

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

**Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 6 February 2017 at 6pm in the
Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick**

In the Chair: Councillor G Fitzpatrick

In attendance: (Councillors)

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor P Brown
Councillor R Burgess	Councillor S Burns
Councillor P Byrne	Councillor M Carr
Councillor C Casey	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor G Craig	Councillor D Curran
Councillor L Devlin	Councillor S Doran
Councillor S Ennis	Councillor C Enright
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor V Harte
Councillor H Harvey	Councillor T Hearty
Councillor D Hyland	Councillor L Kimmins
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor K Loughran
Councillor J Macauley	Councillor A McMurray
Councillor R Mulgrew	Councillor M Murnin
Councillor B O'Múiri	Councillor O'Gribin
Councillor B Quinn	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor G Sharvin
Councillor G Stokes	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J J Tinnelly	Councillor J Trainor

(Officials)

Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive
Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Mr E Curtis, Director of Strategic Planning and Policy
Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Mr C O'Rourke, Director of Regulatory and Technical Services
Mrs M Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism
Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director, Human Resources
Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director, Corporate Planning and Policy
Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director, Corporate Services (Finance and Systems)
Mrs M Morgan, Corporate Services (Finance)
Mrs E McParland, Democratic Services Manager
Mrs C Taylor, Democratic Services Officer
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Officer

C/18/2017

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Bailie, D McAteer and Walker.

The Chairperson referred to the loss of life due to tragic accidents within the District and said sympathy letters would be sent to the families of Matthew Davis who died in a road accident in Saintfield, Sarah Thompson who died in a house fire in Jonesborough, a lady in Kilkeel who died in a road collision, Ciara McGreevy who died in Warrenpoint, Philip McGrath, the brother of Colin McGrath, who had died recently and Councillor Casey's sister-in-law.

The Chairperson extended congratulations to the following:

- Colin Campbell, the golfer from Warrenpoint, who had been named on the initial GB and Ireland Walker Cup squad.
- Dylan Duffy from Downpatrick who had won the Irish U22 boxing championships.
- St Louis School, Kilkeel ladies football team who had become Ulster champions.
- The classic car event at the Slieve Donard in Newcastle for Cancer Research which had been a very well-run event.
- Best wishes and safe travels to Drumgreenagh School, Barnmeen, who had won school choir of the year and were heading to Britain's Got Talent.

Councillor Hyland advised John Dalzell's Christmas sit out for the Hospice had now raised over £1.7m, which should be recognised. The Chairperson advised a reception was to be held to recognise this achievement.

Councillor Harvey advised £16k had been raised at the classic car event for Cancer Research.

C/19/2017

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING

C/20/2017

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2017

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 9 January 2017 (copy circulated)

AGREED: The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Stokes.

C/21/2017

ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2017

Read: Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 9 January 2017(copy circulated)

AGREED: The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 9 January 2017 was agreed.

TO SET A DISTRICT RATE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/2018

C/22/2017 TO SET A DISTRICT RATE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/2018 AS REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 3 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT (NI) 2011.

Read: Report by Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive and Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, dated 6 February 2017, regarding the District Rate 2017-18.
Appendix 1 - Report by Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, dated 6 February 2017, regarding the Efficiency Working Group consideration of rate setting process 2017-18.
Appendix 2 – Four Year Capital Programme.
Appendix 3 – Prudential Indicators and MRP.
Appendix 4 – Treasury Management Strategy Statement.
Appendix 5 – NMDDC 4 Year Plan.
Appendix 6 – Department for Communities – General Estimate of Rates 2017/18 – NMDDC.

Mrs Carville advised Members that the Efficiencies Working Group had met 5 times and had considered in detail the rates estimates. She said she was asking Members to approve an increase to the rates of 2.66%, highlighting the key factors that underpinned the increase, which she said had been considered in detail at the Efficiencies Working Group meetings.

Mrs Carville said that as set out in the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011, the Chief Executive, as Chief Financial Officer, was required to make a submission confirming the robustness of the revenue estimates and the adequacy of reserves going into the 2017/18 year.

Mr Hannaway confirmed that the budget for the 2017/18 financial year was robust and that reserves were sufficient to carry out the requirement on CIPFA guidelines on the minimum reserves, which was one month's working capital to cover any costs.

However Mr Hannaway advised Members that the current political instability in the NI Executive was causing problems, especially as the Regional Rate had not been set and Council had therefore made an assumption that it would receive £2.5m of Rates Support Grant, the same as had been received the previous year.

Mr Hannaway also said there were no figures yet for grants for PCSP, Good Relations and Air Quality Control, but it had been assumed they would be the same as the previous year. He also referred to the Local Government Staff Commission,

saying there could be a potential cost issue if it was to remain in place as no legislation was passed to approve its dissolution. All these issues could impact on the Council's Budget in 2017/2018.

Questions from Members were answered as follows:

- There was no commitment from the NI Executive regarding the Rates Support Grant, but Council had sufficient reserves should the situation arise whereby the grant did not materialise.
- Loan interest increased in the next few years as it was directly linked to the capital programme. Officers were working closely with the treasury advisors to maximise the best rates for Council and they were looking as far into the future as they could to achieve the best rates. The Treasury Management Strategy was committed to achieving the best loan interest rates going forward.
- The other 10 councils in Northern Ireland were at various stages of setting their 2017/18 rate. Belfast City Council had struck their rate at 1.89%.
- Much of the increase in payroll costs had been due to legislation: there was a 1% increase by NILGOSC over the next 3 years, Council had entered into the Apprentice levy of 0.5%, there would be new staff required to roll out the brown bins from April and additional planning staff had been brought in to reduce the backlog of applications. There was also new staff required in Community Planning, a statutory function of Council. There were funded posts in the budget amounting to £500k, with the corresponding income included. Council would also be required to have a Safeguarding Officer in post.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Craig, seconded by Councillor Byrne, that the considerations and recommendations of the Efficiencies Working Group in relation to the 2017/18 rate setting process, be approved as follows:

1. Approve the 4 year capital programme budget of £100,396,852 (detailed in appendix 2 of Report).
2. Approve the Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2017/18 as required by the CIPFA Prudential Code (detailed in appendix 3 of Report).
3. Approve financing severance costs of £987,104 from reserves 2017-18 (detailed in appendix 4 of Report).
4. Approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017-18.
5. Have regard to the Chief Executive's statement as required by the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 (detailed in appendix 5 of Report).
6. Approve an increase in the District Rate for 2017-18 of 2.66% based on an estimated penny product of 2,277,215, meaning a non-domestic rate of 22.9904 pence and a domestic rate of 0.3692 pence.
7. Approve the 2017-18 estimates and authorise the expenditure included in the estimates detailed in appendix 6).

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/23/2017 MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2017

Read: Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 16 January 2017 (copy circulated)

AGREED: **The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Curran, seconded by Councillor Burgess.**

C/24/2017 MINUTES OF STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2017

Read: Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 19 January 2017 (copy circulated).

In response to a query from Councillor Reilly, Mr Curtis advised a report had been received from the Central Procurement Department on the process for the cost of the review of Victoria Lock, a copy of which would be sent to the Member.

In response to a query from Councillor Burgess, Mr Curtis confirmed that council officials had a plan to take to the Development Association to develop 8 x 1,000 sq ft enterprise units at the Saintfield Community Centre and also the development of a 2G pitch on the shale pitch under Council's ownership, details of which would be tabled with the Development Association and brought back to Council in due course.

In response to a query from Councillor Craig, Mr Hannaway explained that responses to the Community Plan would be presented to the Community Planning Partnership Board on 9 February 2017, following which a report would be brought to Council with any revisions to the Community Plan.

SPR/9/2017 Visit from School 7, Kirovsk – March 2017

Mr Curtis advised the costs of hosting the visit from School 7 would be £420 for transportation, plus provision of a minor civic reception. He explained that East Coast Adventure had agreed to provide all other facilities for School 7 during their visit.

Councillor Casey suggested School 7 should be part of the St Patrick's Day parade.

AGREED: **It was agreed that School 7 would be part of the St. Patrick's Day parade.**

SPR/25/2017 - Proposed Changes to Management Structures

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on this matter which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a Government Department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Brown, it was agreed the Council come out of closed session.

Agreed: When the Council came out of closed session, the Chairperson advised that discussion had taken place relating to Minute SPR/25/2017 – proposed changes to Management Structures, with the Chief Executive providing information on the matter and the Minutes had then been agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

C/25/2017 **MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2017**

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 23 January 2017 (copy circulated)

AHC/9/2017 - Play Strategy

Councillor Stokes said he considered that the Play Strategy should have made reference to a large parkland area for the centre of Newry, but it had been explained to him that this fell outside the scope of this particular Play Strategy. He said this was an important project for Council and he requested that this area of open space in the centre of Newry be investigated as this project was extremely important to, and much needed in, Newry.

AGREED: The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Byrne.

C/26/2017 **MINUTES OF REGULATORY & TECHNICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2017**

Read: Minutes of Regulatory and Technical Services Committee Meeting held on 25 January 2017 (copy circulated)

RTS/10/2017 – Moving to a Single Standard of No Glass in Blue Recycle Bins

Councillor Mulgrew referred to the lengthy discussion on the issue of no glass in the blue recycle bins, saying there was further work to do regarding placement of collection bins for glass bottles and education, and requested a more in-depth study to be carried out.

Councillor Stokes said the public were not prepared to pay rates as well as take their glass to be recycled and the elderly, disabled and those without access to transport would be at a disadvantage.

Mr O'Rourke responded to Members' questions as follows:

- The Arc21 contract would run until April 2018 during which blue bin content from the Newry area was recycled including glass.
- The Strategic Waste Working Group had agreed in principle to a project to roll out a blue bin service to commercial customers in the Down area.
- The cost of blue bin content being recycled including glass was £73/tonne, without glass it was £42/tonne.

Councillor Carr said it made sense to roll out the glass collection in the blue bins across the whole District and requested officers investigate this as opposed to stopping the service.

Councillor Murnin suggested information detailing what revenue raised from the rates was spent on, saying this should be broken down and displayed in chart format and sent out in the Council's Citizen's News.

The Chief Executive said information for citizens relating to the 2017/2018 rates was already at an advance stage of preparation, but this would be considered for inclusion in the forthcoming citizens news publication.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew, seconded by Councillor Stokes, that further options be investigated regarding glass in blue recycle bins, including rolling the service out across the whole District, and that information be brought back to Committee.

AGREED: The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew, seconded by Councillor Craig, with the exception of Minute RTS/10/2017.

CORRESPONDENCE AND CONFERENCES

C/27/2017

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS, CLIMATE ACTION AND ENVIRONMENT REGARDING DECOMMISSIONING OF SELLAFIELD.

Read: Correspondence dated 22 December 2016 received from the Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (copy circulated)

Mr Hannaway advised Members that representatives from Sellafield had indicated they could accommodate a delegation of 7 from Council, which would be tabled initially at the Party Representatives Forum.

Noted: The correspondence received from the Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment dated 22 December 2016, was noted.

C/28/2017

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR WORK & PENSIONS RE: NOTICES OF MOTION ON WOMEN'S STATE PENSION AGE INCREASE

Read: Correspondence dated 6 January 2017 received from the Department for Work & Pensions re Notices of Motion on Women's State Pension Age Increase (copy circulated)

Councillor Andrews recorded his disappointment in the response, expressing concerns for people working longer and many not reaching retirement age.

Noted: The correspondence dated 6 January 2017, received from Department for Work & Pensions re Notices of Motion on Women's State Pension Age Increase was noted.

C/29/2017

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM MR SIMON COVENEY TD – RIGHT TO VOTE OUTSIDE OF THE STATE

Read: Correspondence dated 16 January 2017 received from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (copy circulated)

Councillor O'Múiri suggested responding to the correspondence received asking that Council be kept informed of the findings and how the reports were being analysed.

Agreed: It was agreed that a response be sent to Mr S Coveney T.D., Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government asking that Council be kept informed of the findings and how the reports were being analysed.

FOR NOTING

C/30/2017 **NILGA WORK PLAN**

Read: Correspondence dated 9 January 2017 received from NILGA regarding the NILGA Work Plan (copy circulated).

Noted: **The correspondence dated 9 January 2017 received from NILGA regarding the NILGA Work Plan, was noted.**

CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

C/31/2017 **DAERA KNOWLEDGE FRAMEWORK (EDUCATION STRATEGY) CONSULTATION**

Read: Consultation – Daera Knowledge Framework (Education Strategy) Consultation dated 16 January 2017 (copy circulated).

Noted: **It was agreed to note the DAERA Knowledge Framework (Education Strategy) Consultation dated 16 January 2017.**

NOTICES OF MOTION

C/32/2017 **NOTICE OF MOTION RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLOR Ó MUIRÍ**

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the name of Councillor Ó Muirí:

"That this Council agrees that the decision by DUP Minister Paul Givan to remove £50k bursaries from the Liofa initiative shows further disregard for the Irish language and he should immediately restore £50k of bursaries to the Liofa initiative."

In proposing the motion, Councillor Ó Muirí stated that although the funding for the Liofa initiative had now been restored, the manner in which the Minister withdrew the funding was deplorable.

Councillor Ruane seconded the motion.

Councillors Stokes, Sharvin and Brown spoke in support of the motion while Councillors Reilly, Harvey, Burgess and Craig voiced their dissent for the motion, stating the Irish language should not be used as a political football by Sinn Fein trying to force the Irish Language Policy.

Councillor Sharvin proposed an amendment to the motion that the Council write to the Department asking the Minister to ensure funding was ring-fenced for future provision of the Liofa initiative.

Councillor Ó Muirí accepted the amendment and thanked those Members who supported the motion. He invited any Members who wished to visit the school that he taught in.

The Chairperson put the motion, as amended, to a vote, results of which were as follows:

FOR: 27
AGAINST: 5
ABSTENTIONS: 1

The motion as amended, was **CARRIED**.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Ruane that Council write to the current Minister, with follow up to the new Minister when appointed, requesting that funding be ring-fenced for future provision of the Liofa initiative.

C/33/2017 **NOTICE OF MOTION RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLOR STOKES**

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the name of Councillor Stokes:

"Newry, Mourne and Down District Council calls on the Department for Infrastructure to reverse its decision to increase on street parking charges in Newry by 50% from 40p per hour to 60p per hour."

In proposing the motion, Councillor Stokes stated the Department's timing was wrong as businesses were already facing huge instability with Brexit, increasing rates etc. He advised it sent out the wrong message to traders in the Newry city area.

Councillor Andrews seconded the motion.

Councillor Hanna spoke in support of the motion and asked that an amendment be added to the motion asking for the Department to advise Council on how much revenue was lost through Southern registered cars parking in car parks and not paying.

Councillor Kimmins stated Sinn Fein would not be supporting the motion as it was only a 20p increase per hour and cars should only be parking on street for a maximum of 2 hours. She stated Newry city was still the cheapest place to park and cars could still park for 15 minutes for 20p. Councillor Kimmins stated that the situation needed to be monitored and any negative impact should be addressed.

Councillor Stokes thanked Members for their support. He said, although not directly related to the motion, he was supportive of a letter being written to the Minister asking for information on southern registered cars not paying for parking.

The motion was put to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR: 18
AGAINST: 13
ABSTENTIONS: 0

The motion was **CARRIED**.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Andrews that Council call on the Department for Infrastructure to reverse its decision to increase on street parking charges in Newry by 50% from 40p to 60p per hour.

It was also agreed to write to the Minister asking for information on Southern-registered cars not paying for parking.

C/34/2017 **REPORT OF EFFICIENCY WORKING GROUP MEETINGS**

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on this matter which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - Information in relation to any individual and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

Read: Report of Efficiency Working Group Meetings held on 18 November 2016, 30 November 2016, 22 December 2016, 16 January 2017 and 1 February 2017 (copies circulated)

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Brown, it was agreed the Council come out of closed session.

Agreed: When the Council came out of closed session, the Chairperson advised that the reports of the Efficiency Working Group Meetings held on 18 November 2016, 30 November 2016, 22 December 2016, 16 January 2017 and 1 February 2017, had been noted.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.46pm

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive