

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 10 January 2022 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 D Curran
Councillor O Hanlon Councillor B Ó Muirí
Councillor M Rice Councillor W Walker

In attendance via Teams: Councillor P Brown Councillor R Burgess
Councillor P Byrne Councillor C Casey
Councillor W Clarke Councillor L Devlin
Councillor C Enright Councillor A Finnegan
Councillor M Gibbons Councillor G Hanna
Councillor V Harte Councillor R Howell
Councillor M Larkin Councillor A Lewis
Councillor O Magennis Councillor G Malone
Councillor D McAteer Councillor L McEvoy
Councillor H McKee Councillor AMcMurray
Councillor R Mulgrew Councillor D Murphy
Councillor G O'Hare Councillor K Owen
Councillor H Reilly Councillor M Ruane
Councillor M Savage Councillor G Sharvin
Councillor G Stokes Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J Tinnelly 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 & Health Communities
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration &
Tourism
Mr J McBride, Director of Neighbourhood Services
(Acting)
Mrs P McKeever, Democratic Services Officer

C/001/2022 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Gallagher and McKeivitt.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Rice, new Councillor for the Mourne DEA to his first Council meeting.

The Chairperson commented that with the new year Members would reflect on the year of 2021; a year remembered with heavy hearts as we lost members of our community, family members and dear loved ones. 2022 offered a new year of hope and opportunities and it was important that a helping hand in doing so was given to one another.

The Chairpersons mental health initiative for January was focusing on the potential pressures of new year resolutions. She spoke of how these pressures could lead to negative self-reflection and to questioning the direction of your life which had a knock-on effect on a person's mental health and well-being.

The Chairperson asked everyone to focus on their own lives and their own mental health and well-being and if anyone was experiencing increased feelings of pressure and anxiety to slow down and take time out to refocus on doing something that made them feel good. She added that everyone was on their own journey and must help and support each other along the way.

The Chairperson wished fellow Councillors and all the people of Newry, Mourne and Down health, peace and happiness in the year ahead.

C/002/2022 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C/003/2022 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2021

Read: Action sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 8 December 2021 (copy circulated).

C/246/2021: Notice of Motion – Meeting Government Targets for Electric Vehicles

It was agreed an officer from Building Control would contact Councillor Reilly in relation to his comments on how it had been made obligatory for Councils in England to have Building Control departments install individual electric car chargers.

C/242/2021: Notice of Motion – Down High School

It was agreed to note Councillor Reilly and McAteer's comments regarding the possibility of a presentation to a Committee by a group called Forest Schools Awards.

Agreed: **The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 8 December 2021 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Magennis.**

COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING

C/004/2022 **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 6 December 2021 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 6 December 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Andrews.**

C/005/2022 **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 8 December 2021 (copy circulated).

In response to Councillor Mulgrew regarding the need for a special meeting with the Southern Trust regarding Daisy Hill Hospital and the expansion of services as a matter of priority it was agreed the date would be followed up with the Trust.

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 December 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Andrews.**

A date for a meeting with the Southern Trust regarding Daisy Hill Hospital and the expansion of services to be arranged as a matter of priority.

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/006/2022 **MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 13 December 2021 (copy circulated).

ERT/245/2021: Warrenpoint Pontoon

It was agreed Mr Mallon would contact Councillor Gibbons directly regarding his query in relation to an equality impact assessment for undertaking the dredging of the pontoon pocket area by Warrenpoint Harbour Authority.

ERT/244/2021: Small Settlement Regeneration Programme

In response to concerns raised by Councillor Sharvin regarding settlements with a population less than 1,000 being excluded e.g., Strangford and Killough Mr Mallon confirmed all settlements, whether they were below 1,000 population or not, were being considered as part of the development of the scheme going forward. Mr Mallon also confirmed the timescale was the next financial year.

It was agreed Mr Mallon would contact Councillor Reilly in relation to his request for a site meeting with contractors and Councillors in relation to Annalong Harbour.

Agreed: The Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 13 December 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Curran.

C/007/2022 **MINUTES OF STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 December 2021 (copy circulated).

SPR/194/2021: Notice of Motion – Revenue Targets from Renewables

Councillor Enright asked that the original motion be included within the minute. Mrs Carville agreed to look at the matter and make any necessary amendments.

SPR/209/2021: Belfast Region City Deal – Complimentary Fund

In welcoming the fund allocation for the Albert Basin Park Project Councillor Brown requested an update on the three other projects that had been applied for including Active Travel, Kilkeel and Ardglass Harbour Development and the joint project for Larne and Warrenpoint Ports. He enquired if the projects had been rejected, and if so had there been feedback from the Department of Finance as to why they had been rejected.

Mrs Ward confirmed the three projects had not been considered by the Department of Finance in this round, however they may be considered as part of the second round of complimentary funding and that Council would be seeking feedback on all applications.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Strategy, Policy Committee Meeting held on 16 December 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor B Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Magennis subject to the above amendment to item SPR/194/2021: Notice of Motion – Revenue Targets from Renewables.**

C/008/2022 **MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 DECEMBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 20 December 2021 (copy circulated).

AHC/239/2021: District Electoral Area (DEA) Forum Update Report

In response for an update from Councillor Ó Muirí on the potential for maintenance for the new James Reel Play Park, Silverbridge being within the Play Strategy Mr Lipsett confirmed officers were currently liaising with the Neighbourhood Services department on the potential for maintenance in the future and had contacted the club to establish what maintenance it would need. Mr Lipsett added that he hoped a report would be presented to the Active and Healthy Communities Committee on 24 January 2022.

Mr Lipsett agreed to speak with Councillor Reilly regarding points raised in relation to play park inspections and anti-social behaviour in the area of the Kilkeel Bowling Pavilion.

AHC/251/2021: Donard Park Overflow Car Park – Business Case

Councillors Devlin and Clarke welcomed the scheme for the overflow car park at Donard Park however expressed concern that it had not been included on the planning agenda and spoke of the need for urgency to have it constructed pre-Easter season. Mr Lipsett advised further surveys had been requested through the Planning Department but the aim was still to have it ready for Easter and he hoped the scheme would go to the next Planning Committee.

AHC/254/2021: Newcastle Rockpool Update

Councillors Devlin and Clarke took the opportunity to speak about the rockpool in Newcastle and the need for a timeframe and for discussions with all agencies to be expediated as quickly as possible.

Mr Lipsett advised it was difficult to get statutory agencies to come to site meetings but that he hoped there would be progress made and a report presented to the Active and Healthy Communities Committee in February 2022.

Councillor Hanna enquired if officers had engaged with the people of Newcastle and Mr Lipsett confirmed officers had spoken to various groups within the area regarding future management arrangements and would continue to do so.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Committee Meeting held on 20 December 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Casey.**

C/009/2022 **MINUTES OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 DECEMBER 2021**

Read: Minutes of Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on 21 December 2021 (copy circulated)

NS/189/2021: Fleet Replacement Programme Update

Councillor Reilly asked for an update on the purchase of new refuse vehicles and said the refuse service in the Mourne area over Christmas and the new year period had been unacceptable. He asked for an explanation as to why the service had been so bad and an assurance it would not recur.

Mr McBride said it was anticipated an order of up to 30 new vehicles should be progressed in early March 2022, however there was a 12 month delivery time. Mr McBride said he was aware of the refuse collection issues in the Mournes over the festive period and said that due to breakdowns in the larger vehicles, smaller capacity vehicles had to be used.

NS/187/2021: Maintenance of Newry Canal from Fearon's Lock to Reilly's Lock

Councillor McAteer said there was the potential for major opportunity and asked if Waterways Ireland could be included.

Mr Mallon said he would take Councillor McAteer's comments on board and advised a date was being sought for a meeting with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council and Neighbourhood Services would be involved in that meeting from a maintenance perspective.

NS/193/2021: Business Case for Medium-sized Chassis Cab and Cleansing Sweeper Vehicle Replacements

Councillor Sharvin said he considered there to be an imbalance of where the vehicles were located within the district and enquired how this imbalance would be addressed. Mr McBride agreed to speak to Councillor Sharvin outside of the meeting on this issue.

Councillor Mulgrew said she was aware that some recycling plants had been forced to close early and she asked for an assurance that all would be done to ensure sufficient staffing levels to cover street cleansing and recycling plants. Mr McBride agreed to speak to Councillor Mulgrew outside of the meeting.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on 21 December 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McKee.**

C/010/2022

PLANNING MINUTES

Read: Extract from Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held on 17 November 2021 (copy circulated)

Councillor Mulgrew said she was aware of delays in responses from Consultees and she proposed a study be undertaken to determine which consultees responded within the specified timeframe and which did not and depending on the outcome of this study, a letter be sent to the Minister asking that all consultees respond within specified timeframes. Councillor Taylor seconded the proposal.

Mrs Ward advised this issue had been discussed at SOLACE and a meeting had been arranged with the Permanent Secretary to discuss Planning concerns and the challenges being faced by Councils across the board.

Councillor McAteer commented that Council response times should also be looked at.

Councillor Clarke stated it was important this issue was addressed as it reflected badly on the Council and he referred to the Scottish planning model, whereby if consultees did not respond within specified timeframes, applications proceeded without their input.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew, seconded by Councillor Taylor that a study be undertaken to determine the response times of statutory consultees and depending on the outcome, a letter be sent to the Minister asking that Consultees respond within specified timeframes.**

Noted: **The extract from the Planning Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 17 November 2021 was noted on the proposal of Councillor McAteer seconded by Councillor O'Hare.**

FOR NOTING

C/011/2022

**NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING COUNCIL MINUTES
NOVEMBER 2021**

Read: Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes dated 11 November 2021. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Savage asked for an update following the recent Housing Needs Conference in Newcastle.

Mr Mallon advised it was their intention to work the Housing Executive and bring a report to Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee in the coming months.

Councillor Reilly and Councillor Clarke expressed concern at the huge shortage of

accommodation in the private sector. Councillor Clarke proposed a letter be sent to the Minister requesting a review be undertaken to ascertain the impact Airbnb was having on local accommodation provision. Councillor Reilly seconded the proposal.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Reilly that a letter be sent to the Minister requesting a review be undertaken to ascertain the impact Airbnb was having on local accommodation provision.**

Agreed: **The Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes dated 11 November 2021 were noted on the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Andrews**

C/012/2022 **NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING COUNCIL BULLETIN – DECEMBER 2021**

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

Agreed: **The Northern Ireland Housing Council Bulletin was noted on the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Andrews.**

C/013/2022 **CORRESPONDENCE FROM MINISTER OF HEALTH REGARDING DENTAL SERVICES DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC REF: NOM - C/111/2021**

Read: Correspondence 11 December 2021 regarding Notice of Motion – Dental Services during Covid 19 Pandemic. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Finnegan expressed her disappointment that this issue had not been addressed and proposed that a further letter be sent to the Minister requesting priority be given to ensuring an extension to the 12 month free dental care period for mothers who had given birth during the Covid-19 pandemic period be implemented and that a decision be forthcoming as soon as possible. Councillor Hanlon seconded the proposal.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Hanlon to write to the Minister of Health to request that priority be given to ensuring an extension to the 12 month free dental care period for mothers who had given birth during the Covid-19 pandemic period be implemented and that a decision on this matter be forthcoming as soon as possible.**

Agreed: **The correspondence from the Minister of Health was noted on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor McAteer.**

C/014/2022 **CORRESPONDENCE FROM MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE REGARDING PERMANENT 20MPH SPEED LIMITS REF: NOM - C/202/2021**

Read: Correspondence dated 6 December 2021 regarding Notice of Motion Permanent 20mph Speed Limits. (Copy circulated)

Councillor McMurray expressed disappointment there would not be further consultation carried out to look at how legal speeds could be reduced.

Councillor McAteer said the proven effectiveness of 20 mph speed limits with calming measures should be noted in terms of Planning.

Councillor Ó Muirí said he welcomed any measures that slowed traffic outside schools and built up areas and proposed that the DEAs look at the number of schools within their respective areas with speeding issues. Councillor Hanlon seconded the proposal.

Agreed: **Local DEAs look at the schools within their respective areas with speeding issues and report back to Council.**

Agreed: **The correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the Notice of Motion – Permanent 20mph Speed Limits was noted on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon seconded by Councillor McAteer.**

C/015/2022 **N. IRELAND PLANNING CONFERENCE – MARCH 2022**

Read: Annual Northern Ireland Planning Conference – 2 March 2022, Europa Hotel.

Agreed: **It was agreed any Councillor wishing to attend the N. Ireland Planning Conference contact Democratic Services.**

NOTICES OF MOTION

C/016/2022 **NOTICE OF MOTION – LIVESTREAMING / VIDEO RECORDING FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Brown:

