors because of the flooding and spoke in support of the no parking charges on a Saturday in December. Council needed to do more to promote the district and champion people to come back into Downpatrick particularly to increase the foot flow for local businesses.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to approve the decision made at Party Leaders meeting on Wednesday 6 December 2023 to suspend car parking charges in the Councils pay and display off-street car parks on Saturday 9, 16 and 23 December 2023.**

Councillor Lewis left the meeting during discussions of the above item – 6.57pm

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

SPR/183/2023: **REPORT ON CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE**

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting), regarding report on Conference Attendance (**Copy circulated**).

Mrs Ward advised Members that it was up to themselves to determine if they deemed they had a conflict of interest.

Councillor Andrews left the room at this stage.

Ms Taggart advised that the process going forward was that any conference details would be brought to Committee for approval with Members being encouraged to provide reports on the benefit and learning outcomes. This would all be included as part of the Elected Member Development Charter.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to refocus the Conference budget to reflect Elected Member Development and**

ensure any attendance at conferences was on the basis of benefit and learning for Council as recommend at Party Rep's meeting.

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

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, 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 McAteer, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

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

SPR/184/2023: **EXTENSION OF LEASE IN RESPECT OF LANDS KNOWN AS ROSCONNOR PAVILLION AND PLAYING FIELDS, ANNACLOY DOWNPATRICK**

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration regarding Extension of lease in respect of Rosconnor Pavillion Playing Fields, Annacloy, Downpatrick (**Copy circulated**).

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Brennan, it was agreed to extend the term of the Lease noted in the report by 25 years subject to Departmental Consent.

SPR/185/2023: **PROPOSED RENEWAL OF LEASE OF OFFICE SPACE AT DOWNSHIRE CIVIC CENTRE TO PROBATION BOARD**

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration regarding, Renewal of Lease of office Space at Downshire Civic Centre to Probation Board (**Copy circulated**).

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed Elected Members approve to grant a further lease in respect of the lands shaded red and green to the party noted in the report for a period of five years subject to a market rent to be determined by Council's valuer and subject to the

payment as set out in the officer's report towards the costs of removing and reinstating Council's recording equipment.

SPR/186/2023:

RENEWAL OF LEASE OF OFFICE SPACE AT DOWNSHIRE CIVIC CENTRE TO YOUTH JUSTICE AGENCY

Read:

Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration regarding, Renewal of Lease of office Space at Downshire Civic Centre to Youth Justice Agency. **(Copy circulated).**

Agreed:

On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed Elected Members approve to renew the lease in respect of the lands coloured red on the map attached to this report with the party noted in this report for a period of five years subject to market rent to be determined by Council's valuer.

SPR/187/2023:

RENEWAL OF LEASE OF LANDS AT CRANFIELD BEACH, KILKEEL.

Read:

Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration regarding, renewal of lease of lands at Cranfield Beach, Killeel **(Copy circulated).**

Agreed:

On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, it was agreed Elected Members approve to enter into a lease in respect of the lands at Cranfield Beach as outlined in red on the map attached to this report for a term of 5 years from 14th September 2021 subject to the annual rent as set out in this report.

SPR/188/2023:

RENEWAL OF STATIONERY AND OFFICE SUPPLIES FRAMEWORK

Read:

Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services regarding Renewal of Stationery and Office Supplies Framework. **(Copy circulated).**

Agreed:

On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed Elected Members approve, that from the expiry of the current Framework Agreement, Council participate in a new 4 year direct award Framework Agreement as set out in the officer's report, from 1 April 2024 for stationery and office supplies.

SPR/189/2023:

NCCR – PROFESSIONAL FEES UPDATE

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr C Mallon, Director Economy, Regeneration and Tourism regarding NCCR – Professional Fees update. **(Copy circulated).**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed Elected Members note the Compensation Events approved in accordance with the provisions of the NEC Professional Services contract and approve the updated professional fees for the project.**

Councillor Reilly left the meeting at this stage – 7.19pm

SPR/190/2023: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS BRIEFING PAPER

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr C Mallon, Director Economy, Regeneration and Tourism and Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services regarding industrial relations briefing paper. **(Copy circulated).**

Following lengthy discussions, it was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Howell to have a short adjournment to consider the Legal advice provided.

The meeting did then adjourn - 8.02pm

The meeting did then resume - 8.31pm

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to approve option A with any officer papers in relation to Trade Union negotiations coming forward to Committee to be provided to Trade Unions prior to the meeting, with the caveat that any legal or financial information be exempt under the usual rules.**

It was agreed to advance the proposals in relation to option B to establish if there was the potential for terms of reference that would ensure it protects the governance of the Council and the role of Councillors.

It was also agreed that Members meet with Belfast legal services before the next SPR Committee Meeting in January in relation to this matter.

It was further agreed to accept the proposed LRA Conciliation Agreement as shown at Appendix 1 of the officer's report. It was also agreed that Members accept the financial and resource implications as set out in section 4 of the officer's report.

SPR/191/2023: THE NEWRY CITY PARK: ICT APPOINTMENT

Read: Report dated 14 December 2023 from Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director, Capital Projects and Procurement regarding, The Newry City Park: ICT Appointment (**Copy circulated**).

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed Elected Members consider and approve to appoint an Integrated Consultant Team (ICT) for The Newry Park Project as per the cost outlined in section 4.1 of the report.**

FOR NOTING

SPR/192/2023: **MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on Friday 8th September 2023. (**Copy circulated**).

Councillor Enright raised an issue on page 4 of the minutes regarding the need for an estimate of lifetime cost for building projects and clear commitments were required to the NETZIV building code which had been invoked in other countries across the border and in the UK GB for some years.

Councillor Byrne queried whether the old practice of having board members signing off on minutes could be reestablished as it was taking too long for members to sign off minutes currently which meant Committee Members were not able to scrutinise the decisions taken.

Mr Mallon advised it was not always possible that the minutes could be agreed by email therefore sometimes they needed to be referred to the next meeting of the Programme Board for ratification before being presented to SPR Committee. He stated he would endeavour to have the minutes agreed as quickly as possible.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed to note the minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Project Board Meeting held on Friday 8th September 2023.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 9.01pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 8 January 2024.

Signed: **Councillor Leeanne McEvoy**
Chairperson

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

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AHC/2023

Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 18 December 2023 at 6.00pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre and via Microsoft Teams

Chairperson: Councillor O Magennis (Chamber)**In attendance in Chamber:** Councillor A Finnegan Councillor J Jackson
Councillor D Lee-Surginor Councillor A Lewis
Councillor A Mathers Councillor A McMurray
Councillor D Murphy Councillor K Murphy
Councillor S O'Hare**In attendance via Teams:** Councillor L Devlin Councillor D Finn
Councillor C Galbraith**Non-Members in Chamber:** Councillor T Andrews**Officials in attendance in Chamber:** Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer**Officials in attendance Via Teams:** Mrs L Cummins, Democratic Services Officer**AHC/135/2023: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Howell and Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development.

The Chairperson advised that Item 13 – Metal Fabrication Works had been removed from the agenda.

AHC/136/2023: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AHC/137/2023: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2023Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 20 November 2023. **(Copy circulated).**

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 20 November 2023.

AHC/138/2023: Active & Healthy Community Directorate Business Plan

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding Mid-Year assessment of AHC Directorate Business Plan 2023-24 **(Copy Circulated)**

Councillor McMurray queried the direction of the community facilities strategy, specifically around the Slieve Croob area regarding a gap in the provision in community facilities.

Mr Tamati advised he would ask Mrs Robb to revert to the Member directly on this matter.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, to approve the Mid-Year Assessment of the AHC Directorate Business Plan 2023-24.

AHC/139/2023: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the District Electoral Area Forums. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to note the update report and approve the actions in the action sheets attached for:

- Rowallane DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Tuesday 21 November 2023
- The Mournes DEA Forum Private Meeting held Tuesday 28 November 2023
- Newry DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Tuesday 30 November 2023
- Slieve Gullion DEA Forum Private Meeting held Tuesday 12 November 2023
- Downpatrick DEA Forum Private Meeting held Tuesday 12 December 2023
- Slieve Croob DEA Forum Private Meeting held Tuesday 12 December 2023

AHC/140/2023 COMMUNITY COORDINATION HUB (CCH) UPDATE REPORT

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the Community Coordination Hub. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to note the report and approve the

actions in the action sheet for the Community Coordination Hub Meeting held on Wednesday 15 November 2023.

AHC/141/2023

POLICING & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (PCSP) REPORT

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding Policing & Community Partnership. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mathers to:**

- **Note the report.**
- **Note the minutes of the Policing Committee & PSCP Meeting held on 26 September 2023, approved at the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting held on Tuesday 28 November 2023.**

AHC/142/2023

DOWNPATRICK NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PARTNERSHIP (NRP) REPORT

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Report. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mathers to:**

- **Note the report.**
- **Note the attached minutes of the Downpatrick NRP Meeting held on Wednesday 5 July 2023, approved at the Downpatrick NRP Meeting held on Tuesday 14 November 2023**

AHC/143/2023

NEWRY NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PARTNERSHIP (NRP) REPORT

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Report. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mathers, to:**

- **Note the report.**
- **Note the minutes of Newry NRP Meeting held on Wednesday 4 October 2023, approved at Newry NRP Meeting held on Wednesday 29 November 2023.**

AHC/144/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION - ROAD SAFETY REPORT

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding Road Safety Initiatives, NMDDC.
(Copy circulated)

Councillor Andrews spoke to the motion, and referenced the number of those killed or seriously injured within the District. He acknowledged the hard work carried out across the District by all and acknowledged the positive impact this had on road safety.

Councillor D Murphy spoke to the motion, acknowledging the importance of the multi-agency response, and the effectiveness of the work carried out to date. He acknowledged that it was unfortunate that the price has gone up for the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) equipment and that the Department was not providing any funding for more. He welcomed any initiative that highlighted the dangers on the roads, and made reference to the ongoing concerns of Members regarding the A1.

Councillor McMurray thanked Councillor Andrews for bringing the motion, and was happy to support this. He queried whether the Kids Court Initiative could be brought to specific schools as he believed it would be beneficial in more rural areas.
Mr Tamati responded that he would request for Mrs Robb to revert to the Member regarding the query.

Councillor Jackson recognised the work carried out by the PCSP to date, and recognise the positive contribution to the community.

In summing up, Councillor Andrews thanked everyone for the support for the motion.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, to:**

- **Note the ongoing Road Safety Initiatives progressed by Newry, Mourne & Down Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and other agencies (including NMDDC and the PSNI).**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Devlin, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 11 to 14, which related to exempt information by virtue of para. Three of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local /Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Galbraith, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

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

AHC/145/2023 **SWIMMING POOL COVERS AND MOVING FLOORS**

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport, regarding Swimming Pool Moving floors and Pool Covers. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McMurray, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to:**

- **Approve the Business Case as per appendix 1 and appendix 2 of the officer's report.**
- **To commence procurement and appointment of contractor/supplier for swimming pool moving floors and pool covers.**

AHC/146/2023 **BUILDING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport, regarding Building Management Systems. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Galbraith to:**

- **Approve the Business Case as per appendix 1 of the officer's report.**
- **Commence procurement and appointment of contractor/single supplier for Building Management Systems for leisure facilities.**

AHC/147/2023 **NEWRY LEISURE CENTRE SWIMMING POOL TILES**

Read: Report dated 18 December 2023 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport, regarding Newry Leisure Centre swimming pool tiles. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Devlin to:**

- **Approve core sampling works of Newry Leisure Centre swimming pool at a cost outlined in section 4.1 of the officer's report.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 18:35.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 8 January 2024.

Signed: Councillor Howell
Chairperson

Signed: Paul Tamati
Assistant Director Leisure and Sport

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 20 December 2023 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, District Council Offices, Monaghan Row, Newry and via MS Teams.**

Chair:	Councillor T Andrews (Chamber)	
In Attendance in Chamber:	Councillor C Enright Councillor M Larkin Councillor O Magennis	Councillor D Finn Councillor G Kearns Councillor H Reilly
In Attendance via Teams:	Councillor W Clarke Councillor M Rice	Councillor L McEvoy Councillor J Truesdale
Officials in Attendance:	Mr A Cassells, Director Sustainability and Environment Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director Waste Management Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability Ms G Kane, Head of Facilities Management Mr A Mallon, Head of Maintenance Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting) Mrs L Cummins, Democratic Services Officer	

SE/144/2023: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Feehan and Taylor.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr C Sage who had recently been appointed as the new Assistant Director of Sustainability to his first committee meeting.

The Chairperson also thanked Mrs G Kane & Mr A Mallon who had been acting Assistant Directors since April 2023 for all their hard work and rising to the challenges in particular the elections in May 2023 and the fantastic response in relation to flooding in October and November 2023.

The Chairperson wished Mr B Rankin, Head of Sustainability who was leaving Council, all the best in his new role and hoped that the recruitment process would be swift to fill the post of Head of Sustainability and the Energy Officer post which was currently being reviewed.

Mr Cassells commended a Council employee from his Department for going above and beyond their duty in assisting and administering first aid at a road traffic accident involving a Council vehicle and a car in the Belleeks area.

The Chairperson requested a letter of appreciation be sent to the employee in recognition of their exemplary behaviour.

SE/145/2023: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

There were no declarations of interest.

SE/146/2023: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2023

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 22 November 2023. **(Copy circulated)**

SE/128/2023 – Upgrade to Town Centre CCTV and Council Facilities CCTV

In response to query from Councillor Truesdale, Mrs G Kane advised that it was a historic issue in relation to monitoring of different areas within the district and the upgrade in relation to town centres CCTV if approved had to be completed by the end of 2025 as the analogue lines would no longer be in effect.

SE/127/2023 – Fleet Replacement

In response to query from Councillor Enright, Mr Cassells confirmed that he was content that a whole life cost analysis to be carried out on forklift and mechanical sweepers before making a decision regarding every vehicle and clarified that Greenbank did have electric van capacity, just not as much as Strangford Road. He would be asking NIE for additional supply to be added however was mindful if a greater supply requested than what NIE could provide at present Council may end up being responsible for the full cost of another substation.

SE/126/2023 – Consultation response in creating a smoke free generation and tackling young vaping

Councillor Reilly expressed concerns at the amount of young people being exploited and encouraged to use vapes containing addictive chemicals making a child vulnerable. He queried whether a more collaborative approach with outside partners could be taken to highlight the threat and dangers of vaping to the wider public.

Mrs S Murphy agreed to revert to Councillor Reilly outside of the meeting to see if there were any linkages which could be made to raise more awareness around the dangers of vaping.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed that the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 22 November 2023 be noted.

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Larkin, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 4 to 13, which related to exempt information by virtue of para. Three of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local /Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Finn, 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:

SE/147/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR SUPPLY OF WOOD PELLETS FOR GREENBANK BIOMASS BOILER

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mrs G Kane, Acting Assistant Director; Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding a business case for renewal of service contract for supply of Wood Pellets to Greenbank Council Depot, Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Kearns it was agreed to note the contents of the report and to approve the business case for the supply of wood pellets for the Greenbank Depot biomass boiler for a 5 year period.

SE/148/2023: REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE OPENING/CLOSING TIMES

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mrs G Kane, Acting Assistant Director; Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding a review of Public Convenience opening/closing times. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Reilly, to note the contents of the report and approve the opening/closing times contained within Appendix 1 of the officer's report, based on the review of the cleansing review and liaison with Council's HR department to ensure consideration of aspects contained within point 2.4 of the officer's report.

Councillor Reilly left the meeting at this point – 18.26pm

SE/149/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR BEDDING PLANTS

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mr A Mallon, Assistant Director Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding a Tender for supply of Summer & Winter bedding plants for public spaces 2024 - 2026 **(copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Finn, to endorse the themes as contained in the officer's report and commence the procurement for supply of bedding plants as outlined in Section 2 of the officer's report.

Councillor Reilly rejoined the meeting – 18.31pm

SE/150/2023: STA FOR METAL FABRICATION

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mr A Mallon, Assistant Director Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding Single Tender Action for Metal Fabrication and Repair Contractor. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Magennis, to note the contents of the report and approve the attached Single Tender Action form.

SE/151/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR OCCASIONAL HOOK HIRE

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mrs S Murphy, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding a Business Case for Occasional Hire of Hook Loader Vehicle and Driver. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to approve the business case expenditure to procure a contract for the occasional hire of hook loader vehicle and driver.

FOR NOTING – These items are deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014**SE/152/2023: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS MONTHLY BULLETIN – 5 DECEMBER 2023**

Read: ARC21 – Joint Committee Members Monthly Bulletin. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the arc21 Joint Committee Members Monthly Bulletin from 5 December 2023.

SE/153/2023: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 26 OCTOBER 2023

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting in Committee Minutes of 26 October 2023 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note arc21 Joint Committee Meeting In Committee Minutes of 26 October 2023.

SE/154/2023: UPDATE ON REBRANDING/REDEVELOPMENT OF NEWRY MARKET

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mrs G Kane, Acting Assistant Director: Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding an update on rebranding/redevelopment of Newry Market **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the contents of the report.

SE/155/2023: FASTER EV PROJECT SLA WITH EASYGO

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment regarding the Faster EV Project with EasyGo. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the final Service Level Agreement with EasyGo, as part of the FASTER project.

SE/156/2023: FLEET OPERATOR'S LICENSE

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mrs S Murphy, Assistant Director: Environment regarding the Fleet Operator's License – Fleet Management Action Plan Update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the contents of the report.

FOR NOTING

SE/157/2023: JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF 26 OCTOBER 2023

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting Minutes of 26 October 2023 **(Copy circulated)**.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed note the minutes.

SE/158/2023: NI WASTE MANAGEMENT STATISTICS 2022-23

Read: Report dated 20 December from Mrs S Murphy, Assistant Director: Environment regarding NI Waste Management Statistics 2022/23 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed note the contents of the report.

SE/159/2023: SHARED ISLAND PROJECT ON FLEET DECARBONISATION

Read: Report dated 20 December 2023 from Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment regarding the Shared Island Project on Fleet Decarbonisation. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the report produced as part of the Shared Island funded project on fleet decarbonisation in Appendix 1 of the officer's report.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 18:43pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 08 January 2024.

Signed: Councillor Terry Andrews
Chairperson

Signed: Mr Andrew Cassells
Director of Sustainability & Environment

**From the Permanent Secretary
and HSC Chief Executive**



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

Castle Buildings
Upper Newtownards Road
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ

Tel: 02890520559

Email: peter.may@health-ni.gov.uk

Your Ref: C.203.2023

Our ref: SCORR-1410-2023

Date: 12 December 2023

Dear Marie

Thank you for your letter of 13th November in relation to your members request that the Department provide information in relation to the change factors being considered regarding Daisy Hill Hospital and have asked what weighting was attributed to these factors and when were they likely to be implemented.

As outlined in my previous letter of 13th October, there is a process of assessment regarding the process and the content of the consultation that the Southern Health and Social Care Trust performed. There are no 'weightings' as such to which you refer, rather we assess the process the Trust have gone through in order to arrive at the options for service reconfiguration. That work is a matter of public record and is available.

In regards to the 'when they were likely to be implemented' as you know, the interim solution of consolidating the Emergency General Surgery service on the Craigavon Area Hospital site has been in place since February 2022. As the preferred option that was consulted on was predicated on this option, the service is already in operation.

However, a decision on the permanent configuration of services remains and as I have previously informed you my team is currently considering this issue. A decision has not been yet made but the views of local stakeholders will of course be taken into account.

Yours sincerely



Peter May

**From the Permanent Secretary
and HSC Chief Executive**



MLAs in Southern Area

By Email

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Upper Newtownards Road
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

Tel: 028 90 520559

Email: peter.may@health-ni.gov.uk

Our ref: SSUB-0069-2023

Date: 8 January 2024

Dear All

CONSULTATION FINDINGS REPORT ON THE CLOSURE OF THE EMERGENCY GENERAL SURGERY SERVICE AT DAISY HILL HOSPITAL

I am writing to inform you that I have decided to approve Southern HSC Trust's decision to permanently consolidate emergency general surgery for the Southern area population at Craigavon Hospital and, as a consequence, to make permanent the temporary suspension of the service at Daisy Hill Hospital.

The Department has concluded that this temporary suspension - which took effect in early 2022 – demonstrates the merits of consolidation on a single site. It has provided stability in clinical staffing, meaning safe services can be sustained in the longer term.

The provision of emergency general surgery at Daisy Hill had become increasingly unviable due to a shortage of general surgery consultants.

I am advised that an average of three patients per day have been directed to Craigavon from Daisy Hill for emergency general surgery over the past two years. Assessment of these arrangements has found no indication of any patient coming to harm.

My approval of the Trust decision reflects the reality that all hospitals cannot provide all services. A level of consolidation and specialisation is required in light of advances in medicine.

I want to emphasise that Daisy Hill Hospital will continue to provide a vital service to the local community, across a range of key specialities. The Department's commitment to

Daisy Hill has been reflected in the decision to make it an Elective Overnight Stay Centre (EOSC), caring for patients who may require an overnight stay in hospital after planned surgery.

The Trust advises that since April 2023, over 6000 patients have been treated at Daisy Hill EOSC across a range of specialties including general surgery, gynaecology, ENT and endoscopy.

You will also be aware of the capital investment underway at Daisy Hill Hospital to address resilience and capacity issues within the electrical infrastructure. Once complete, further investment will be made to provide a permanent twin MRI and CT suite. In the interim the Trust have a modular MRI scanner on site to ensure this essential service is maintained for the population of Newry and Mourne.

The Southern HSC Trust's decision on consolidating emergency general surgery at Craigavon was taken after public consultation.

I have reviewed the Trust's decision in line with the 2023 Guidance *Change or Withdrawal of Services - Guidance on Roles and Responsibilities*. In our assessment of the work. I have considered the consultation outcome report and the Department has liaised with the Public Health Agency.

I am satisfied that my approval is in accordance with Northern Ireland Executive Formation legislation and the associated Guidance published by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

It is in step with the transformation agenda for health which emphasises that changes are required to maintain sustainable services. The consolidation on a single site also aligns with the direction of travel set out in the Department of Health's Review of General Surgery published in June 2022.

I have written to the Trust Chief Executive to inform her of my approval. The instability of the service previously was a long standing problem that did not offer the optimum level of service expected for patients and families or a stable environment for the clinical team working within it.

While I appreciate that service changes will often lead to concerns in local populations, I hope you will recognise that safety, sustainability and quality of care are of paramount importance in this decision.

Yours sincerely



PETER MAY

Copied to: Marie Ward, Chief Executive, Newry, Mourne and Down Council
Roger Wilson, Chief Executive, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Council

**From the Permanent Secretary
and HSC Chief Executive**



Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down District council
council@nmandd.org

Castle Buildings
Upper Newtownards Road
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ

Tel: 02890520559

Email: peter.may@health-ni.gov.uk

Your Ref: C/225/2023

Our ref: SCORR-1412-2023

Date: 8 December 2023

Dear Marie

Thank you for your letter of 21st November 2023 regarding the implementation of the recommendations from Royal College of Pathologists, report into Southern Health and Social Care Trust's (SHSCT) cervical screening services January 2008 to October 2021.

The SHSCT has fully accepted the findings of the report and is working with the PHA and the Department to implement them in full. Most of the recommendations have already been implemented and work is well under way to implement the remaining recommendations, which includes the introduction of primary HPV testing within the cervical screening programme.

In terms of the report commissioned by Jo's Trust, the Department is fully committed to the prevention of cervical cancer and the continued promotion of HPV vaccination as an effective means to do so. While the elimination of cervical cancer is an achievable goal, this and any associated timescale, would form part of a policy consideration by a future Health Minister.

Yours sincerely



Peter May



Northern
Ireland
Office

The Rt Hon Steve Baker MP
Minister of State for Northern
Ireland

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Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry Mourne and Down District Council

01 December 2023
Our reference: MC/23/563
Your reference: C/223/2023

Dear Ms Ward,

Thank you for your letter dated 13 November 2023 regarding the availability of the prostate cancer drug, Abiraterone, in Northern Ireland. I am responding on the Secretary of State's behalf.

The Secretary of State completely understands the very real concerns that patients and staff across the healthcare system in Northern Ireland have, and recognises the seriousness of the specific concerns you are raising regarding the availability of this prostate cancer drug in Northern Ireland. My officials are in touch with the NI Department of Health and the Department of Health and Social Care about these matters on a regular basis.

The healthcare system in Northern Ireland is facing severe pressure across the board and this is something that the Secretary of State is acutely aware of through his engagements with various stakeholders in Northern Ireland. I am clear that this is not a sustainable situation.

However, healthcare is a devolved matter and it is a matter for the Department of Health and a Northern Ireland Health Minister. The people of Northern Ireland should be able to raise these concerns with their own locally elected representatives in a devolved government and it is extremely frustrating that the ongoing absence of a functioning Executive is exacerbating the severe challenges that the healthcare system in Northern Ireland is facing.

In recent days the Secretary of State has spoken publicly about talks with political parties which he believes are in the final stages. It remains his top priority to facilitate the return of the Northern Ireland Executive and a fully functioning Northern Ireland Assembly, so these important issues can be addressed by those elected to do so.

Thank you for getting in touch on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Baker', with a horizontal line underneath it.

**THE RT HON STEVE BAKER MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

**From the Permanent Secretary
and HSC Chief Executive**



Marie Ward
CEO
Newry Mourne and Down District Council
council@nmandd.org

Castle Buildings
Upper Newtownards Road
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ

Tel: 02890520559

Email: peter.may@health-ni.gov.uk

Your Ref: C/223/2023

Our ref: SCORR-1411-2023

Date: 7 December 2023

Dear Marie

Abiraterone for Prostate Cancer

Thank you for your e-mail of 24 October 2023 regarding the use of Abiraterone for early-stage prostate cancer in Northern Ireland.

The Department has a formal link with NICE under which NICE Technology Appraisals (TAs) are reviewed locally for their legal and policy applicability in Northern Ireland. Where found to be applicable, they are endorsed for implementation within Health and Social Care (HSC) organisations in NI. This link has ensured that Northern Ireland has access to up-to-date, independent, professional, evidence-based guidance on the value of health care interventions.

In Northern Ireland, abiraterone is not recommended for the treatment of newly diagnosed high-risk hormone-sensitive metastatic prostate cancer in adults, in line with the recommendations set out in NICE TA721 (<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta721>). This guidance is scheduled for review by NICE in 2024.

Abiraterone is recommended for use in men with very advanced prostate cancer which has spread to other parts of the body, in line with NICE guidance listed below.

TA387 - Abiraterone in combination with prednisone or prednisolone is recommended, within its marketing authorisation, as an option for treating metastatic hormone-relapsed prostate cancer.
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta387>

TA259 - Abiraterone in combination with prednisone or prednisolone is recommended as an option for the treatment of castration-resistant metastatic prostate cancer in adults.

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta259>

There is currently no flexibility for the HSC to look at decisions of NHS Scotland or NHS Wales in preference to NICE endorsements as Northern Ireland does not have its own health technology assessment body or equivalent to NICE/Scottish Medicines Consortium or All Wales Medicine Strategy Group, that could make a bespoke determination for Northern Ireland patients.

I trust you find this response helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter May". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Peter May

SENT ON BEHALF OF ROGER SAYERS

Ms Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry Mourne and Down District Council
Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry, BT35 8DJ

11 December 2023

OUR REF: CEO 671-10-23

Dear Ms Ward

RE: Notice of Motion – Education Authority, Transport and Availability of Places for Children with additional needs.

Thank you for your letter (attached) to Sara Long, the Chief Executive, on 04 October 2023 regarding the Notice of Motion - Education Authority, Transport and Availability of Places for Children with additional needs. Apologies for the delay in replying, as I have management responsibility for this area I shall respond on Sara's behalf.

With reference to ***This Council will seek answers from the Education Authority in relation to the yearly confusion, distress and upset caused as a result of the failure to provide transport on time to those who are entitled to it***, EA transport provides assistance to thousands of pupils across the Newry and Mourne area, providing high numbers of transport provision in the form of EA buses and private hire buses and taxi's serving a wide range of schools across this region. EA deliver these services successfully year on year, but such is the scale of this operation and the high numbers of pupils there may be some instances whereby some services take longer than others to put in place in particular with new pupils.

We transport many pupils with complex needs and as a result training may be required before provision can commence. We may also require different types of vehicles that may involve a tendering process which again we need to ensure is completed properly and with the correct compliance checks carried out before Transport can begin. Where transport issues do arise EA transport work to find resolutions as quickly as possible to support those families. EA transport endeavour to meet the needs of all pupils with transport eligibility across not only Newry and Mourne but all our council areas and will continue to work tirelessly to achieve this.

"To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be."

Education Authority

3 Charlemont Place, The Mall, Armagh, BT61 9AX T: +44 (0)28 3751 2200 W:

In response to **Furthermore the Council notes with concern and seeks assurance from the Education Authority in relation to the lack of places available to those children with additional needs**", there are 3 special schools located within Newry Mourne and Down District Council Area. Two schools, Rathore School, Newry, and Knockevin School which is a dual campus with sites in Downpatrick, Dundrum and Castlewellan, cater for children with severe learning difficulties from the age of 3 – 19 and the third, a KS3 school based in Downpatrick, for children with Social, Behavioural, Emotional Wellbeing.

The Education Authority experienced an unprecedented demand for special school places across the region over the past number of years which led to accommodation pressures for special schools and a reduction in available spaces within council areas. This resulted in a number of Specialist Provisions being established in Mainstream Schools, supported by local Special Schools, for pupils with a special school profile. A total of ten classes have been established across five mainstream primary schools across the council area which created additional capacity to provide places for approximately 76 children.

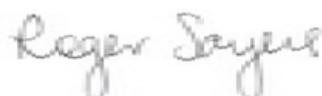
The Education Authority is currently in the process of seeking approval from the Department of Education to acquire additional land adjacent to Rathore School, which would enable the current school site to be extended and additional accommodation would then be provided to meet the needs of the school. Despite the unprecedented financial challenges, the Department of Education and EA has already committed a significant amount of investment to increasing capacity and creating additional places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. A dedicated cross-directorate team was set up in 2020 to focus on enhancing the capacity across the education system. Since then, 336 additional specialist classes have been established across Northern Ireland in Mainstream and Special schools, including 124 established for September 2023.

The need for specialist settings continues to rise and we will continue to establish additional specialist classes during the 2023/24 academic year. The long-term planning for special schools and specialist classes in mainstream is being delivered through the EA's Strategic Area Plan 2022-2027 supported by a series of operational plans and there will be more information available as this work progresses. The EA's Strategic Plan for Special Education Provision can be found at the following link:

[Special Education Strategic Area Plan 2022-27 - Planning for Special Education Provision_0.pdf \(eani.org.uk\)](#)

I trust you will find this information useful.

Kind Regards



Roger Sayers
ACTING DIRECTOR OF OPERATION AND ESTATES

"To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be."

Education Authority

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Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Monaghan Row
Newry
BT35 8DJ
Northern Ireland

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon
Minister of State (Middle East,
North Africa, South Asia,
Commonwealth and the UN)

Prime Minister's Special
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Our ref: MC2023/23437

08 December 2023

Dear Marie Ward,

Thank you for your letter of 13 November to the Prime about the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). I am replying as the Minister of State for the Middle East.

A human tragedy is unfolding in the Middle East. Israel has suffered the worst terror attack in its history and Palestinian civilians in Gaza are suffering a devastating and growing humanitarian crisis. The UK condemns the terrorist acts perpetrated by Hamas against Israeli and international citizens. Hamas neither speaks for nor acts in the interests of the Palestinian people. Together with the US, the UK has targeted Hamas with a new set of sanctions in an effort to disrupt the group's acts of terror. We must work with our allies to provide serious, practical and enduring support needed to bolster the Palestinian Authority, because they are the best route to sweep away the terrible scourge of Hamas and all it has wrought.

The UK supports Israel's right to defend itself against terrorism in line with international humanitarian law. We have pressed Israel to ensure its campaign is targeted against Hamas leaders and military infrastructure; to allow aid to enter Gaza; to end settler violence and hold perpetrators to account; and to work with the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to improve the desperate humanitarian situation. It is vital that all parties ensure that their actions are proportionate, necessary and minimise harm to civilians.

From the start we have said that we want British nationals to be able to leave Gaza and for humanitarian aid to reach Gaza. We welcomed the recent truce in fighting as an opportunity to get hostages out and will continue to get aid into Gaza on a sustained basis now that the truce has ended. We want to see all hostages released. We continue to press – both at the UN and directly with Israel – for unhindered humanitarian access and substantive, repeated humanitarian agreements that will allow aid to enter and British nationals to leave. We have announced a further £30 million in lifesaving humanitarian aid for people in Gaza. The aid will go to trusted partners including UN agencies on the ground. This brings the total additional UK aid for Palestinian civilians to over £60 million since the crisis started in October.

To prevent further conflict and terrorism, there must be a lasting political solution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict: a two-state solution which provides peace, justice and security for both Israelis and Palestinians. The UK will work urgently with our partners to ensure this vision finally becomes a reality. We are also urging all sides to de-escalate tension in the West Bank and tackle all forms of extremism. We will oppose any attempts by malign actors to cause further escalation in the region.

As the Prime Minister has said, we are investing more deeply in regional stability and in the two-state solution. The Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary and I have spoken, crucially, to counterparts across the region to underline the need to work together and avoid any further spread of conflict. This includes the King of Jordan, the President of Egypt, the Prime Minister of Israel, Palestinian Authority President Abbas, the President of Turkey, the Amir of Qatar, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia and the UN Secretary General. The Foreign Secretary has spoken separately with the Israeli Foreign Minister, the Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister and the US Secretary of State; both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary had further meetings with regional counterparts at COP 28 in Dubai at the end of November.

On 22 November, the Foreign Secretary and I hosted a meeting of Foreign Ministers from five Arabic and Islamic countries in London. The Foreign Secretary visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 22-24 November during which he reiterated the UK's support for Israel to defend itself against Hamas in line with International Humanitarian Law; the urgent need for further humanitarian aid to get into Gaza; and engaged on further acute issues such as the hostage situation in Gaza and rising tensions in the West Bank. During his visit he met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, as well as other Israeli ministers. The Foreign Secretary also visited Ramallah in the Occupied Palestinian Territories where he met Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas and PA Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh, with whom he discussed the UK's continued support for the Palestinian Authority and a two-state solution.

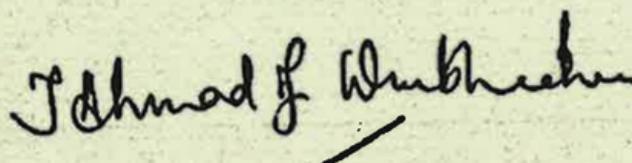
I spoke to the UN General Assembly in New York in October and delivered the UK intervention at a Security Council meeting on Gaza on 29 November, when I called for humanitarian pauses to get hostages out and aid in and set out our engagement to push for: a scaled up humanitarian response, progress on a two-state solution and meaningful action on settler violence. I have met or spoken to representatives from the UN, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, UAE, the Palestinian Authority, Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Morocco, Bahrain and Lebanon. I visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 1-2 November, Qatar on 18-19 November; and had further meetings with Arab countries and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in New York on 29 November.

In all our engagements with Israeli counterparts we have underscored the UK's firm belief in Israel's right to self-defence in accordance with International Humanitarian Law. Israel has a duty to protect civilians and we have called on Israel to take every possible precaution in this respect. Our position on international law is unwavering. We continue to make clear to all parties that all possible measures must be taken to ensure civilian

casualties are minimised and to facilitate humanitarian aid to the civilians in Gaza. The Prime Minister has raised directly with his Israeli counterparts the need to act in line with International Humanitarian Law. Israeli President Herzog has also said Israel will abide by international law.

Peace, security and stability for Israelis and Palestinians alike can only be achieved through a collaborative and concerted effort towards a two-state solution; a secure Israel, living side by side with an independent, secure and viable Palestinian state.

Yours sincerely,



LORD (TARIQ) AHMAD OF WIMBLEDON
Minister of State

Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict

① Democratic structures - FYA



Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry BT35 8DJ

14 December 2023

Dear Ms Ward

Re: Notice of Motion – Bereavement Support

Thank you for your letter to the chief executive, on whose behalf I am responding, in relation to the Motion agreed at a recent meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The Education Authority (EA) is represented on the School Bereavement Programme Board and is aware of the bereavement training facilitated by Marie Curie and Cruse Bereavement for schools. The EA contributed to this training by providing guidance and resources in relation to a Bereavement Policy Framework and Critical Incident information.

The EA also provides a two day training programme 'A Whole School Approach to Bereavement and Critical Incidents' for Principals and senior leaders from all schools. This training provides participants with the knowledge and skills to provide a whole school approach to supporting children and young people following a bereavement. Day One provides information in relation to the ways children and young people grieve, explores effective strategies to support them and guidance on developing a Bereavement Policy Framework. Day Two provides guidance to develop a Critical Incident Management Policy and Plan, raises awareness of the many complex issues accompanying a critical incident and inform schools of the supportive role of the EA's Critical Incident Response Team.

Schools can also avail of bereavement advice via the EA's Critical Incident Helpline and resources on the EA's website which includes information for schools to assist them to support a pupil following a bereavement.

In addition, schools that have registered for A Whole School Approach to Emotional Health and Wellbeing – Being Well, Doing Well programme will be offered in school Bereavement training for all staff. This is a programme which is funded by the Department of Education (DE) as part of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework.

“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”

Education Authority

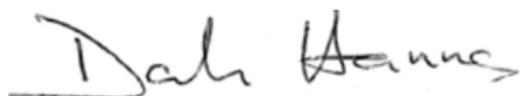
3 Charlemont Place, The Mall, Armagh BT61 9AX

T: 028 37512535 | email: dale.hanna@eani.org.uk Web: <https://www.eani.org.uk>

I hope this provides some clarity on the level of bereavement support currently provided by the EA to support schools, alongside our collaboration with the voluntary and community groups you referenced. The interventions and support offered provides the Education Authority with an opportunity to both request and receive feedback and we are continually striving to enhance service delivery in line with the needs of schools.

Please be assured of our ongoing commitment to engage with schools, not only in the area of bereavement and loss, but also the broader issue of pupil emotional health and well-being.

Yours sincerely



Dale Hanna
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES

“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”

Education Authority

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apse seminars

Strategic Policy Symposium

Incorporating the APSE Full Association Meeting 2024

FREE

for member councils

Friday 19 January 2024

Glasgow Marriot Hotel, G3 8RR

Programme

73

10:00 Coffee and Registration

10.30 Chair's Opening Remarks – Cllr Jacqui Burnett, APSE National Chair

10:35 Session One: The Dynamics of Local Government, Finance and Governance Decisions

It's all about the money, money, money! What S.114s and financial peril means to frontline services

- Results of an APSE / Survation spot opinion poll of local councillors on local finances
- What areas do the public support to protect from cuts.
- Differences in priorities between councillors and the public – what the survey data tells us.
- Is it time for a needs-based budgeting campaign in local government?

Mo Baines, APSE Chief Executive

Under Pressure: The Future of Member – Officer Relationships in Local Government

- The strains of governance in a fiscally challenging environment
- What does the research tell us about the differing dynamics and does the notion of 'members decide officers implement' still hold true?
- Lessons from the case studies – how do we improve communications and expectations?

Professor Steven Griggs, lead report author

The child payment: Is the Scottish Government approach a way forward across the UK?

- Removing children from the deprivation trap
- 407,000 children in families eligible for the payment
- What does the data tell us about the financial impact on families and children?
- How does this support help local councils?

Cllr Lynne Short, Dundee City Council and APSE Scotland Chair

11:45 Audience and panel Q&A followed by a short comfort break

12:00 Session Two: Lessons in Climate Resilience and Prevention Planning

Flooding and coastal erosion: Lessons from the Isle of Wight

- Impact on the most vulnerable communities
- Coastal erosion: what it means to service planning and resilience
- The Ventor Landslip: A council response to managing an emergency

Colin Rowland, Strategic Director of Communities and Natasha Dix, Service Director Waste Environment and Planning

Can better planning support climate adaptation and mitigation?

- Using planning powers to limit climate change impacts
- The problem with current regulations
- What more could councils do to effect positive changes though planning?
- Upcoming APSE guidance for councils

Tim Crawshaw, APSE Energy Associate

Audience and panel Q&A

12:45 Full Association Business

APSE Chief Executive, Mo Baines, will present the following agenda items for the meeting's approval:

1. Minutes of the Full Association held on the Friday 20 January 2023
2. APSE Report – An update on the work of APSE
3. Budget 2024/25 – An examination of APSE's budget 2024/25
4. The APSE Business Plan 2023-2026 and ESG Framework – progress report.

13:00 Lunch

Lunch will be provided at the rise of the meeting. Delegates are encouraged to stay for lunch and make the most of this networking opportunity with colleagues from across the UK. As this meeting carries formal APSE Business for its members it is not open to non-member councils.

What is included?

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This **FREE** event and Full Association meeting is only available to APSE member councils.

All delegates will receive:

- Online delegate pack (print copies available on pre-request)
- Refreshments and lunch on the day
- Access to the networking arrangements on the day

Please remember to tell APSE about any access or dietary requirements.

How to book

>> **Click here to reserve your place** <<

Travel

Delegates should make their own travel and accommodation arrangements. A list of hotels close to the event venue can be downloaded [using this link](#).

Information on getting to Glasgow can be accessed [using this link](#).

Venue address: Glasgow Marriot Hotel, 500 Argyle Street, Glasgow, G3 8RR

[Get directions with Google Maps](#)

