

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**NMD/SC/**

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**Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on Monday 29 February 2016 at 6pm  
in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick**

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**In the Chair:** Councillor M Ruane

**In attendance: (Councillors)**

Councillor R Burgess	Councillor S Burns
Councillor M Carr	Councillor C Casey
Councillor W Clarke	Councillor D Curran
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor V Harte
Councillor T Hearty	Councillor M Larkin
Councillor K Loughran	Councillor D McAteer
Councillor R Mulgrew	Councillor M Murnin
Councillor P Ó'Gribín	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor G Stokes	Councillor J J Tinnelly

**(Officials)**

Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive  
Mrs E McParland, Democratic Services Manager  
Mr I Sands, Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Officer  
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Officer  
Mrs C Taylor, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in attendance:** Mr R Larkin, Director of Finance and Regulation, NI Water  
Mr G Millar, Head of Wastewater Networks Capital Delivery, NI Water  
Mr I Jackson, Head of OCMC, NI Water  
Mr J Martin, Rivers Agency  
Ms C Noble, Transport NI

**SC/22/2016 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bailie, Craig, Devlin, Ennis, Enright, Harvey, Kimmins, McKee, Quinn, Taylor and Walker

The Chairperson extended congratulations to Councillor Bailie and her husband, upon the birth of their baby girl earlier that day.

**SC/23/2015 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**SC/24/2015 PRESENTATION BY NI WATER**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Ronan Larkin, Mr Grahame Millar and Mr Ivan Jackson from NI Water and invited them to make their presentation, after which, flooding issues would be dealt with.

Mr Larkin thanked the Chairperson for the opportunity to present to Council and said he had appreciated the support from Council since the meeting last year. Mr Larkin said NI Water wished to provide 21<sup>st</sup> Century water and waste water services to the Councillors' constituents. He said he saw NI Water's role as key to health, economy and the environment within the Council District stretching from Rowallane to Slieve Gullion. (Copy of the presentation is appended to these minutes).

The Chairperson thanked the delegation for their presentation and invited questions from the Members.

Members asked the following questions:

- When would the work start on Camlough Lake as from a tourism point of view, it was important the works were completed by 2017.
- When would the new waste water treatment plant at Ardtole be fully operational?
- Were there capacity issues at Ballynahinch waste treatment plant as during heavy rainfall a smell could be detected in houses on the Hillsborough Road, Limetrees and in some town centre properties.
- Would the overgrown footpaths be cut back at the Silent Valley?
- The leaking pipes on the Ballinra Road had been reported twice, but had not yet been fixed – why did this keep re-occurring?
- When would the new pipeline from Ballymartin to Kilkeel be fully operational?
- It was difficult to get a response from the NI Water Elected Member Helpline number, and if the public helpline number was rung, the same person answered who answered the Elected Member helpline.
- It was difficult to reach the tier 2 engineers/managers through the NI Water Elected Member helpline.
- A very bad odour was given off during mild weather at the sewage works in Kilkeel and it had been necessary for residents to leave their homes.
- Reinstatement of the roads after utility works had been carried out was not always first class.
- There were on-going problem with sewage in the river at Annalong, despite several attempts to resolve them.
- The water had been cut off at Ballynoe for 18 hours on Sunday 28 February, which had caused problems for housed livestock. Farmers in the area would like assurance that the infrastructure was up to speed.
- What were the latest figures for leakages in the District?
- Annsborough waste water treatment works – why were the blowers on more frequently when wet? How many times had the works gone into overdrive in the past years and what was the environmental impact of this?
- NI Water had agreed to paint the façade next to the mosaic to the fishing disaster in Newcastle. When would this take place?

- The legacy Council had bought the generator house at the waste water treatment plant in Newcastle, but it had not yet been handed over. The community were keen to work with Council to gain ownership and start using the building. Initiatives to speed this up would be welcome.
- Could NI Water provide an update on the price for a full review of the new metering system for commercial properties.
- There were over 10 houses on the Drumboy Road - why was there no mains water? Also, the Magheramayo Road leading to Dolly's Brae – there was no mains water.
- There was a problem during heavy rainfall with the grating at the sewage works on the Old Grand Jury Road, Saintfield.
- Could the capacity of the pumping station on the Crossgar Road, Saintfield be tested?
- Was NI Water's helpline a premium number?

Representatives from NI Water responded to Members queries as follows:

- NI Water would make every effort to ensure the works at Camlough Lake were completed on time which included clearing the planning process as quickly as possible so that contractors could be brought onto the site and could finish as soon as possible.
- The waste water treatment plant at Ardtole was now fully operational.
- The treatment plant at Ballynahinch was completed. NI Water were not aware of any odour complaints, although it was possible for odour to be present at times of heavy rainfall.
- There was no charge for calls to the NI Water helpline, although it did depend on which mobile was used.

Mr Larkin, Director of Finance and Regulation, NI Water undertook to come back to Members with answers to the following questions:

- Why was untreated water still being pumped into the waste water treatment plant at Ardtole.
- Why was there a strong odour in some properties in Ballynahinch during heavy rainfall, particularly town centre properties and those on the Hillsborough Road.
- The capacity of the pumping station on the Crossgar Road, Saintfield.
- The cost for calling the NI Water helpline.

Councillor Carr said the money spent by NI Water in the past year was to be appreciated and that a scheme could make a big difference to an area. He thanked NI Water for solving issues in the Warrenpoint area.

The Chairperson thanked the delegation for their presentation and invited the representatives from Rivers Agency and Transport NI to answer Members questions on flooding issues.

### **Crotlieve Area Issues:**

- Rostrevor Road floods even when tide is out. Gulley cleaning is not happening on a regular enough basis.
- Moygannon River coming over the bank and flooding stables.
- St Colmans and St Jude's, Rostrevor – foul coming up through households into gulleys.
- Roads around Green Park Road and Knockbarragh– the gulleys at the lower end are packed with silt.
- Ongoing issue on Crossan Road, landowners most affected are extremely frustrated as they thought they issue had been resolved.
- Investigations into issues around Derryleckagh Bridge need to be carried out.
- Burren Road area has river overflowing onto it and travelling across the Avenue which then becomes joined with water running down Milltown Street.
- Piles of stones are lying on roads and gulleys are blocked.
- Glen Road may be a landowner issue.
- Burren Bridge Road, water lies on the road before the pitch.
- Bann Road and Aughnagun Road, gulleys are causing problems.
- Rostrevor-Warrenpoint, the arch at St Leonards – meetings have been held with residents, Rivers Agency and TransportNI, however the road still floods and has been closed on numerous occasions over the past few years. Residents need to see action as they were told 2 years ago a culvert would be put in to alleviate the flooding.
- Derryleckagh – problem at Brady's Lane, something needs to be done as it is continuously flooding.

### **Rivers Agency and TransportNI Responses:**

- A new culvert to alleviate flooding is planned for St Leonard's, however this will not happen before the summer programme. The plan however is to have the work completed this year.
- Moygannon/Rath Road – a feasibility study will be undertaken at that area.
- Drumsesk – developer working with Rivers Agency and will be putting pipes in and work will be done to the outlet.
- Derryleckagh – historical flooding – levels were at their highest in 40 years and Rivers Agency are examining the area again on a cost/benefit basis.
- Crossan Road – Rivers Agency have researched the flood location and are unable to find the path of the original water course so would appreciate any local knowledge being passed onto them.
- Donaghuy Road – footpath scheme ongoing at present and TransportNI are investigating the drainage on Milltown Street which connects into Avenue to alleviate the problem of water on the road.

### **Rowallane Area Issues:**

- A7 – Ballygowan turnoff at Doran's Rock – still flooding.

- Floods on Windmill Road and the bridge outside the high school in Saintfield.
- Carryduff Road only 3 gratings out of 37 are working, the rest are full.
- Main Street in Saintfield at the roundabout the grating isn't working and flooding occurs onto Lisburn Road.
- TransportNI should investigate ways of drilling holes into the bridge to allow the water to run into the river.

#### **Rivers Agency and Transport NI responses:**

- Depending on the design and structure of the bridge, the matter of drilling holes could be investigated. It is not possible to drill through maintenance arch structures which many of the older bridges are.

#### **Slieve Croob Area Issues:**

- Sewage flooding in O'Donnell Close, Castlewellan is happening all the time. Could investigations be made into changing the equipment?
- Annsborough flooding – the flood wall has a flat valve, when the river rises above the wall, does the valve open?
- What were the pumps that are pumping up to the waste water treatment designed for? A sud system may be more beneficial given the recurring flooding that has been occurring.
- Magheratimpany Road and Ballymaclave Road – is there any means of logging the flooding occurrences during the year rather than at peak times.
- Drumaness Road just above Mill Bridge – manhole in the centre of the road on the lane heading to Newcastle, causes ponding on the Spa Road.
- Leitrim Village constantly flooding.
- Magheramayo Road – farmer diverted water out of field onto the road which causes flooding on this road.
- How many gully cleaners are there in Newry and in Down and are they in mechanical working order?
- Ballylough Road – issue with local farm owner.

#### **Rivers Agency and Transport NI responses:**

- The flat valve works on the balance of water. If the water in the river is higher then it closes and opens if it is under.
- Leitrim Village – an artificial watercourse exists and Rivers Agency did not have this mapped.
- Ballylough Road - Rivers Agency raised the issue with the landowner and they have agreed to remove the blockage when the ground conditions improve.

#### **Newry Area Issues:**

- Gulleys throughout Newry need investigated, there is a lot of work required to alleviate flooding on all the streets.
- Can an update be provided on Windmill Road as it is a serious issue?

- Monkshill Road also needs investigated.
- Kilmorey Street, Quay Street and Mary Street through to the market are constantly flooding.
- Event space at Marcus Square has water lying in it which makes it difficult for people to manoeuvre around.
- Monaghan Street turning into the old creamery – the water blocks up here.

### **Rivers Agency and Transport NI responses:**

- Windmill Road has an undesignated watercourse which runs down through 2 properties. Residents have been told of their responsibilities regarding this.

### **Mournes Area Issues:**

- There are persistent rumours that landowners will be abandoned to look after their own drainage.
- The AOH Clubhouse and graveyard at Aughlisnafin are flooded.
- Bay Park Road in Rathfriland – homes were saved from flooding due to the sandbags received from TransportNI. Rivers Agency are designating flat land as flood plain.
- Killowen-Ballyedmond Road is very dangerous as water accumulates at the A2 from Campbell's Garage – drains should be cut into the road and let the water drain into the sea.
- Gulleys are not being emptied and weeds are growing out of the top of them therefore the water is not clearing.
- Kilcreggan Road – no maintenance to the sheughs.
- Storm drains are not getting into the river due to the floodwall on the Burren River.
- Beechfield, Burren Park and Dunwellan Park in Newcastle – flat valves should be installed.
- Mourneview in Newcastle need a scheme to remedy the flooding that occurs there.
- Is there any update on the Shimna River feasibility study to protect houses on the Bryansford Road.
- Main Street in Newcastle has areas of continual flooding due to a problem with two drains.
- Corrags Road and Burren Bridge Road – landowners are blocking drains and the water is not getting away.
- A2 Bloody Bridge to Annalong – some work carried out but still not sufficient, road continues to flood.
- Head Road between Silent Valley and Drinnigh water.
- Ballinran Road – pipe burst and has been running for a long time.
- The trees need trimmed back on the road between Bloody Bridge and Kilkeel as HGV lorries and buses are losing wing mirrors and swerving out in the road to avoid the branches.
- What plans are in place to deal with potholes around the District?

### **Rivers Agency and Transport NI responses:**

- Designated water courses will be maintained within the Rivers Agency regime. Undesignated water courses are the responsibility of the landowner. There are no plans in place to withdraw maintenance of the designated water courses.
- Flood plains are protected from development in order to prevent increasing floods elsewhere.
- Burren river scheme – local area office require design drawings and will investigate flooding of back gardens.
- Shimna River feasibility study is complete and the department are awaiting funding to progress the scheme. This can be confirmed to Councillors in writing.

### **Slieve Gullion Area Issues:**

- Bessbrook – row of houses and the graveyard just waiting to flood.
- Camlough's Mountain Road – subsidence in some ditches, gulleys need emptied and potholes need mended.
- Keggal Road has serious damage to the tarmac, the gulleys need cleaned and the huge potholes need repaired.
- Dromintee Road, Killeavy – farmer had re-seeded ground and put landbridge at the bottom of the mountain which caused serious flooding in 2014 and the water has been diverted down the fields.
- Is there any way of putting a fence around the river at Forkhill/Mullaghbawn to prevent anyone falling into the river?
- Some roads are in a terrible state due to potholes, surveying needs to be carried out.
- The surface has come off the Molly Road, is there any intention to resurface these roads.

### **Rivers Agency and Transport NI responses:**

- TransportNI have an inspection cycle, however due to funding issues this was recently changed therefore unclassified roads will only be inspected twice a year now. Repairs are not carried out on unclassified roads. The Department was successful in getting small pots of additional funding that was used to patch some of the surface defects around the District.
- Unable to complete gully cleaning and pothole repairs due to lack of funding and as there were no repairs carried out last year there is a backlog.
- Dromintee Road, Killeavy – unaware of this issue however would like information from the Councillor.
- Rivers Agency are only tasked with the drainage function of watercourses and would not put fences up. There was an issue with the bend at the bridge therefore safety fencing was removed.

### **Downpatrick Area Issues:**

- Serious flooding occurred in lower Market Street and the junction of Stream Street and St Patrick's Avenue at the top end which has never happened before.
- Strangford Road, Downpatrick – cleaning was completed however the flooding is back again. A co-ordinated approach is required to manage the flooding. The water is coming up through the grating in the middle of the road.
- Is it possible to investigate flooding coming from a field at Ballystew Road as it is running down into the back of houses?
- Can the open trench in Dunleath Park be grated over to avoid a child slipping into it?

#### **Rivers Agency and Transport NI responses:**

- The new pumping station is up and running in Downpatrick however these pumps have finite capacity therefore the risk of flooding cannot be eliminated altogether, just reduced. Councillors can work with community groups to prepare and learn how to recover from flooding incidents. Grants are available for individual property protection. NIW officers are happy to meet with each DEA to discuss ways to prevent flooding such as more permeable surfaces for public realm work etc.
- The flooding that occurred at the junction of Stream Street and St Patrick's Avenue is on an unadopted watercourse and discussions are ongoing as to who owns the pipe.

Ian Sands advised Members the list that was circulated was not finalised however was based on the questionnaires which Councillors had responded to. The plan is to work towards a system through the DEAs to find out what the issues and priorities are so that these can be tracked into a consolidated spreadsheet.

Councillor Reilly asked if there were legal issues to people filling in potholes themselves.

Ms Noble advised that TransportNI were the legal owner of the road and although there was no legal impediment to people filling potholes in themselves, it may not be advisable to do so from a health and safety point of view.

Councillor W Clarke proposed that consideration be given to the establishment of a Task and Finish group to look strategically at preventative measures to tackle flooding, perhaps through a thematic grouping at community planning level. This was seconded by Councillor Burns.

**Agreed:**                    **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor W Clarke, seconded by Councillor Burns that consideration be given to the establishment of a Task and Finish group to look strategically at preventative measures to tackle flooding, perhaps through a thematic grouping at community planning level.**



**There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.05pm.**

For adoption at Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to be held on Monday 4 April 2016.

**Signed:**

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**Chairperson**

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**Chief Executive**