

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 1 November 2021 at 6.00pm via Hybrid in Downshire Chamber and Microsoft Teams

In the Chair:	Councillor C Mason (Chamber)	
In attendance in Chamber:	Councillor T Andrews Councillor C Enright	Councillor D Curran Councillor O Hanlon
In attendance via Teams:	Councillor P Brown Councillor P Byrne Councillor L Devlin Councillor M Gibbons Councillor G Hanna Councillor R Howell Councillor A Lewis Councillor G Malone Councillor H McKee Councillor A McMurray Councillor D Murphy Councillor K Owen Councillor M Ruane Councillor G Stokes Councillor J Tinnelly	Councillor R Burgess Councillor C Casey Councillor A Finnegan Councillor O Hanlon Councillor V Harte Councillor M Larkin Councillor O Magennis Councillor L McEvoy Councillor McKeivitt Councillor R Mulgrew Councillor B Ó Muirí Councillor H Reilly Councillor G Sharvin Councillor D Taylor Councillor W Walker

**Officials in attendance
in Chamber:**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in Attendance
Via Teams:**

Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism
Mr J McBride, Director of Neighbourhood Services (Acting)
Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director, Culture, Tourism & Events
Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director, Estates & Capital Projects.
Mrs P McKeever, Democratic Services Officer

C/206/2021

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Doran, Gallagher, O'Hare and Trainor.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Walker back following his recent illness.

The Chairperson congratulated Carrickcruppen GAC who had won the Armagh Intermediate Championship and Belleek GAA on winning the Junior Championship. Congratulations were also sent to Downpatrick RGU ladies on winning the Senior A intermediate Championship.

The Chairperson outlined the mental health and wellbeing topic for November as focusing on a healthy lifestyle and the impact this had on mental health and general well-being.

The Chairperson spoke at length about nutrition and the need for a well-balanced diet, measured alcohol intake, healthy work life balance, good sleep patterns and plenty of exercise and activity. She also referred to studies supporting the link between exercise, sleep, mindfulness, acupuncture and mental health and growing evidence indicating that nutrition may also play an important role in the prevention, development and management of diagnosed mental health problems including depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and dementia.

The Chairperson spoke about the positive impact getting out and about had on well-being, pointing out Council had identified this in its corporate objectives stating: "It will encourage local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of our parks and open spaces"

The Chairperson asked Members to personally have a close look at their own lifestyle, commenting that the job they do did not lend itself well to having an adequate work life balance and asked them to take a step back and put more of a focus on lifestyle and take a conscious step to promote to others the benefits a healthy lifestyle could have.

At the request of Councillor Hanna the Chairperson also sent congratulations on behalf of Council to Ballyvea Football Club on winning the Fosters Cup Final.

C/207/2021

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C/208/2021

ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2021

Read: Action sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 4 October 2021 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 4 October 2021 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Magennis.**

COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING

C/209/2021 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2021

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 4 October 2021 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 4 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Burgess.**

C/210/2021 MINUTES OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2021

Read: Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 27 September 2021 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 27 September 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Andrews.**

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/211/2021 MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2021

Read: Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 October 2021 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Burgess.**

ERT/185/2021: Report of Warrenpoint Front Shore Public Realm Scheme Meeting 5 October 2021

Councillor McAteer emphasised he believed there was a need to tighten up on the delivery of the project and expressed concern it was to be delivered in phases. He proposed a letter be sent to the Department for Communities requesting reassurance that the monies for all phases of the Warrenpoint Front Shore Public Realm Scheme be forthcoming in 2022/23. Councillor McKeivitt seconded the proposal.

Councillor Gibbons asked for an update on the Consultation on Charged Parking for Council's Forest and Country Parks that had completed in January 2021.

Councillor Gibbons advised a number of experienced mountain bikers had contacted him regarding safety concerns on some of the mountain bike trails in Rostrevor, he acknowledged some work had recently been done on the trails, however, he said there was an issue with water logging and maintenance concerns.

Mr Mallon said he would speak to Councillor Gibbons outside of the meeting to address both of

these issues.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor McKevitt to write to the Department of Communities to request that the monies for all phases of the Warrenpoint Front Shore Public Realm Scheme be forthcoming in 2022/23.**

It was agreed Mr C Mallon contact Councillor Gibbons directly to update him regarding the Consultation on Charged Parking for Council's Forest and Country Parks and to discuss areas of concern regarding the Mountain Bike Trails in Rostrevor.

C/212/2021 **MINUTES OF STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 14 October 2021 (copy circulated).

SPR/164/2021: Surplus Assets Update

Councillor Sharvin advised with regard to 5 Ballynoe Road, Downpatrick, liaison had now taken place between the local community group and officials, and he proposed to remove it from moving to open market and officers continue to liaise with the local community group as it had been identified to be suitable for their needs. Councillor Hanlon seconded the proposal.

Ms Carville to take this action forward.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Strategy, Policy Committee Meeting held on 14 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon.**

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon that SPR/164/2021 Surplus Assets Update relating to 5 Ballynoe Road, Downpatrick (former site of Killough Road community Centre) be removed from moving to Open Market sale and Officers continue to liaise with the local community group as it has been identified to be suitable for their needs.

C/213/2021 **MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 18 October 2021 (copy circulated).

AHC/200/2021: Newry, Mourne and Down Active Travel Masterplan

Councillor Ó Muirí stated the Newry Mourne and Down Active Travel Masterplan was a fantastic plan but expressed concerns as to whether it was largely aspirational or if it was something that could be worked on to make a reality.

In response, Mr Lipsett agreed it was a very ambitious document and it would take a long time for all actions contained in it to be actioned, if indeed this was the case. He said it would require the efforts of a lot of government departments and agencies but that Council would work hard to realise the targets set out.

Councillor Byrne welcomed the document and said it was important it was adopted. He said NMDDC was a largely rural area and whilst the document addressed a lot of issues pertaining to the bigger towns and villages, he said these proposed changes would not improve active travel in rural areas and it was important to explore ways to connect the smaller, more rural areas around the big towns.

Councillor Byrne proposed the document remained an open living document so that it could be added to going forward. Councillor Andrews seconded the proposal.

Mr Lipsett to take this action forward.

Councillor Reilly agreed with Councillor Byrne's comments regarding the rural areas and expressed concern at safety issues for people walking on dark roads and asked if Council could advocate the necessity for wearing reflective clothing when walking on dark roads.

Mr Lipsett said this was an issue that was already addressed by the DEAs and PCSP, however he said he would speak to Councillor Reilly on this issue outside of the meeting.

Councillor McAteer clarified the comments he had made at the meeting stating:

1. There was no linkage to Ballyholland via Courtney Hill and Temple Hill Roads and
2. There were still some parts of the old road and train track existing from Narrow Water Castle to the Greenbank in Newry which was worth looking at in terms of a Greenway.

Councillor McMurray added his support to that of Councillor Byrne and Ó Muirí saying it was important to have aspirational dreams to work within and suggested Councillor Byrne ask Minister Mallon to increase the spend per capita.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Andrews that the Newry Mourne and Down Active Travel Masterplan document remain an open and living document that can be added to going forward.**

The Minutes of Active and Healthy Committee Meeting held on 18 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

C/214/2021 **MINUTES OF SPECIAL ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Special Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 21 October 2021 (copy circulated).

SPR/216/2021: Application for the grant of a licence to operate a house of multiple occupation for 42 Pound Road, Newry Co. Down

Councillor Casey asked that the address be amended to read 42 and 44 Pound Road and not Pound Street as was reflected in the minutes.

Agreed: The Minutes of Special Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 21 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Finnegan subject to the amendment being made to the address under SPR/216/2021.

C/215/2021 MINUTES OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2021

Read: Minutes of Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on 19 October 2021 (copy circulated)

Councillor Andrews offered his congratulations to the winners of the recent Green Flag Heritage Awards, in particular Delamont Country Park and he acknowledged the hard work and commitment of all staff involved.

Councillor Tinnelly raised the issue of the recent destruction and removal of historic bamboo planting within Kilbroney Park and the widespread anger this had invoked in the local community. He said this work had been carried out by contractors on behalf of the Council and said it was unacceptable especially as at the April Council Meeting he had raised the issue of an incident of extensive tree felling in Kilbroney Park and was assured that going forward Councillors would be advised of any intended extensive tree felling and the reasons for doing so.

Councillor Tinnelly said the removal of the bamboo planting had exposed a previously hidden badger sett which would be protected under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

Councillor Tinnelly acknowledged the planting may have been an invasive species but it was a much loved area of the park and many residents, himself included, remembered playing there as children.

Councillor Tinnelly asked that it be put on record he shared the outrage that existed within the community relating to this matter.

Councillor Tinnelly proposed that going forward Council Officials liaise with Councillors regarding intended works within any Council site that could result in a change of character of the area and the reasons given for the intended works and he asked that Council make an official statement on social media addressing what had occurred in Kilbroney Park.

Ms Ward said she appreciated the challenges Members had faced over this issue but assured them the matter was being dealt with. Mr McBride would progress the matter with Councillor Tinnelly outside the meeting. Ms Ward said it was an operational matter and not one to be voted on in Council and she assured Councillor Tinnelly Council had prepared a statement that would be released tomorrow morning.

Councillor Ruane said it was important the public were made aware the work had been carried out as part of Council's Bio Diversity Plan.

Councillor Reilly said he did not understand why the bamboo planting would have had to be decimated as he did not consider it to be invasive and checks should have been made in advance which would have uncovered the badger sett.

Councillor McKeivitt said she could not defend the Council in this case and that a policy was

needed on the issue.

Councillor McAteer said there were lessons to be learned from what had happened.

Councillor Tinnelly was content a paper would be brought back to Committee on this issue and a statement would be issued on 2 November 2021.

NS/148/2021: Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Group Meeting – 11 October 2021

Councillor Casey said his proposal had been to contact Newry Cathedral administrators to request the gardens were opened to the public so people could enter the gardens and access the crib, rather than just view the crib.

Agreed: **It was agreed a report be presented at the next Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting regarding works relating to the removal of Bamboo Planting in Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor and that a statement from Council be released on the matter.**

The Minutes of Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on 19 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor McKevitt, seconded by Councillor Curran subject to the amendment made at NS/148/2021.

C/216/2021 **PLANNING MINUTES**

Read: Extract from Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held on 22 September 2021 (copy circulated)

Noted: **The extract from the Planning Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 22 September 2021 were noted on the proposal of Councillor Larkin seconded by Councillor McAteer.**

Councillor Harte left the meeting at this point – 7.55pm.

FOR NOTING

C/217/2020 **NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING COUNCIL MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 2021**

Read: Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes dated 9 September 2021. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Savage asked that an invitation be extended to Minister Hargey to attend the Housing Needs Conference scheduled for 9 November 2021 in the Burrendale Hotel, Newcastle. He said doing this would send out a message of hope to those families who were facing real hardship.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Andrews to invite Minister Hargey to attend the Housing Needs Conference in the Burrendale Hotel, Newcastle on 9 November 2021.

The Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes dated 9 September 2021 were noted on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Hanlon.

C/218/2021 **NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING COUNCIL BULLETIN – OCTOBER 2021**

Read: Bulletin dated October 2021 from Northern Ireland Housing Council. (Copy circulated)

Agreed: The Northern Ireland Housing Council Bulletin was noted on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Hanlon.

C/219/2021 **CORRESPONDENCE FROM FERMANAGH & OMAGH DC RE. NOM SYRINGES FOR CUBA CAMPAIGN/END THE BLOCKADE**

Read: Correspondence dated 20 September 2021 regarding Notice of Motion Syringes for Cuba Campaign/End the Blockade. (Copy circulated)

Agreed: The correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh DC regarding the Notice of Motion – Syringes for Cuba Campaign/End the Blockade was noted on the proposal of Councillor Howell seconded by Councillor Hanlon.

C/220/2021 **CORRESPONDENCE FROM FERMANAGH & OMAGH DC RE NOM WEALTH TAX**

Read: Correspondence dated 8 October 2021 regarding Notice of Motion Wealth Tax. (Copy circulated)

Agreed: The correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh DC regarding the Notice of Motion – Wealth Tax was noted on the proposal of Councillor Howell seconded by Councillor Hanlon

C/221/2021 **RESPONSE FROM DfC RE. NOM C/203/2021**

Read: Response dated 26 October 2021 regarding NOM C/203/2021 (Copy circulated)

Councillor Byrne welcomed the letter received from the DfC and acknowledged Minister Hargey for submitting a bid for £55m in the October monitoring round, however expressed disappointment that there had not been foresight to make an application for either next years committed budget or for the January 2022 monitoring round.

Councillor O'Muire said the only way to find the £55m for the uplift would have been to take it out of the £200m assigned to Health and he said as it was £200m was not enough for Health.

Councillor Byrne said he wished to clarify that he did not mean for the £55m to be taken out of the £200m, but he was stating that firstly he was thankful to the Minister for Communities for her direction and making a bid with the October monitoring round and to express his disappointment that there was not a will to work together for over commitments for the January monitoring round.

Agreed: **The correspondence from DfC dated 26 October 2021 regarding NOM C/203/2021 was noted on the proposal of Councillor Howell seconded by Councillor Hanlon.**

C/222/2021 **NAC – LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE**

Read: Details on the NAC Local Government Conference scheduled for 26 – 28 November 2021 (Copy circulated)

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Curran that any Councillor wishing to attend the NAC Local Government Conference as an NAC Member contact Democratic Services as soon as possible.**

NOTICES OF MOTION

C/223/2021 **NOTICE OF MOTION – CONTACTLESS PAYMENT STATIONS**

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Brown:

'Given the continued high homelessness rates in the District and the rise in cashless transactions, this council commits to installing a number of contactless payment stations in main urban areas across the District which can gather donations for homelessness charities based in the District to distribute to those most in need.'

The Motion was seconded by Councillor McMurray.

The Chairperson advised the motion was being referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee under Standing Order 16.1.6.

The Chairperson thanked Councillor Enright for bringing the Motion forward and she encouraged all Councillors to attend the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting when this matter was being tabled.

Agreed: **The Motion was referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.**

C/224/2021 **NOTICE OF MOTION – MAKING COUNCIL FINANCES FIT TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE**

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Enright:

Council notes the supporting table below is based on a Freedom of Information reply from the Department of Finance, supplemented by FoI's from each of the 11 Councils. Council notes that or District is running in a poor last place in terms of revenue despite having the best potential renewable resources in the North of Ireland outside Donegal. Were it not for the £100,000+pa benefit of our old abandoned energy efficiency campaign, Newry Mourne and Down District Council's position would be worse.

Council formally adopts revenue targets from renewables as follows;

2022 - £1 million per annum
2025 - £5 Million per annum
2030 - £10 Million per annum

Council directs management that these targets can be met by rates from renewables projects, income from Council's own renewables projects and from a revitalised energy savings programme.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Hanna.

The Chairperson advised the motion was being referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee under Standing Order 16.1.6.

Agreed: The Motion was referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 19:07.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 December 2021.

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive