

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/PC/4

**Minutes of the Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (Shadow)
Planning Committee held on Tuesday 7 October 2014 at 2.00pm in Mourne
Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick**

In attendance:

(Councillors)

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Councillor C Casey | Councillor P Clarke |
| Councillor W Clarke | Councillor S Doran |
| Councillor G Hanna | Councillor T Hearty |
| Councillor M Larkin | Councillor K Loughran |
| Councillor C McGrath | Councillor H McKee |
| Councillor M Murnin | Councillor M Ruane |
| Councillor G Sharvin (Chair) | Councillor JJ Tinnelly |

Councillor P Brown

(Officials)

Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive Designate
Ms C Miskelly, Head of Human Resources
Mr J McBride, Change Manager
Mrs D Starkey, Committee Administrator

Mr A McKay (Planning Manager)
Mrs J Brown (DoE Planning)
Mrs A McAlarney (DoE Planning)
Mr P Rooney (DoE Planning)
Mrs H Stoops (DoE Planning)
Mr D Wilson (DoE Planning)

Mrs M Ward, Group Chief Building Control Officer

PC/29/2014: APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Bailie, Burgess, Craig, Devlin, D McAteer and O'Gribín.

PC/30/2014: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

Councillor Larkin joined the meeting during the following discussion – 2.15pm

PRESENTATION

**PC/31/2014: PREPARATORY STUDIES FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
PLAN: PAPER 1: POPULATION AND GROWTH STATISTICS**

Read: Newry, Mourne and Down Local Development Plan
Preparatory Studies: Paper 1: Population and Growth. **(Copy
circulated)**

NOTED: Presentation from Mrs H Stoops, DoE Planning on the Local
Development Plan Process and Population and Growth.
(Attached at appendix 1)

NOTED: Mrs Stoops pointed out the paper was not finalised and
required the input of Members as it was a powerful tool to
deliver Council's vision and growth strategy for the area. The
importance of where growth would take place and how it was
apportioned across settlements was highlighted.

NOTED: The Chief Executive confirmed a number of workshops would be
organised to allow Members the opportunity to work through
summary documents.

AGREED: **It was agreed to circulate a copy of the presentation to all
Councillors for their information.**

**PC/32/2014 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM (SHADOW) PLANNING
COMMITTEE MEETING ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2014**

READ: Action Sheet arising from (Shadow) Planning Committee
Meeting held on 2 September 2014. **(Copy circulated)**

NOTED: The Chief Executive confirmed the date for the visit for Planning
Committee Members to Fife Council was 26/27 November 2014.

AGREED: **It was AGREED to mark the Action Sheet `noted`.**

PC/33/2014: GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE

Read: Report dated 7 October 2014 on governance arrangements for Newry, Mourne and Down Planning Committee. (**Copy circulated**)

NOTED: Mr McBride asked Members to consider issues contained within the report to inform future governance arrangements and to assist with the study visit to the Planning Committee in Fife Council. Key issues included:

- Committee Size, Term and Remuneration
- Location and frequency of meetings
- Role of non-committee Members

NOTED: During discussion Members raised the following points for consideration in relation to a Planning Committee:

- The use of substitute members
- Consideration be given to a smaller sized Committee (ranging from 8 to 11 Members)
- Appointments to the Planning Committee should be for the term of Council
- Consideration be given to District Electoral area representation
- It was suggested meetings be held twice monthly, with start times of 3.00pm and 6.00pm on a rotational basis.

AGREED: It was **AGREED to seek clarity on the use of substitute members for a Planning Committee with the Department of the Environment.**

A further report on governance arrangements for Newry, Mourne and Down Planning Committee to be presented at the Planning Committee Meeting to be held on 4 November 2014.

Councillor Casey joined the meeting during the following discussion - 2.55pm

PC/34/2014: OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE

Read: Report dated 7 October 2014 on operational arrangements for Newry, Mourne and Down Planning Committee. (**Copy circulated**)

NOTED: Mr McKay asked Members to consider issues contained within the report to inform operational arrangements for the Planning Committee. Key issues included:

- Scheme of Delegation
- Speaking Rights
- Deferrals
- Site Visits
- Enforcement
- Development Plan; and any other operational matters

During a question/answer session the following points were raised:

- Planning Committee would be responsible for determining if a site visit was necessary and how it should be conducted. Planning Committee Members should not meet with applicants/agents on site.
- A request was made for a breakdown of the type of applications received to enable Members to make an informed decision on what decisions to delegate to Planning officers and what type of applications Council will be dealing with.
- The Planning Committee would retain an oversight role over delegated decisions and would have the power to 'call in' if necessary.
- Criteria required for site visits.
- Criteria required for speaking rights to include Members, general public, applicants, agents, objectors.
- A delegated administration team was an essential component.
- Post April 2015 MPs, MLAs would have the same input any other representative.

NOTED: Mr McKay asked Members to be conscious of the scale of work to be undertaken and should consider carefully the extent to which decisions be delegated to officers.

AGREED: **It was AGREED to provide a breakdown on the type of applications received for the new Council area for Members consideration.**

PC/35/2014: **CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING FOR ELECTED MEMBERS (TRANSFER OF PLANNING)**

Read: Report dated 7 October 2014 on Capacity Building and Training for Elected Members (Transfer of Planning). **(Copy circulated)**

NOTED: Mrs C Miskelly reminded Members of the arrangements for the series of training events being rolled out on the planning functions, with session two taking place on Thursday 16 October 2014 in the Down Arts Centre, Downpatrick.

NOTED: The Chief Executive confirmed that further to concerns raised by Members who attended session one of the regional training programme, Mr A Kerr had advised further sessions would be more engaging going forward.

NOTED: Members were advised confirmation of their availability to attend the Fife Council Visit on 26/27 November 2014 was required as soon as possible to enable arrangements to be made.

AGREED: **The draft programme for the Study Visit to Fife Council was agreed, and any Members wishing to have input should do so at the earliest opportunity.**

AGREED: **It was AGREED to mark the report 'noted'.**

PC/36/2014: **DEFERRAL OF APPLICATIONS IN PREDECESSOR COUNCILS**

NOTED: The Chief Executive highlighted concerns in relation to the number of deferred applications in predecessor Council. Members were asked to give consideration to requesting deferrals going forward as from 1 April 2015 the new Council would be responsible for making decisions on these applications.

Mr McKay provided an overview of the number of deferred applications within the system (with approximately 200 applications having been within the system for more than 12 months) and pointed out the importance of moving applications.

During discussion the following key points were raised:

- Deferred applications not being dealt with quickly enough.
- Concerns about Council making decisions on applications that have been deferred for a long period of time.
- A request for information on the categorisation of deferred applications for Members information.
- What influence MPs, MLAs had on deferrals – From 1 April 2015 Council would make decisions on all local and major planning decisions.
- A significant enforcement workload would transfer to Council. Members would be required to declare an interest if involved with any past planning application.

AGREED: **It was AGREED a list showing the categorisation of deferrals be provided to the Planning Committee.**

PC/37/2014: **BUILDING CONTROL CONVENTION 2014**

Read: Correspondence in relation to the Building Control Convention (13 and 14 November 2014) **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was AGREED to decline the opportunity to attend the Building Control Convention 2014.**

CONSULTATIONS

PC/38/2014 **GUIDANCE ON PLANNING ELEMENTS OF COUNCILLORS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

Read: Correspondence from the Department of the Environment in relation to consultation on guidance on planning element of Councillors' Code of Conduct. **(Copy circulated)**

NOTED: **The Chief Executive asked that if Members had comments to make regarding the guidance that they are forwarded for consideration at the Governance Committee Meeting on 11 November 2014.**

AGREED: **It was AGREED to mark the correspondence 'noted'.**

PC/39/2014 **PUBLICATION OF REVISED PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 15 'PLANNING AND FLOOD RISK' FINAL FORM**

Read: Correspondence from the Department of the Environment in relation to Publication of Revised Planning Policy Statement 15 'Planning and Flood Risk' Final Form.

AGREED: **It was AGREED to mark the correspondence 'noted'.**

The Chief Executive took the opportunity to advise Members that since planning personnel had been relocated to offices in Newry, a total of 9 planning applications had been submitted by members of the public.

There being no further business the Meeting concluded at **3.40pm.**

For consideration at the Shadow Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday 4 November 2014.

Signed: **Councillor Sharvin
Chairperson**

**Mr L Hannaway
Chief Executive Designate**

Newry, Mourne and Down Preparatory Studies

Overview of the Local Development Plan Process & Population and Growth



**Helen Stoops, Principal Planning Officer
Development Plan Section**

Aim of Presentation

The aim of this presentation is to provide:

- A recap of the new Local Development Plan System
- How the Preparatory Studies will inform the new Local Development Plan
- An update on the Preparatory Studies work programme
- Provide an overview and key findings of the Population & Growth Paper

A New Development Plan System

- **A Plan Led System** – applications determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise
- A two tier evidence based system comprising:
 1. **Plan Strategy**
 2. **Local Policies Plan**

A New Development Plan System

The Plan Strategy

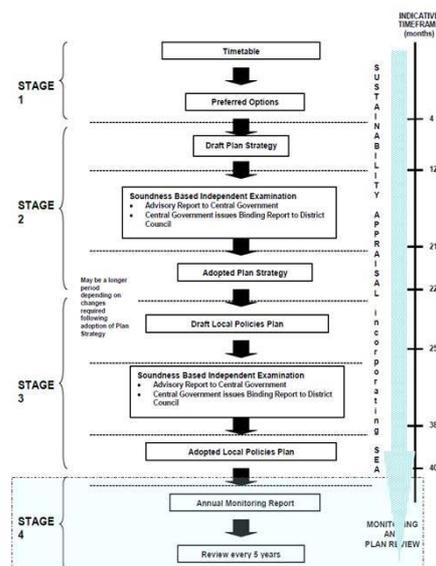
- Sets the vision, the strategic objectives and the growth strategy for the area and general strategic policies having regard to Regional Policy

A New Development Plan System

The Local Policies Plan

- Sets out the Council's local policies consistent with the Plan Strategy
- Identifies site specific proposals including settlement limits, zonings and designations

Development Plan Process



Purpose of the Newry, Mourne and Down Preparatory Studies

- Provide baseline information for policy development
- To inform the Preferred Options Paper (Stage 1)
- Build capacity of Members to make informed planning decisions
- To take stock of existing housing and economic land supply and the extent to which this can provide for a growing population to 2030
- To consider Newry, Mourne and Down's Settlement Hierarchy
- Build relations between planners and council officers
- Link Corporate, Community and Local Development Plans

Progress to date.....

Preparatory Study Papers

Topics include:

- Population and Growth;
- Housing and Settlements;
- Employment and Economic Development; and
- Town Centres and Town Centre Opportunities.

Overview of Paper 1: Population and Growth

Paper is divided into 3 sections:

- Population Profile of the new Council Area – with associated maps in Appendix 1. Consideration of Section 75 groups during planning process as required by Section 75 of NI Act 1998 & set Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) framework
- Population Growth and Population Projections to 2030
- Settlement Strategy for Accommodating Sustainable Growth in the new Council Area

Under-represented Groups

Under-represented groups may be defined based on:

- AGE – Children, Youth and the Elderly
- DISABILITY- physical, mental and emotional difficulties
- RACIAL GROUP - Ethnic origin
- GENDER – Women
- MARITAL STATUS – Single parents
- DEPENDENCY- Those with considerable caring responsibilities.
- SEXUALITY – Gay and Lesbian
- RELIGION AND POLITICAL OPINION

Under-representation and disadvantage

Under-represented groups include those most disadvantaged in terms of:

- **WEALTH** - Unemployment and low income
- **HEALTH** - At risk of disease, limited physical mobility and suffering greatest health stress including living env. & crime/disorder issues
- **TRANSPORT** - Low car ownership, dependency on public transport and travel by foot/bicycle
- **ACCESSIBILTY** - To employment, education/skills training, public and private service and goods

Newry, Mourne and Down's Population & Growth

KEY FACTS

- NMD has the third largest population in NI with approximately 171,500 people at 2011.
- NMD has a younger age profile than the NI average with the number of children <16 projected to rise by 22% by 2023. South Armagh has a particularly young population.
- People are living longer and there are concentrations of older people living in coastal areas. The% of NMD pensioners are projected to increase from 15.05% in 2008 to 16.59% in 2023
- 20% had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their daily activities

Newry, Mourne and Down Population & Growth

KEY FACTS

- Border areas of the Cluster has over the NI average of residents born in ROI
- NMD has a religious composition of approx 66% Catholic, 20% Protestant, 6.5% other/no religion & 7.5% not stated
- 39% of aged 16 and over had no or low (level 1) qualifications
- 66% economically active, 34% economically inactive of those aged 16-74
- NMD has an overall Urban Rural Split (i.e. City/Towns & Villages Vs Small Settlements & Countryside) of 61% urban and 39% rural.
- 8 of the most deprived NMD SOAs are in Newry and Mourne although Ballymote in Downpatrick is the most deprived in the Cluster.

Newry, Mourne and Down's Population and Household Projections

- The population is expected to grow from an estimated 180,500 in 2015 to approximately 206,700 by 2030
- Households are expected to increase from approximately 66,300 in 2015 to 80,000 in 2030
- The increase in households equates to a requirement for over 13,500 new dwellings which is consistent with the regional trend towards an increase in the no. of single people and smaller households

A Settlement Strategy for Accommodating Growth

The Regional Development Strategy 2035:

- highlights the strategic importance of Newry City which has been identified in the RDS as a Gateway and a Main Hub on a key transport link.
- Downpatrick has also been identified as a Main Hub on a transport link between Newcastle, Strangford and the Mourne

A Settlement Strategy for Accommodating Growth

The Regional Development Strategy 2035 provides a spatial strategy based on:

- Principal City/Towns (Hubs); small towns & villages; and smaller settlements & rural areas
- Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs) for each District
- Settlement hierarchy defined by existing plans & analysis of related associated infrastructure

The Newry, Mourne and Down Population & Growth Paper

Recommendations

- To consider and revise the report as new NISRA data is released & in light of work undertaken as part of the Community Planning Process.
- The needs identified are used as a working draft for the preparatory studies and for the Local Development Plan
- To use the report as a foundation for the Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the EQIA) to inform the Plan.
- To consider and identify proposed changes to the settlement hierarchy, subject to sustainability appraisal.