

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on
Monday 11 December 2017 at 5.00pm in the Boardroom, District Council
Offices,
Monaghan Row, Newry**

Chairperson: Councillor P Byrne

In Attendance: **(Committee Members)**
Councillor R Burgess
Councillor C Casey
Councillor W Clarke
Councillor G Hanna
Councillor H Harvey
Councillor M Carr
Councillor D McAteer
Councillor B Quinn
Councillor G Stokes

Also in Attendance: Councillor Sharvin

Officials

in Attendance: Ms M Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism
Mr J McGilly, Asst. Director, Enterprise Employment & Regeneration
Mr A Patterson, Asst. Director, Tourism Culture & Events
Ms C Taylor, Democratic Services Officer

ERT/209/2017: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors McMahon, Ruane and Hearty.

The Chairperson welcomed Newry Youth Council to the meeting.

ERT/210/2017: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Curran declared an interest in item ERT//2017 – Ardglass Harbour Development.

Councillor Stokes declared an interest in item ERT//2017 – Accelerate Innovation Proposal.

FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

ERT/211/2017: ACTION SHEET MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2017

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 13 November 2017.
(Copy circulated)

ERT/201/2017 – Support for European Capital of Culture 2023 Bid

In response to a query from Councillor Hanna, Mrs Ward advised Council had issued Letters of Support for the bid to Derry City Council and Belfast City Council and correspondence had been received to say work was being undertaken to find a resolution.

ERT/199/2017 – 2018/19 Tourism Events Programme

In response to a query from Councillor McAteer, Mrs Ward said whilst this query should have been raised at the December Council meeting, she undertook to include an action to liaise with the groups currently running tourism related festivals.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 13 November 2017.

ERT/212/2017: PRESENTATION – FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NMD

Read: Presentation – Future Economic Growth in NMD by Eoin Magennis – Ulster University.

The Chairperson welcomed Eoin Magennis of Ulster University to the meeting and invited him to make his presentation.

Mr Magennis thanked the Chairperson for the invitation to attend the meeting and said he had been asked to look at what economic success in Newry, Mourne and Down may look like in 10 years' time in relation to employment, the labour market and the challenges posed for the Council in terms of infrastructure and housing.

Following the presentation, the following points were raised:

- What did 10% of direct employment in the top 100 businesses mean in terms of employment?
- Further investment was required for new start-up businesses. If the start-up was not in Derry or Belfast, Invest NI did not seem interested.
- Wage levels for care workers were very poor and had stagnated over the past 10 years. Were wage levels going in a particular direction?
- There were jobs to be had in eg. Dublin, whereby tradesmen left the north early and returned late in the day.

- Were there any examples of what councils had done to make changes or intervene?
- If corporate tax was lowered, would it provide a massive boost?
- Education providers should be helping young people undertaking education to fill the gaps in industry by targeting specific areas.
- The rural areas were subject to poor infrastructure which was a disadvantage. The skills base could be an issue for schools to target the right businesses in the future. What was the role of council in this – was it to support/facilitate the businesses to move things forward?
- Businesses in the Newcastle area could not find office locations to suit their needs ie. a bespoke business park environment with good connectivity, in a town of their choice with links to lifestyle aspects.
- What were the views on hubs for professional services? Would the Newry Civic Centre provide a good opportunity for professional services to act as a stimulus ?

Mr Magennis replied to comments, advising:

- Invest NI would work with the top 100 firms which employed 6,500 people. Employment numbers for work place employment in the District was 66,000, which was 10% direct employment.
- Wages were behind across NI where they were 10-15 years ago. Another emerging issue was the zero hours contract. Wage levels to the west of the Sperrins were much worse than to the east of the Sperrins due to the retention of people along the Belfast/Dublin corridor.
- Commuting for work each day to eg. Dublin, was ok until family commitments took over.
- Galway City Council had put all their eggs into the medical devices/software sectors and pushed the education providers in their area to deliver graduates that the local firms would want to employ. County Kerry had gone down the route of concentrating on its large rural economy and looked to help rural enterprises and tourism to move from 1-2 employees to over the 5 employee mark by introducing schemes such as LEADER. The common theme to both councils was a concentration on business start-up and how to bring it through to a bigger scale.
- Norbrook was in the top 100 companies in NI.
- There was an argument for corporation tax which took away the discouragement of growing businesses more. Issues around VAT could be looked into to encourage more export.
- It had often been the role of councils to be a facilitator to ensure infrastructure was kept well up the agenda.
- The Newry Civic Centre posed a good opportunity for a business park environment type of development, as did the civic centre in Downpatrick. Professional services were setting up in business parks in Dundalk and Drogheda and were transforming the idea of a traditional industrial park from huge buildings, to smaller shared spaces.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Magennis for his presentation and he departed from the meeting.

Agreed: It was agreed that the presentation would be circulated to all Members of ERT Committee.

ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT & REGENERATION

ERT/213/2017: RING OF GULLION SLLP NIEA FUNDING

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Mr Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration regarding Ring of Gullion SLLP NIEA Funding. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Harvey, it was agreed to sign and return NIEA Acceptance Form and to approve the additional funding offer of £11,000.

ERT/214/2017: UNION PRIORITY 4 (SEAFLAG)

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director of Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration regarding the Report on Flag 2. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed: -

1. To note the Strategy Development process.
2. To approve the submission of the Development strategy to DAERA.
3. To approve the acceptance and sign off for the administration/running costs letter of offer.

ERT/215/2017 IRISH STREET, DOWNPATRICK – PUBLIC REALM SCHEME

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director of Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration regarding the Irish Street, Downpatrick, Public Realm Scheme. **(copy circulated)**

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Casey, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed to approve the further expenditure of £6,000 to allow the scheme to secure the necessary planning approval. This will ensure that the project will be ready to proceed as soon as the DFC funding is released.

ERT/216/2017: ACCELERATE INNOVATION PROPOSAL

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Jonathan McGilly,

Assistant Director of Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration
regarding the Accelerate Innovation Programme.

In response to a query from Councillor Harvey, Mr McGilly advised that the issue was one of resources, but that this could be looked at moving forward if the pilot worked out well.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to contribute £25,000 towards the Innovate Accelerate Pilot Programme in Year One, to be implemented by Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency and Down Business Centre in partnership with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Louth, Meath and Monaghan Local Enterprise Offices. Option for two additional years in 2018/19 and 2019/20 upon review for the pilot programme.

ERT/217/2017 AUDIT OF VACANT PROPERTIES

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Marie Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism regarding the Audit of Vacant Properties. **(Copy circulated)**

In response to queries from Councillors, Mr McGilly provided the following answers:

- The £10,000 would be used to look at the level of dereliction in Newry and Downpatrick, to identify ownership, what was stopping the buildings from being used, the potential for use in the future and a strategy to bring them into more productive use.
- The pilot would explore the issues and the potential for use and to address these.
- Owners could not be forced into complying with the audit, but officers would try to work with owners to engage with businesses in the short term.
- If some of the derelict properties were brought back into use, it would be a good start as council was often challenged about dereliction in town centres.
- Dereliction was an issue District wide. If some quick wins could be achieved, it would justify looking at other areas in the District.

Councillors Clarke, Casey, Quinn and McAteer provided their support to this initiative.

Councillor Sharvin advised he had requested this item would be included on the ERT agenda as Downpatrick had become a prominent area for local businesses to move into and it was a struggle for them to understand which properties were vacant and what size of properties were available. He added that some of the larger retailers were looking in the Downpatrick area for space over 10,000 sq ft and it would be important to include any vacant land that was available in the report.

Councillor Hanna proposed an amendment to the recommendation to include any

vacant land in Downpatrick and Newry that was available.

Councillor Curran seconded Councillor Hanna's amendment.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed:

1. To approve the SLA with the 2 no. Enterprise Agencies to cover works agreed in advance up to a maximum cost of £20,000 per annum for 2017/18 and 2018/19.
2. To approve vacant property unit works be completed under this SLA at a cost of £10,000 within the current financial year.
3. To include any vacant land in Downpatrick and Newry.

The Newry Youth Council departed from the meeting – 6.05pm

ERT/218/2017 **ARDGLASS HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT**

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Marie Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism regarding Ardglass Harbour Development. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Hanna welcomed the proposal saying he wanted to see economic development of all of the fisheries along the County Down coast.

Councillors Clarke, Quinn and Carr also added their support to the proposal.

Councillor Carr requested officers to elaborate on the title to include some of the surveys.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed:

1. To contribute £25k (25%) to Local Harbour Development Group to complete a business case for Harbour Development and wider regeneration projects.
2. That the Group contribute 10% overall costs.
3. That the Group secure remaining (65%) budget from external source i.e FLAG.
4. That a Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Officer support the Group in their work.

ERT/219/2017 **ACCESS AUDIT STRANGFORD LOUGH AND LECALÉ**

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director of Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration and Andy Patterson, Assistant Director of Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration. **(Copy circulated)**.

Councillor Clarke stressed the importance of water sports having access to the waterway.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to an Audit of Access to the Strangford Lough to include: Current Access, Potential Access and Recommendations, relevant to the potential to develop water based recreation and related activities while conserving the area's conservation features and biosecurity.

ERT/220/2017 **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS REPORT**

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Marie Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism regarding International Relations Report. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Burgess referred to the twinning programme, saying he had been approached by the Downpatrick and Ballynahinch twinning programmes. Councillor Burgess also requested a meeting with the chairs of the twinning groups in the Downpatrick area.

Mrs Ward asked Councillor Burgess to provide her with details which she would bring to the International Relations Working Group (IRWG) and then back through ERT Committee. Mrs Ward requested Councillor Burgess to provide details of the twinning groups in the Downpatrick area which she would then organise to attend the IRWG.

In response to a query from Councillor Byrne, Mrs Ward advised council was keen to work with other schools and school principals and SRC had been invited to attend the next IRWG.

Councillor Quinn suggested developing an initiative around the Suez Canal as the man who designed it was from the Kilkeel area. Mrs Ward undertook to take this to the next IRWG.

In response to a question from Councillor Casey, Mrs Ward explained she had met with representatives from the Changchun region and a friendship agreement was being developed which took time, and an update would be brought to Committee in January.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Burgess, it was agreed to:

- (1) Note the detail of the visit to Kirovsk and the signing of a Twinning Agreement from October 2017 to April 2019.**

- (2) **Approve the financial contribution of Council to the St Paul's Exchange visit in February 2017.**
- (3) **Approve the placement of a Russian Student for the period of April 2018 to March 2019.**
- (4) **Approve further consideration of development of a Friendship Agreement between the Changchun region and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.**

TOURISM, CULTURE & EVENTS ITEMS

ERT/221/2017: EVENTS OPEN CALL PROPOSAL

Read: Report dated 11 December 2107 from Andy Patterson, Assistant Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Byrne expressed concerns regarding the balance between the Council led events budget allocation and the community led events budget allocation, saying there was an uneven split. He said he was not comfortable with growing the Council events at the cost of the community led events and would not like to see events such as the Pride festival receiving any reduction in funding. He added that Wake the Giant and the Soma festival had seen fantastic returns but he did not want this to be at the cost of the community led events.

Councillor Clarke said whilst he concurred with some of Councillor Byrne's comments, he proposed Scenario 3, as it would allow the festivals to grow and it could be reviewed next year.

Councillor Carr proposed Scenario 2, saying there was a greater return from supporting the community led festivals than the council run festivals, although there were groups in the District that could increase with the help of financial assistance.

Councillor Hanna seconded Councillor Clarke's proposal for Scenario 3, saying it was important to support new festivals coming on board and given the opportunity to develop with help from council.

Mr Patterson advised the importance of the Open Call, saying any new festivals could talk to council officers about their proposals.

Councillor Burgess seconded Councillor Carr's proposal for Scenario 2.

Councillor McAteer expressed concerns around publishing the criteria, saying it could send out the wrong message regarding applications and he gave his support to Scenario 2.

In response to Councillor Hanna's query, Mrs Ward advised groups could apply for up to a maximum of £15k, but if there was a huge number of applications that met the criteria, then the budget would be apportioned and brought back to committee.

Councillor Clarke expressed concern around the negative undertones, saying festivals needed to grow and this would encourage visitors. To start to cut festivals

would send out the wrong message.

Councillor Byrne said council led festivals were growing at a faster rate than community led festivals and work was required with the community groups on this issue.

Mrs Ward confirmed Scenario 2 was a cut to the budget which would enable council to grow events. She said if Scenario 2 was agreed, there would be an impact, which could mean a cut in the number of giants being built or whether the Festival of Flight was run over 1 or 2 days. She added that it was not all about a return on finances, but about the reputation and the positive impact on the District.

The Chairperson put Councillor Clarke's proposal, seconded by Councillor Hanna for Scenario 3, to a vote.

Voting was as follows:

FOR:	4
AGAINST:	6
ABSTENTIONS	0

The motion was LOST.

Councillor Carr's proposal, seconded by Councillor Burgess, for Scenario 2, was put to a vote.

Voting was as follows:

FOR:	7
AGAINST:	4
ABSTENTIONS	0

The motion was CARRIED.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Carr, seconded by Councillor Burgess, it was agreed to approve Scenario 2: Remove c12% from Giant Adventures Events – to include the following:

- **Festival of Flight: £140k proposed budget cut to £122k.**
- **Footsteps in the Forest: £85k proposed budget cut to £74k.**
- **Wake the Giant: £100k proposed budget cut to £87k.**
- **City of Merchants: £100k budget cut to £87k.**
- **In addition to the above budget adjustments, the overall budget proposed for the Guardians of the Mournes Festival would be cut from £128k to £112k.**

FOR NOTING

ERT/222/2017: ACTION TRACKER UPDATE SHEET

Read: ERT Action Tracker Sheet (**copy circulated**)

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Harvey, it was agreed to note the ERT Action Tracker Sheet.

ERT/223/2017: SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Read: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Scheme of Delegation (**copy circulated**)

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Stokes, it was agreed to note the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Scheme of Delegation.

**ERT/224/2017: REPORT FROM NEWRY & MOURNE MUSEUM
RE: APPLICATION FOR REIMAGE, REMAKE , REPLAY**

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Marie Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism. (**Copy circulated**)

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Harvey, it was agreed the information be noted.

ERT/225/2017: UPDATE ON PROPOSED DOWNPATRICK HOTEL

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director of Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration regarding update on proposed Downpatrick Hotel. (**Copy circulated**).

Councillor Curran expressed disappointment in the progress of the hotel, saying the application was still with the planners and he thought the hotel would have started by now.

Mrs Ward said whilst she had raised the issue of progress with the planners several time, she would follow up on any progress again.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Curran, seconded by Councillor Burgess, it was agreed Committee asked to “Note” this progress and await the outcome of the planning process.

ERT/226/2017: DOWNPATRICK PSNI STATION

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Burgess, 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 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).

Read: Report dated 11 December 2017 from Marie Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism regarding Downpatrick PSNI Station.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Stokes, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

Agreed: When the Committee came out of closed session, the Chairperson advised that it had been agreed on the proposal of Councillor Curran, seconded by Councillor Harvey, to approve the recommendations as outlined in Section 3.0 of the Report.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 7.20pm.

Signed: _____
Councillor P Byrne
Chairperson of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee

Signed: _____
Ms M Ward
Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee