

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 19 May 2021 at 6.00pm via MS Teams.

Chair: Councillor O Magennis

Deputy Chair: Councillor T Andrews

Members:

Councillor C Casey	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor D Curran	Councillor A Finnegan
Councillor G Malone	Councillor H McKee
Councillor K McKeivitt	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Owen	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor G Stokes	Councillor D Taylor

Non-Committee Members: Councillor J Tinnelly

Officials in Attendance:

- Ms M Ward, Chief Executive
- Mr J McBride, Director of Neighbourhood Services (Acting)
- Mr K Scullion, Assistant Director Facilities Management and Maintenance
- Mr L Dinsmore, Head of Waste Processing and Enforcement
- Mr A Mallon, Head of Maintenance, Facilities Management and Maintenance
- Ms G Kane, Head of Facilities Management and Maintenance
- Mr J Ellis, Grounds Maintenance Manager
- Ms C McAteer, Democratic Services Officer
- Ms P McKeever, Democratic Services Officer

NS/077/2021: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillor Mason.

Councillor Magennis said this was her last meeting as Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Committee and she thanked Councillor Andrews, Deputy Chair; the Committee Members and Council Officials for their help and co-operation throughout the year.

The Director and Members thanked Councillor Magennis for the professional manner in which she had chaired the Meetings in what had been a very difficult year.

NS/078/2021: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

No declarations of conflicts of interest were made.

NS/079/2021: ACTION SHEET OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 APRIL 2021

Read: Action Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 21 April 2021. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Councillor Owen, it was agreed the Action Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 21 April 2021 be noted and actions removed as marked.

In response to a query from Councillor McKee regarding rubbish being accepted at HRCs from litter picking initiatives, Mr Dinsmore confirmed that if litter picks were co-ordinated through the Sustainability Office, the organisers would be issued with a letter to be presented when taking the rubbish to HRCs. He also confirmed that the majority of litter picked from roadsides would go into general waste if it was not separated.

Councillor Stokes raised an issue regarding a litter pick carried out by an individual at the 5 Ways Roundabout in Newry and said he was very disappointed that the lady had been told she had to take the rubbish collected to the HRC herself. Councillor Owen said she had heard of similar issues and felt that if people were making the effort to tidy the District, then Council should lift the rubbish collected.

Mr McBride advised if Members were aware of such issues they should raise them with Mr Dinsmore who would ensure the Sustainability Officer contacted the groups/individuals.

In response to a query from Councillor Casey regarding the on-going problem of wind-blown litter from the fast food outlet at Damolly Retail Park, and the progress made on the erection of a fence to prevent this, Mr Dinsmore said he had engaged with the owners and the restaurant franchise and would now formalise the request that a green fence be erected at this location.

AGREED: It was agreed Mr Dinsmore continue to update Councillor Casey in relation to progress on this matter.

In response to a query from Councillor Murphy, Mr Dinsmore confirmed there would be a delivery of bio-degradable caddy bags next week and Councillors would be contacted regarding their distribution. In relation to the distribution of litter pickers to schools, he advised an order had been placed for these and they would be distributed as part of the outreach programme that the Sustainability Group had with schools.

AGREED: It was agreed the Sustainability Officer advise Councillors on how the litter pickers would be distributed to schools.

In response to a query from Councillor Murphy, Mr Scullion updated the Committee on those areas within the District that had already been re-wilded and said Members would be updated as grounds maintenance continued to develop other sites.

AGREED: It was agreed Officers update Committee Members on the re-wilding of other areas throughout the District as they were developed.

FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION

**NS/080/2021: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DIRECTORATE
SCHEME OF DELEGATION MARCH 2020 TO MAY 2021**

Read: Report dated 19 May 2021 from Mr J McBride, advising the Committee of decisions taken by the Director of Neighbourhood Services under delegated authority for the time 1st March 2020 to 30th April 2021. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to note this report.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

NS/081/2021: PUBLIC TOILET STRATEGY

Read: Report dated 19 May 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: Council's Public Toilet Strategy. *(Circulated)*.

Issues raised by Members

- Essential that all necessary resources were made available to ensure there were no delays in implementing this Strategy.
- The possibility of a small charge being applied to use pc's in major towns provided they were of a very high quality.
- Consideration be given to the re-opening of the toilets at Loughross, Crossmaglen as this would attract more visitors to this amenity

Mr Scullion advised that all these issues would have to be decided as the Committee worked on implementing the Strategy, weighing up costs and benefits.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Owen, it was agreed to note the content of the report and:-

- **To approve the Council's Public Toilet Strategy as presented at Appendix 1 of this report.**

- **Council Officers to revert to this Committee with a report setting out each work package as part of the implementation process for delivery of the service going forward.**

NS/082/2021: PROPOSED REOPENING OF ALL PUBLIC TOILETS

Read: Report dated 19 May 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: timetable for the reopening of all Council public toilets, subject to resources being made available. *(Circulated)*.

Issues raised by Members

- Disappointment that no public conveniences were yet open in the Rowallane DEA.
- A need to ensure that hand sanitisers provided at public conveniences were always full (this was not the case recently at the public toilets in Warrenpoint)
- Public toilets in Newcastle being closed earlier than they should be, in some cases at 4.00 pm. If this was a fault with the door mechanism then it needed to be sorted out urgently and all action taken to ensure these toilets remained open until their scheduled closing time

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the content of the report and to approve the proposed recovery plan as detailed within section 1.4 of the above report.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was also agreed that officers make every effort to bring forward the extension to opening times of identified public conveniences to the beginning of June, rather than mid-June as stated in the report.

Officers to update Committee Members as soon as possible on the re-opening timetable, with endeavours to get them open at the start of June.

NS/083/2021: REQUEST TO LEASE UNITS ATTACHED TO PUBLIC TOILETS

Read: Report dated 19 May 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: request to lease units attached to two public toilet blocks owned by the Council within Warrenpoint Square and Downs Road public toilet, Newcastle. *(Circulated)*.

Councillor Clarke proposed and Councillor Murphy seconded to approve the Officer's recommendation that no action be taken currently in seeking to lease either facility referred to in the report until it was established if these facilities would be required as part of the Changing Places provision.

As an amendment Councillor Andrews proposed and Councillor Curran seconded that this matter be deferred and an options paper be prepared for the next Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting that both weighed up the Public Convenience Strategy and the hospitality sector.

The amendment was put to a vote and voting was as follows:-

FOR:	6
AGAINST:	6
ABSTENTIONS:	1

The Chair used her casting vote against and the amendment and was declared lost.

The proposal from Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Murphy, to approve the Officer's recommendation that no action be taken currently in seeking to lease either facility referred to in the report until it was established if these facilities would be required as part of the Changing Places provision was put to a vote and voting was as follows:-

FOR:	11
AGAINST:	0
ABSTENTIONS:	2

The proposal was declared carried.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to note contents of this report and to approve the Officers recommendation that no action be taken currently in seeking to lease either facility referred to in the report until it was established if these facilities would be required as part of the Changing Places provision.**

WASTE MANAGMENT

NS/084/2021: ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Read: Report dated 19 May from Mr L Dinsmore re: Enforcement Improvement Plan. *(Circulated)*.

Issues raised by Members

- The provision of additional bins was welcome, but it was important that existing bins were regularly emptied and not left overflowing.
- Continue to support the need for sufficient enforcement staff, empowered to issue fines, for dog fouling and littering offences.
- Can Councils use mobile CCTV footage and if this was considered an asset, a bit to be made for such a unit in next year's rate estimates process.
- As part of the Responsible Dog Ownership Campaign, focus should be placed on the dangers to health posed by dog fouling.
- An update on the provision of bird proof litter bins particularly for seaside towns in the District, including Ardglass and Newcastle.

Mr McBride advised he had made a bid to the Council's covid recovery fund for the provision of bird proof litter bins for coastal areas and he would advise the Committee at the June meeting in relation to where these were going to be deployed.

Councillor Clarke said he wished to put on record his thanks his thanks to officers for putting together this very comprehensive Strategy for moving forward. He said education was key, along with PR and a high-profile campaign that would capture the imagination of the public and keep them involved.

(Councillor Finnegan left the meeting)

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to note the content of this report.**

AGREED: **It was also agreed Mr McBride provide an update on the provision of bird proof litter bins at the June Committee Meeting.**

FOR NOTING

NS/085/2021: **Arc21 JC MEMBERS MONTHLY BULLETIN – 29 APRIL 2021**

Read: Arc21 JC Members Monthly Bulletin – 29 April 2021. ***(Circulated)***.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Councillor McKeivitt, it was agreed to mark this correspondence noted.**

NS/086/2021: **Arc21 JC MINUTES – 25 MARCH 2021**

Read: Arc21 JC Meeting Minutes held on 25 March 2021 ***(Circulated)***.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McKee, it was agreed to mark this correspondence noted.

NS/087/2021: **HISTORIC ACTIONS TRACKING SHEET**

Read: Historic Actions Tracking Sheet (*Circulated*).

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed the Historic Actions Tracking Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meetings be noted and actions removed as marked.

In relation to NS/070/2019 – Notice of Motion – Memory Gardens – it was agreed that Mr McBride follow up on progress in relation to this issue and update Councillor Tinnelly.

EXEMPT INFORMATION ITEMS

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

Items 12, 13, 14 and 15 were deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on this item.

NS/088/2021: **ARC 21 IN COMMITTEE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – THURSDAY 25 MARCH 2021**

Read: Arc 21 In Committee Joint Committee Meeting Minutes held on Thursday 25 March 2021. (*Circulated*).

NS/089/2021: **PURCHASE OF A NEW INDUSTRIAL HEAVY GRADE TRACTOR AND SIDE ARM FLAIL/CUTTING UNIT FOR GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS DISTRICT WIDE**

Read: Report dated 19 May 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: purchase of a new industrial heavy grade tractor and side arm flail/cutting unit

for Grounds Maintenance at various locations district wide.
(Circulated).

NS/090/2021: BUSINESS CASE LOOKING AT OPTIONS FOR STRATEGIC MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL ARTIFICIAL SPORTS PITCHES AND SURFACES 2021 TO 2023

Read: Report dated 19 May 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: business case looking at options for strategic maintenance of Council artificial sports pitches and surfaces 2021 to 2023. *(Circulated)*.

NS/091/2021: ECONOMIC APPRAISAL – SUPPLY OF VEHICLE PARTS AND EXTERNAL FLEET MAINTENANCE SERVICES

Read: Report dated 19 May 2021 from Mr J McBride, re: economic appraisal – supply of vehicle parts and external fleet maintenance services. *(Circulated)*.

Councillor Andrews proposed, and Councillor Murphy seconded to come out of closed session.

When the Committee was out of closed session the Chairperson reported the following had been agreed:-

NS/088/2021 – Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Minutes – Thursday 25 March 2021

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Councillor Stokes, it was agreed to note the Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Minutes held on Thursday 25 March 2021.

NS/089/2021 – Purchase of a new industrial heavy grade tractor and side arm flail/cutting unit for Grounds Maintenance at various locations District wide

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the content of the report and associated Business Cases and accept the conclusion of the Business Cases that Option 3 from each be chosen as the preferred option. This would see the procurement of an industrial tractor and a side arm flail.

NS/090/2021 – Business case on options for strategic maintenance of Council artificial sports pitches and surfaces 2021 to 2023

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the content of the report and associated Business Case and approve the recommendation from the Business Case that Option 2 be

accepted. Option 2 would see a hybrid model for maintenance of these surfaces whereby Council staff undertake maintenance works with support from an external contractor for more specialised tasks. The external contractor would be appointed for up to a three-year period.

NS/091/2021– Economic Appraisal – supply of vehicle parts and external fleet maintenance services

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to approve the economic appraisal to procure contractors for the supply of vehicle parts and external fleet maintenance services.

Ms Ward Chief Executive, explained she would be attending all Committee meetings this month from a legislative perspective and made the following statement:

“Due to the current legislative uncertainty around remote meetings and the restrictions on indoor gatherings, the Chief Executive also agrees to exercise her delegated authority under Standing Orders to implement the resolution of the Committee once ratified by Council subject to any conflict of interest or legal advice that the decision is unlawful.”

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.35 pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 June 2021.

**Signed: Councillor O Magennis
Chairperson of Neighbourhood Services Committee**

**Signed: Mr J McBride
Director of Neighbourhood Services (Acting)**