



March 15th, 2017

Notice Of Meeting

You are invited to attend the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 16th March 2017 at 5:00 pm** in **Mourne Room, Downshire.**

The Members of the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee are:-

Chair: Councillor P Brown

Vice Chair: Councillor C Enright

Members: Councillor T Andrews Councillor N Bailie

Councillor R Burgess Councillor P Byrne

Councillor M Carr Councillor W Clarke

Councillor S Doran Councillor M Murnin

Councillor B Ó'Muirí Councillor B Quinn

Councillor M Ruane Councillor G Sharvin

Councillor W Walker

Agenda

1 Apologies

2 Declarations of Interest

3 Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 February 2017 (copy attached)

 *SPR-16022017.pdf*

Page 1

4 Report of Narrow Water Stakeholder Group Meeting held on 20 February 2017 (copy attached)

 *Rpt Narrow Water Bridge Stakeholder Group Mtg - 20 February 2017.pdf*

Page 12

5 Report of the Strategic Projects Working Group held on 28 February 2017 (copy attached)

 *SPP 28 February 2017.pdf*

Page 16

Performance

6 Performance Improvement Report (copy attached)

 *Report - Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2017-18.pdf*

Page 22

 *Appendix 1 - Consultation on Draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2017-18 v2.pdf*

Page 26

 *Appendix 2 - Development and publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18.pdf*

Page 49

Local Development Plan

7 Local Development Plan: Preparatory Studies - Paper 10: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure (copy attached)

PLEASE NOTE THAT MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE ARE INVITED TO ATTEND FOR THIS ITEM OF BUSINESS.

 *SPR Report re LDP Paper 10 - Open Space etc.pdf*

Page 54

 *LDP Paper 10 - Open Space, Recreation and Leisure.pdf*

Page 56

8 Local Development Plan: Preparatory Studies - Paper 12 (Part 1): Countryside - Landscape Character Assessment (copy attached)

PLEASE NOTE THAT MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE ARE INVITED TO ATTEND FOR THIS ITEM OF BUSINESS.

 *SPR Report re LDP Paper 12 (Part 1) - Countryside - LCA.pdf* *Page 109*

 *LDP Paper 12 (Part 1) - Countryside - Landscape Character Assessment.pdf* *Page 111*

Corporate Services - Democratic Services

9 Councillors Allowances (copy attached)

 *Councillors allowancws.pdf* *Page 173*

Communication

10 Report on draft Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019 (copy attached)

 *Draft Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019 March 2017.docx.pdf* *Page 177*

 *Draft Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019 March 2017.pdf* *Page 179*

11 Report on Updated Terms of Reference - Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group (copy attached)

 *Report on Updated Terms of Reference - Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group for consideration at SP&R meeting .pdf* *Page 190*

 *Téarmaí Tagartha TOR leasaithe Feabhra 2017 - Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group TOR February 2017.pdf* *Page 191*

12 Report on Requests regarding planting of a tree and to locate a park bench (copy attached)

 *Report on Requests regarding Planting of a Tree and to locate a Park Bench for consideration at SP&R meeting 16 March 2017.pdf* *Page 193*

13 Report on Updated Policy on Naming Facilities and Guidelines and associated procedure for (re)naming of facilities (copy attached)

 *Report on Updated Policy on Naming Facilities and Guidelines and associated* *Page 195*

 ***Policy on Naming of Facilities 7-3-17.pdf*** **Page 196**

 ***Updated Guidelines and associated procedure on Naming of facilities 7-3-17.doc.pdf*** **Page 198**

For Consideration and/or Decision

14 Brexit Update (copy attached)

 ***ERT - BREXIT 13 March 17.pdf*** **Page 200**

15 Culloville Development Association - Supplemental Contribution Agreement (copy attached)

 ***Report Template Culloville Development Association 1.pdf*** **Page 202**

 ***Supp Contribution Agreement Culloville Dev Assoc.pdf*** **Page 203**

16 Credit Card Policy (copy attached)

 ***CC Policy Report.pdf*** **Page 209**

 ***NMDDC Credit Card Policy - March 17.pdf*** **Page 210**

Items Restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

17 Newry Civic Centre Progress Report (copy attached)

This item is deemed to be restricted 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).

 ***Newry Civic Centre Progress Report.pdf*** **Not included**

18 External Works at Newry Leisure Centre (copy attached)

This item is deemed to be restricted 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).

 ***External Works at Newry Leisure Centre Phase 2.pdf*** **Not included**

 ***3662- 7023 Entrance gate proposal.pdf*** **Not included**

 ***3662- 7024 Entrance gate proposal.pdf*** **Not included**

 **3662-0100 Site Layout Landscape Plan 1-500 A1-DRAFT_.pdf**

Not included

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews	terry.andrews@nmandd.org
Cllr Naomi Bailie	naomi.bailie@nmandd.org
Cllr Patrick Brown	patrick.brown@nmandd.org
Cllr Robert Burgess	robert.burgess@nmandd.org
Cllr Stephen Burns	stephen.burns@nmandd.org
Cllr Pete Byrne	pete.byrne@nmandd.org
Mr Gerard Byrne	gerard.byrne@nmandd.org
Cllr Michael Carr	michael.carr@nmandd.org
Mrs Dorinnia Carville	dorinnia.carville@nmandd.org
Cllr charlie casey	charlie.casey@nmandd.org
Cllr William Clarke	william.clarke@nmandd.org
Cllr Garth Craig	garth.craig@nmandd.org
Cllr Dermot Curran	dermot.curran@nmandd.org
Cllr Laura Devlin	laura.devlin@nmandd.org
Cllr Sean Doran	sean.doran@nmandd.org
Cllr Cadogan Enright	cadogan.enright@nmandd.org
Cllr Gillian Fitzpatrick	gillian.fitzpatrick@nmandd.org
Cllr Glyn Hanna	glyn.hanna@nmandd.org
Mr Liam Hannaway	liam.hannaway@nmandd.org
Cllr Valerie Harte	valerie.harte@nmandd.org
Cllr Harry Harvey	harry.harvey@nmandd.org
Cllr Terry Hearty	terry.hearty@nmandd.org
Cllr David Hyland	david.hyland@nmandd.org
Cllr Liz Kimmins	liz.kimmins@nmandd.org
Cllr Mickey Larkin	micky.larkin@nmandd.org
Mr Michael Lipsett	michael.lipsett@nmandd.org
Cllr Kate Loughran	kate.loughran@nmandd.org
Cllr Jill Macauley	jill.macauley@nmandd.org
Mrs Regina Mackin	regina.mackin@nmandd.org
Cllr Kevin Mc Ateer	kevin.mcateer@nmandd.org
Mr Johnny Mc Bride	johnny.mcbride@newryandmourne.gov.uk
Cllr Declan McAteer	declan.mcateer@nmandd.org
Jonathan McGilly	jonathan.mcgilly@nmandd.org
Mr Eamon McManus	eamon.mcmanus@nmandd.org
Cllr Andrew McMurray	andrew.mcmurray@nmandd.org
Eileen McParland	eileen.mcparland@nmandd.org
Catrina Miskelly	catrina.miskelly@downdc.gov.uk
Mr Colin Moffett	colin.moffett@nmandd.org
Cllr Roisin Mulgrew	roisin.mulgrew@nmandd.org
Cllr Mark Murnin	mark.murnin@nmandd.org
Cllr Barra O Muiir	barra.omuiir@nmandd.org

Cllr Pol O'Gribin	pol.ogribin@nmandd.org
Mr Canice O'Rourke	canice.orourke@downdc.gov.uk
Ms Patricia Oakes	patricia.oakes@nmandd.org
Cllr Brian Quinn	brian.quinn@nmandd.org
Cllr Henry Reilly	henry.reilly@nmandd.org
Ms Alison Robb	Alison.Robb@downdc.gov.uk
Cllr Michael Ruane	michael.ruane@nmandd.org
Cllr Gareth Sharvin	gareth.sharvin@nmandd.org
Cllr Gary Stokes	gary.stokes@nmandd.org
Sarah Taggart	sarah-louise.taggart@nmandd.org
Cllr David Taylor	david.taylor@nmandd.org
Caroline Taylor	Caroline.Taylor@downdc.gov.uk
Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly	jarlath.tinnelly@nmandd.org
Cllr John Trainor	john.trainor@nmandd.org
Cllr William Walker	william.walker@nmandd.org
Mrs Marie Ward	marie.ward@nmandd.org

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2016 –

ITEMS STILL IN PROGRESS OR ON-GOING.

SPR/192/2016	Former Kindle Primary School – Business Case	Agreed - officer's recommendation to purchase the site from Department of Education in order to develop a community centre, subject to a full economic appraisal and business case being carried out on the site.	M Lipsett	On-going.	
ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2015					
SPR/210/2016	Derelict Site- Daisy Hill, Newry	Agreed to: Declare the land as surplus. Request LPS to provide a current market valuation and a recommendation on the most appropriate way to dispose of the land. Concrete shed on-site to be demolished if required in advance of the proposed sale. Review and if necessary improve security at the site to reduce unauthorised entry/anti-social behaviour.	K Scullion	Ongoing.	

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 13 OCTOBER 2016 – ITEMS STILL IN PROGRESS OR ON-GOING.

SPR/223/2016	Report on Former Chairperson's Portraits	It was agreed that the former Chairperson's portraits be disposed of as follows: • If the subjects of the original portraits are still alive, the	A Robb	In progress.	
--------------	--	--	--------	--------------	--

		portraits should be offered to them at nil consideration. If an individual does not respond or does not wish to accept his/her portrait the Council will hold it for a period of 3 months and then arrange for appropriate disposal. • If the subject of a portrait is deceased the original portrait should be offered to his/her personal representatives in line with the distribution of estates priority list as set out in the Administration of Estates Act (NI) 1955 at nil consideration. • If there is more than one eligible person in an entitled group eg. if the deceased has no surviving married or civil partner and there are children and more than one child wishes to obtain the original portrait then the matter will be resolved by the drawing of lots. • Either the original portrait subject or any person claiming a portrait on his/her behalf will be responsible for collection of the portrait from Down County Museum and its care and maintenance thereafter, and will accept the portrait as seen i.e. in its existing condition. • If there was no interested party in obtaining a portrait the Council will hold same for a period of 3 months and then arrange for appropriate disposal. • The above process will be facilitated by Down County Museum.			
--	--	--	--	--	--

ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2015

SPR/236/2016	Right of Way Proposal at Ballyedmond, Killowen, Rostrevor	It was agreed to accept the officer's recommendations as follows: • Approval of the details of the proposed Killowen Coastal Path around the Big Moat at Ballyedmond as per the presentation at the meeting,	E McManus	Response awaited from Pat Savage or AECOM in response to E McManus e mail dated 19 Dec 2016 .	
--------------	---	---	-----------	---	--

		ie. the design drawings and technical specification. • A joint application for Planning Permission will be submitted by the Ballyedmond Estate and the Council for the creation of the proposed Coastal Path as per the approved details.			
--	--	--	--	--	--

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2016 – ITEMS STILL IN PROGRESS OR ON-GOING.

SPR/249/2016	Correspondence from Lidl re Planning Permission in Newcastle	Invitation from Lidl to meet with Councillors accepted.	E Curtis	Meeting took place 30 January 2017.	
SPR/250/2016	Disposal of Land at Carnbane Road, Newry beside Carnbane Playing Fields	• Council to express an interest in the disposal of land at Carnbane Road, Newry as this land is important for the future management and development of Carnbane Playing Fields and the land is under Council control as present. The acquisition will also resolve any discrepancies in the Council boundary. • Council to seek a transfer at nominal value in the first instance. • If Council is successful in acquiring this land, the Council agree to re-imburse NIE for any costs incurred in the relocation of their equipment on this site in the event of development and also agree to enter into a Wayleave Agreement with NIE for the equipment.	A Robb	Questionnaire returned to LPS to formally register the Council's interest in this matter.	

		Easements may also be required for Transport NI, BT and NI Water.			
SPR/251/2016	Disposal of Land at Sugar Island, Newry	Council to express an interest in the disposal of land at Sugar Island, Newry. Council to seek a transfer at nominal value in the first instance.	B Magill	Questionnaire returned to LPS to formally register the Council's interest in this matter.	
SPR/257/2016	Peace IV	Application to be submitted to Shared Spaces and Services funding call for the John Doyle Peace Centre.	S Burns		

SPR/280/2016	International Relations Policy & Reference Group	Reference Group to be established as a partnership between Council and external agencies to approve the Terms of Reference and Framework outlined in the report.	E Curtis	On-going.	
SPR/282/2016	Correspondence from the Department for Communities Regeneration Bill	Council to write to the Minister for Communities asking him to reconsider the decision not to progress the Regeneration Bill.	L Hannaway		
SPR/283/2016	Carlingford Lough Greenway – from Weir on Middlebank to Victoria Lock	Council to proceed to seek tenders for the second phase of the Greenway from the Weir on Middlebank to Victoria Lock and to carry out this scheme during 2017. The tender process project management and contract supervision to be carried out by the Phase 1 Consultant who was appointed to deal with the development of the Greenway from Newry to Victoria Lock with Consultancy costs to be funded by Council through the Landfill Communities Fund administered by Ulster Wildlife.	E McManus		

SPR/10/2017	Garden Area at Junction of Kilmorey Street/River Street, Newry	Council to write to the Department for Infrastructure, Transport NI to seek their agreement to renewal of lease of this land for a further five year period and at a similar rent of 5pence per year.	A Robb		
SPR/17/2017	Peace IV Capital Shared Spaces and Services Application	Council to continue to support the Camlough scheme and write to the Clanrye group advising them Council could not offer a letter of support however would assist the group in investigating other methods of funding.	E Curtis		
SPR/18/2017	Sister Cities Programme	Officers to draw up a programme of events around business, arts, culture, sports/leisure in line with Council's International Relations Policy.	J McCabe		

ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2015

SPR/295/2016	Tender for the Provision of Corporate Graphic Design Services	Tender for the provision of Corporate Graphic Design approved for a 6 month period, with the option to extend for a further period if required, compliant with the Council's Financial Policy and Procedures Regulations.	R Mackin	Ongoing.	
SPR/297/2016	Proposals to increase Permanent Headcount in the Planning Department	Decision to increase the permanent headcount in the Planning Department to be taken after the Efficiencies Working Group to be held on 22 December 2016.	C O'Rourke		
SPR/19/2017	Saintfield Community Centre	The following was approved: 1. Proceed with the development of the Saintfield	E Curtis		

		Community Centre Project utilising Council's own funding secured in the 2017/18 budget. 2. It is proposed that enterprise units are included as part of the scheme to generate income, subject to the requirement of the public and in line with Saintfield Community Trust's ethos. 3. Commence a new tender process to appoint an integrated design team, followed by an integrated supply team to deliver the scheme in accordance with Council project plan. 4. Statement to be issued to press on the project, at an appropriate time. Further agreed to erect a sign at Saintfield Community Centre site detailing the proposed new scheme and the inclusion of a possible 3G pitch in Saintfield.			
SPR/20/2017	Final Accounts for Victoria Lock Refurbishment Scheme	1. Approve the final account for the dredging contract at Victoria Lock for the sum as detailed in the Officer's report. 2. To approve the final account for the refurbishment of the sea gates at Victoria Lock for the sum as detailed in the Officer's report.	E McManus		

		3. To approve additional payments for Consultancy services provided by the appointment Consultants for the sum as detailed in the Officer's report.			
SPR/21/2017	Terms of Reference for a Review of the Big Screen, Newry	Terms of Reference contained within the Officer's report, for the review of the Big Screen in Newry, approved. To be undertaken by ASM, Chartered Accountants, and for their report to be subsequently considered by the Audit Committee.	D Carville		

ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2017

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SPR/30/2017	Chairperson's Remarks – Additional Item – Saintfield Community Centre	It was agreed that Council officials hold a meeting with Saintfield Development Association and representatives from Darragh Cross GAA, Saintfield Hockey Club and Saintfield Football Club in order to go through the options and allow officials to concentrate on the feasible options that suited the community needs. It was also agreed that this meeting be held as a matter of urgency.	M Lipsett	In progress	
SPR/37/2017	Armagh Down Women's Aid	It was agreed to offer a letter of support from Council to Armagh Down Women's Aid Group who wished to have Southern Health and Social Services Council property on the Downshire Road, Newry transferred to them under Government Community Transfer Policy.	E Curtis		
SPR/39/2017	Consultation Response on Children and Young People's Strategy Northern Ireland	It was agreed to approve the consultation response on Children and Young People's Strategy Northern Ireland.	J McBride	Approved.	
SPR/40/2017	Consultation Response on the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNi) Regional Child Protection/ Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Northern Ireland	It was agreed to note the contents of the report, and approve the submission of responses to the consultation on the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNi) Regional Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Northern Ireland.	C Miskelly	Approved.	
SPR/41/2017	Kilkeel Town Hall	It was agreed to approve the works outlined in the	E Curtis	Approved.	

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
		Officer's report to allow the premises to be returned to the Council.			
SPR/42/2017	Lease of Offices – McGrath House, Newry	It was agreed to permit officials to seek advice from LPS as to the definition of community rental rate before deciding on whether to renew the lease at McGrath House, Newry. It was also agreed that a report would be brought back to the Committee in due course.	A Robb		
SPR/43/2017	Deed of Release of Covenant and Charge – Ti Chulainn Limited	It was agreed to note the contents of the Officer's report and agreed to Council entering into a Deed of Release of a Deed of Charge between Ti Chulainn Limited and legacy Newry and Mourne District Council, registered on 15 December 1998 and Supplementary Contribution Agreement dated 24 August 1999.	P Green	Agreed.	

ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2015

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
SPR/44/2017	Proposed Sale of Land at Carlingford Park, Newry	It was agreed to proceed with the sale of a portion of land at Carlingford Park, Newry at the recommended valuation, subject to the conditions listed in paragraph 2.1 of the Officer's report	A Robb	Approved.	
SPR/45/2017	Report re Soccer Field – Bog Road, Forkhill	It was agreed to proceed with the sale of land at Bog Road, Forkhill to Peadar O'Doirnin GAA Club at the valuation contained within paragraph 3.1 of the Officer's report and subject to the conditions detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the report.	A Robb	Approved.	

SPR/46/2017	CCTV	It was agreed to note the contents of the Officer's report and agree to: 1. The extension of the town centre CCTV surveillance and monitoring contract with the company detailed in the Officer's report for a further 12 months until 31 March 2018 at the cost contained within the Officer's report. 2. Grant authority to Officials to identify options for the longer-term management of CCTV throughout the District (town centres and Council property) and; 3. The immediate upgrading of the CCTV system at the Bridge Centre, Killyleagh at the cost outlined in the Officer's report.	J McBride	Agreed.	
SPR/47/2017	Health & Safety Policy	It was agreed to approve the Health and Safety Policy contained in Appendix 1 of the Officers' report.	D Carville	Approved.	
SPR/48/2017	Additional Costs to Newry Leisure Centre	It was agreed to: 1. Grant authority to Council Officers to instruct the Design Team to include all necessary additional mechanical and electrical works in the current Newry Leisure Centre Phase 2 scheme that had not been included in the original tender documentation, noting that these additional works shall incur additional costs to the contract. 2. Grant authority to Council Officers to take appropriate action to seek to recover any additional costs to the Council arising directly from the Design Team's omission of necessary mechanical and electrical works from the original tender documentation.	E McManus	Approved.	
SPR/49/2017	Tender for Insurance Brokerage Services	It was agreed to appoint the company as recommended in paragraph 3.1 of the Officer's report as the Council's insurance broker for a two year period running from 1 April 2017 until 31 March 2019, with an option to extend the contract for a further 1 year + 1 year period.	K Montgomery	Approved.	

SPR/50/2017	Policy on Revenue Expenditure Funded by Capital Under Statute	It was agreed to approve the policy for revenue expenditure funded by capital under statute, as attached in appendix 1 of the Officer's report.	K Montgomery	Approved.	
SPR/51/2017	Proposed New Entrance to Newry Leisure Centre	It was agreed to approve the additional works to the entrance to the new Newry Leisure Centre from Cecil Street, Newry at the cost detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the Officer's report with this work to be carried out as part of the current contract.	E McManus	Approved.	
SPR/52/2017	RPA Severance	It was agreed to note the contents of the Officer's report and agree to the recommendations regarding the application of the RPA Severance scheme at paragraph 3.1 of the report.	D Carville	Approved.	

Newry Mourne & Down District Council

Report of Narrow Water Stakeholder Group Meeting held on Monday 20 February 2017 at 2.00pm, in the Boardroom District Council Offices Monaghan Row Newry.

In attendance: Councillor D McAteer
Councillor M Carr
Councillor C Casey
Councillor B Walker
Councillor J Tinnelly

Officials in attendance: Mr L Hannaway Chief Executive
Ms M Ward Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism
Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism
Ms L Dillon Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance:

Mr Tom Reid	Department for Infrastructure
Mr Ray O Leary	Department of Transport Tourism & Sport
Mr Adrian O Hare	Narrow Water Bridge Community Network
Mr Jim Boylan	Narrow Water Bridge Community Network
Mr Denis Brady	Narrow Water Bridge Community Network
Ms Pamela Arthurs	East Border Region
Mr Pat Finn	Louth County Council
Ms Kieran Grant	Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
Mr Dennis Ryan	North South Ministerial Council
Mr Sean McAteer	North South Ministerial Council
Mr M McKeown	Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade
Mr B Stewart	Warrenpoint Chamber of Commerce

Apologies: None

The meeting had been organised by the Department for Infrastructure, N Ireland

Mr Reid explained this had been the third meeting with the stakeholders group. He said that since the last meeting work had been done to look at options for the Narrow Water Bridge and a paper had been presented to the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Plenary on 4 July 2016.

He said it was hoped that both the Narrow Water Bridge and Southern Relief Road projects would be taken forward as complementary projects.

The purpose of the meeting was to give stakeholders an opportunity to look at high level objectives and establish what options will fit with these objectives.

Based on previous meetings and consultations to date, Mr Reid outlined the following high level options:

- 1) The existing scheme
- 2) A scheme to include cycling and pedestrian access
- 3) A cycling/ pedestrian only scheme

He said they needed to establish if there are other options to consider.

Mr O Leary said it was apparent that the Narrow Water Bridge project would be more than a bridge. It would incorporate an overall vision and development strategy, in particular to develop tourism for the region. It was important that whatever bridge structure was built that it would link to and build upon the overall strategy for the cross border region.

Considerable discussion then followed during which several speakers put forward their views on the various options for the bridge.

Many speakers were strongly supportive of the current design for the project ie, a bridge which would include vehicular access.

Disappointment was expressed that it appeared no progress had been made in bringing the project forward especially in view of the fact that planning approval for the project was due to expire in November 2017.

Mr Reid said that given the considerable costs involved with a scheme such as the Narrow Water Bridge Project, it was essential to demonstrate that all options have been examined.

Mr Reid said that it would be important to agree the key objectives of the Narrow Water project.

The following key objectives were agreed:

- 1. The project should link the two communities north and south**
- 2. Encourage and enhance overall tourism in the cross border region**
- 3. Protect the natural environment north and south**

Reference was made to the following;

- The Bridge is needed to enhance local access and tourism development and must involve vehicular traffic – but is not intended as a measure to address the huge strategic traffic problem in Newry.

- If the project is changed at this point this will result in significant costs.
- Importance of social links the Bridge can provide.
- Provision of the Bridge would be key in developing the Lough and this would greatly ensure development of tourism for the region.
- Significant offering of 'active tourism' from countries such as Germany and France.
- Preliminary costings should be provided for pedestrian and cycle option, and for vehicular option.
- To note that work is progressing on the Newry Mourne & Down District Council Tourism Strategy.

Mr Reid said that following this meeting the departments would concentrate on the agreed three high level objectives at this stage:

- 1) To cement the relationship between the two regions.
- 2) Bring a focus on active tourism .
- 3) Protect and enhance the natural environment.

Conclusion:

Mr Reid said it was important to establish what was the correct project for the area. The Department of Infrastructure planned to bring a paper to the North South Ministerial Council in Summer 2017 outling the best way forward in this respect

Mr Reid said a further meeting would be held in due course and he thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting concluded at 3.40pm.

For noting at the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee Meeting to be held on Thursday 16 March 2017.

Signed: **Ms L Dillon**
 Democratic Services Officer

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Strategic Projects Working Group Meeting held on Tuesday
28 February 2017 at 3.00pm in the Commedagh Room, Downshire Civic Centre,
Downpatrick**

Chairperson: Councillor C Enright

In Attendance: **(Committee Members)**
Councillor C Casey
Councillor W Clarke
Councillor G Craig
Councillor M Murnin

Officials in Attendance: Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive
Ms M Ward, Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism
Ms D Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration
Mr K Scullion, Assistant Director of Facilities, Management & Maintenance
Mr M Mohan, Senior Tourism Initiatives Manager
Ms P Oakes PA to the Director of Strategic Planning & Performance

Also in Attendance: Mr Neil Elliot Representative of LUC
Mr David Bullough Representative of LUC
Mr Pete Mullins Representative of LUC

1) APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The following apologies were received:

Councillor P Brown
Councillor G Stokes
Councillor D Taylor

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Brown, it was agreed that Councillor Enright assume the position of Chairman.

2) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

PRESENTATIONS

3) PRESENTATION

RE: MOURNES GATEWAY STUDY PROJECT UPDATE

Representatives from LUC gave a presentation on the Mourne Gateway Study Project Update. (Copy circulated)

Members welcomed this exciting project which would have great potential for the District and looked forward to receiving the costings to enable the project to happen.

The following issues were raised by Members:

- Ensure that the project is usable all year round
- Concerns about the raised walkways, as there are plenty of both natural viewing spots and natural walkways.
- Consider the need to cater for young families with young children.
- Have a balance of indoor and outdoor activities.
- Consider extending the project as far as Murlough and develop these links.
- Consider the installation of a zip wire.

AGREED: Councillors' comments above to be included in the process following which proposals will be submitted for consideration to the ERT Committee.

4a) LETTER FROM STEPHEN VILLIERS, PRINCES TRUST REGARDING THE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LANDS AT HILLTOWN ROAD, DERRYLECKAGH, NEWRY

Mr Hannaway referred to a letter from Stephen Villiers regarding the potential development of lands at Hilltown Road, Derryleckagh, Newry (copy circulated). Mr Stephen Villiers and Dermot Farrell will be attending the next Strategic Projects Working Group scheduled for 25 April 2017 to discuss the potential development of these lands.

AGREED: Mr Stephen Villiers and Mr Dermott Farrell to attend the next meeting of the Strategic Projects Working Group on 25 April 2017 to make a presentation on the potential development of lands at Hilltown Road, Derryleckagh, Newry.

4b) PROGRESS REPORT ON PRINCES TRUST PROPOSAL FOR NEWCASTLE HARBOUR

Mr Hannaway advised that Mr Villiers and Mr Farland would also discuss the progress report on the Princes Trust proposal for Newcastle Harbour at the next Strategic Projects Working Group scheduled for 25 April 2017.

AGREED: Mr Stephen Villiers and Mr Dermot Farrell to attend the next meeting of the Strategic Projects Working Group on 25 April 2017 to make a presentation on the Princes Trust proposal for Newcastle Harbour.

3) MINUTES OF STRATEGIC PROJECTS WORKING GROUP MEETING - 20 DECEMBER 2016

Read: Minutes of Strategic Projects Working Group Meeting held on Tuesday 20 December 2016. (Copy circulated)

Agreed: It was unanimously agreed to note the Minutes of Strategic Projects Working Group Meeting held on 20 December 2016.

6) REPORT ON PROPOSALS FOR ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Mr Hannaway referred to the report and presentation (copy circulated) and explained that Council needs to identify their assets in order to realise maximum value from its Estate and to establish an Asset Management Strategy. It is imperative to know the estate requirements, so that the most appropriate uses for the Estate can be established. The Asset Management Plan and Asset Information systems will identify the long, medium and short term purpose of each asset. Estates Management have a key role to play in the implementation of Community Planning alongside our partners in Community Planning Partnership. The Estates Strategy takes each strategic area of responsibility and demonstrates how the Estate needs can be identified. The development of the Asset Management Strategy will be mapping the demand against current supply provided by the current Estate. The Council will work in conjunction with other Councils and relevant public sector organisations under the co-ordination role of the SIB to establish and start to set up the most appropriate asset information plan and system going forward. The idea is to have an overview of all Council assets and an Asset Register is currently being compiled for the organisation.

Mrs Carville explained that a meeting will take place with internal officers to review Asset Management from different angles, ie finance value etc. It is intended to ensure that there is a strategic overview of the Council's estates over the short, medium and long term. There are some short term considerations and through the Efficiencies Working Group, it is hoped to identify surplus estates to release the burden on the ratepayer.

Members raised the following issues:-

- Would the Council seek planning permission before disposal of a Council Estate/asset?
- The sale of estates is linked to the Council's Corporate Plan and vision for the Council area
- The sale would have to be compatible with all types of enterprises
- Would Council consider purchasing other buildings to redevelop and sell on?
- Possibility of using the site of the former Leisure Centre in Newry for a multi storey car park
- Possibility of the Council Offices at Monaghan Row being disposed of to the Trust if they were interested, following completion of the new Civic Centre

Mr Hannaway explained that a development brief will be drawn up and if, for example, the Council sell a property for the development of a hotel, we would need to seek planning permission would need to be sought prior to sale but each application would be considered individually. The Council would like to build an investment pot and build this into reserves as the idea is to have money available to attract other investment and joint investment with other bodies to regenerate areas, however the detail needs to be considered. Mrs Carville explained that the rates from the sale of any property will have to be ring fenced for capital purposes in order to determine the best use.

AGREED: A report with further details will be submitted to a future meeting of the Strategic Projects Working Group following which it will be submitted for consideration to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

7) PROGRESS REPORT ON NEWRY CIVIC CENTRE

Mr Hannaway provided an update to the progress in respect of Newry Civic Centre (copy circulated) and explained that following the last meeting, 2 sites have been identified for the new Civic Centre:-

- Abbey Way (Council ownership)
- St Clare's Convent site

Mr Hannaway also explained that there is a possible third site which is adjacent to the leisure centre, an area accessed through Cecil Street at Upper Edward Street. A valuation framework needs to be agreed as it is important to locate the Civic Centre in the City Centre.

Mr Hannaway pointed out that it is hoped to move on to the next stage in this process with a report by June 2017.

Mrs Ward explained that the process will maximise the benefits, not only for the Civic Centre, but the regeneration of Newry and it is hoped to have the Civic Centre completed by 2019. Views of Members of the Strategic Projects Working Group are sought following which the matter will be considered by the SPRC.

Noted: Progress Report on the Newry Civic Centre.

8) UPDATE
RE: PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES

Read: Progress Report from Mr E Curtis Director Strategic Planning & Performance, regarding development of strategic programmes.
(Copy circulated)

Members queried the following issue:

- Saintfield Community Centre and the removal of the 3G pitch from the proposal.

AGREED: To note Progress Report from Mr E Curtis Director Strategic Planning & Performance regarding the development of Strategic Programmes.

E Curtis to consider reduced options for the Saintfield Community Centre by the Community Group.

9) SCAPE PROCURE – MAJOR WORKS FRAMEWORK

L Hannaway referred to the report (copy circulated) and advised that this is a new framework document.

AGREED: Representatives from Scape be invited to make a presentation on the Major Works Framework at a future Strategic Projects Working Group.

10) UPDATE ON OFF-STREET CAR PARKING STRATEGY

L Hannaway advised that Ave Arup & Partners have been appointed by the Council to prepare an off-street car parking strategy. The scope will consider the optimum number of car parking spaces to be provided in the Council's main settlements as well as options for the future use of tariffs. The information gathering exercise has been completed and an emerging finding is that there appears to be a widespread reticence concerning the introduction of tariffs for those car parks which are currently free. The intention is to have the draft strategy completed by end of March/start of April.

Members agreed that this Working Group should meet to discuss the findings and other issues such as seasonal charging or permits for ratepayers at a future meeting.

AGREED: To discuss the findings and recommendations of the Car Parking Strategy including car park charging at the next Strategic Projects Working Group on 25 April 2017; the matter will subsequently be considered by Council.

11) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Noted: The next meeting of the Strategic Projects Working Group to be held on Tuesday 25 April 2017 at 3pm in the Training Room, Newry

There being no further business the meeting ended at 5.00pm.

Signed: **Mr L Hannaway**
Chief Executive

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2017
Subject:	Performance Improvement Objectives 2017-18
Reporting Officer:	Johnny McBride - Assistant Director: Community Planning and Performance
Contact Officer:	Kate Bingham – Head of Performance Improvement

Decisions Required:	
Members are asked to note the contents of the report, and to give consideration and agreement to:	
- The draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18, and supporting actions and measures, including authorisation to proceed with an eight week public consultation from 24 March - 19 May 2017. - The proposed approach and timetable for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18, by 30 June 2017.	
1.0	<u>Purpose & Background</u>
1.1	Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all District Councils are required to put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions. Each financial year, Councils are also required to set performance improvement objectives for the services they provide.
1.2	In 2016-17, the Council selected performance improvement objectives which were aligned to strategic priorities within the Corporate Plan 2015-19, and focused on leisure and recreation facilities, planning services and community planning. Following an audit and assessment of the Council's performance management arrangements in 2016, the NI Audit Office has issued a certificate of compliance with the Duty of Performance for 2016-17. The audit report outlines a number of proposals for improvement and it is understood that the Local Government Auditor will undertake future assessments against these proposals. The Audit and Assessment Report concluded that the performance improvement objectives for 2016-17 were foundational in nature, and could form the basis of improvement in future years, as opposed to just the current year. The NI Audit Office has subsequently put forward the following 'proposals for improvement': Improvement objectives should focus on outcomes for citizens in relation to improved services and functions, demonstrating how citizens will be 'better off'.

	Improvement should be demonstrated and measured through the use of performance indicators and data collection methods. In 2017-18 the audit and assessment framework will also change to reflect the introduction of a retrospective assessment, in addition to the current forward-looking assessment. This fundamentally shifts the performance agenda as it will require Councils to demonstrate improvement, via robust performance information, and to benchmark against suitable performance comparisons.
2.0	<u>Key Issues</u>
	Developing and publishing performance improvement objectives 2017-18
2.1	The guidance states that performance improvement is more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or in the internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement should focus on activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for communities. Councils should therefore frame improvement objectives so as to bring about improvement in at least one of the specified aspects of improvement: - Strategic effectiveness - Service quality - Service availability - Fairness - Sustainability - Efficiency - Innovation The first aspect of 'strategic effectiveness' seeks to link community planning outcomes with the Council's performance improvement objectives. The Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down has been agreed and includes five outcomes, with a range of supporting indicators and measures. The Council's draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18 are clearly aligned to the outcomes within the Community Plan.
2.2	Councils should also determine their objectives for improvement based on critical self analysis, taking account of a wide range of evidence. All improvement objectives should relate to improving the functions and services to communities and citizens, and be: - Legitimate - Clear - Robust - Deliverable - Demonstrable Councils can set objectives which span more than one year, with intermediary milestones, which must be reviewed annually.
2.3	The proposed performance improvement objectives for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council are outlined in Appendix 1 and are summarised below:

	• Encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities • Improve economic growth by creating new business starts, supporting the growth of existing businesses and promoting Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier tourist destination • Deliver urban and rural regeneration initiatives that will create a District where people want to live, work and invest in • Create a cleaner, greener, more attractive District • Encourage and empower local communities to participate in Council engagement structures These objectives and supporting actions and measures have been developed in collaboration with the SMT and CMT, taking into account existing plans and strategies.
2.4	Councils are required to consult and engage a range of stakeholders, including citizens, businesses and partner organisations on the draft performance improvement objectives. The recommended timetable of activity to consult on the draft performance improvement objectives and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18 is outlined in Appendix 2. Attention is drawn to the intense activity that is required over the next 3 months to ensure that the Performance Improvement Plan is published by 30 June 2017.
3.0	Recommendations
	To consider and agree the: • Draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18, and supporting actions and measures, including authorisation to proceed with an 8 week consultation from 24 March – 19 May 2017, outlined in Appendix 1. • The proposed approach and timetable for developing and publishing the performance improvement objectives by 30 June 2017, outlined in Appendix 2.
4.0	Resource Implications
4.1	The development and publication of the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18 will be delivered within existing resources.
5.0	Equality & Good Relations Implications
5.1	The draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18 have been equality screened and it is recommended that they are not subject to an equality impact assessment (with no mitigating measures required). In relation to the proposed eight-week consultation process, whilst the Council's Equality Scheme commits to holding consultation exercises relevant to the statutory duties for a minimum of twelve weeks, it also sets out exceptional circumstances where the twelve weeks may not apply. In this instance, it is proposed that the

	Council implements an eight-week consultation process in order to ensure the deadline for publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18 by 30 June 2017 is met. It should also be noted that the performance improvement objectives 2017-18 have been developed based the content of existing strategies, including the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, Tourism Strategy and Play Strategy, which have been informed by a robust and reliable quantitative and qualitative evidence base.
6.0	<u>Appendices</u>
	• Appendix 1 – Consultation - Draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18 • Appendix 2 – Overall approach and timetable for developing and publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18

Consultation

Draft Performance Improvement Objectives

2017-18



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Our Duty of Improvement

Part 12 of The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 sets out a General Duty of Improvement for local government, whereby all District Councils are required to put in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions.

We are required to set improvement objectives for the services we provide on an annual basis, and to have in place arrangements to achieve these objectives. Each performance improvement objective must bring about improvement in at least one of the following aspects of performance:

- Strategic effectiveness
- Service quality
- Service availability
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Innovation

Improvement for Councils should focus on enhancing the sustainable quality of life for ratepayers and local communities, and each objective should be clearly linked to the community planning outcomes for the District.

The draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18 for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council are aligned to the following regional and local plans which influence the overall direction of travel of the organisation, and have been developed based on extensive consultation with key stakeholders:

- Draft Programme for Government Framework
- Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan
- Regional strategies and local strategies, including the Tourism Strategy, Economic Regeneration and Investment Strategy, Play Strategy, Sports Facility Strategy, PCSP, Good Relations and DEA Action Plans

Once agreed, the performance improvement objectives 2017-18 will be published in our annual Performance Improvement Plan. This plan will provide more detail about what we want to improve, how we will deliver improvements, how our performance will be measured and what positive outcomes stakeholders will experience as a result of our improvement activity.

Community Planning Outcomes

The Newry, Mourne and Down Community Plan has been developed and agreed by the Community Planning Partnership Board. Entitled 'Living Well Together', the Community Plan provides a framework for collaborative working to deliver positive change for our communities, and sets out the following long term overarching vision for the District:

'Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs'.

Through the Community Plan, the following five positive outcomes (illustrated at Figure 1) have been identified:

Figure 1

Our Outcomes

These are the positive outcomes we all wish to see in our community.



Council Priorities

Through the Corporate Plan, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has identified a mission and eight priorities (illustrated at Figure 2 below) which will contribute to achieving the overarching outcomes within the Community Plan.

'Lead and serve a District that is prosperous, healthy and sustainable'

Figure 2



Our draft Performance Improvement Objectives for 2017-18

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has identified the following draft performance improvement objectives for 2017-18, all of which are clearly linked to the Community and Corporate Plans for the District.

- 1. Encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities**
- 2. Improve economic growth by creating new business starts, supporting the growth of existing businesses and promoting Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier tourist destination**
- 3. Deliver urban and rural regeneration initiatives that will create a District where people want to live, work and invest in**
- 4. Create a cleaner, greener, more attractive District**
- 5. Encourage and empower local communities to participate in Council engagement structures**

Your voice, your choice!

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is inviting you to put forward your views on the draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18. We are keen to ensure that our performance improvement objectives have a positive impact on the quality of life of all stakeholders across the District, including citizens, local businesses, partner organisations in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, employees and Elected Members.

A questionnaire has been included on page 20 of this document for all stakeholders to complete and return to:

Email: kate.bingham@nmandd.org

Address: Performance Improvement
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry
Co Down
N. Ireland
BT35 8DJ

The questionnaire is also available at the following Newry, Mourne and Down District Council public receptions:

- O'Hagan House, Monaghan Row, Newry
- Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick
- Ethnic Minority Support Centre, Town Hall, Newry

Alternatively, if you prefer to provide comments in person, please contact us on: 0300 013 2233.

The closing date for responses is 19 May 2017.

Performance Improvement Objective 1

Encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities

Senior Responsible Officer: TBC

Why does this matter

Good health is one of the most valued aspects of our lives. It influences many other dimensions of well-being, such as employment, income, social connections, participation in community life and educational attainment. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has a key role to play in helping local communities to live long and healthy lives, and we are committed to collaborating with partners across the statutory and voluntary sectors to address health inequalities and encourage residents to make healthy and informed lifestyle choices.

The demographic profile of our community not only has an impact on the services the Council provides, but the way these services will be delivered in the future. With the population of the District projected to grow by 8% over the next decade, including a 74% increase in residents aged 65 years and above by 2039, the overall health and wellbeing needs of local communities are set to change and evolve. The majority of residents are currently in good health, with no long term health problems, whilst over a third of those aged 65 years and above have a long term health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities a lot. Eleven neighbourhoods across the District fall within the 20% most deprived in Northern Ireland, experiencing health inequalities in terms of life expectancy, cancer rates, adult and childhood obesity rates, mental health and drug and alcohol related conditions. Ongoing engagement with local communities has also highlighted a range of health and wellbeing issues around obesity, mental health and isolation. These issues serve to underpin the direct correlation between health, physical activity, diet and nutrition, which influences the health, wellbeing and quality of life of all our local communities.

In recognition of the changing needs of our diverse, growing and ageing population, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has prioritised the provision of high quality, accessible leisure, sport and recreational facilities. Through the Play Strategy and Sports Facility Strategy, the Council is continuing to put in place the infrastructure to encourage healthy lifestyles and improve the overall wellbeing of all local communities.

Supporting actions	Measures of success
• Provide and operate high quality indoor leisure facilities through the completion of Newry and Downpatrick Leisure Centres • Improve the customer experience at indoor leisure centres through marketing, branding, mobile technology and targeted physical activity programmes • Provide fixed and non fixed play opportunities for children and young people by consolidating and upgrading the play parks in Hilltown, Bessbrook, Backfield, Meigh, Bridge Centre, Mourne Gardens and Oliver Plunkett, and developing a new play park in Mayobridge • Engage more children and young people in community play initiatives across the District • Increase participation in sport, leisure and recreational activities through the co-ordination of a multi-stakeholder Activity, Promotion and Development Plan, which is suitable for all ages and abilities	• 34% increase in the number participants using all indoor leisure facilities by March 2018 • 5-6% year on year increase in the number of participants using Newry Leisure Centre • 2% increase in the number of participants using Downpatrick Leisure Centre in 2017-18, followed by a 9% increase in 2018-19 and a 72% increase in 2019-20 • Level of user satisfaction with selected indoor leisure facilities during 2017-18 • 32% increase in the number of members of indoor leisure facilities by 2020-21 • Completion of the 2017-18 Capital Sports Facility and Fixed Play programmes within budget • Number of participants using Council owned outdoor facilities during 2017-18 • Increase in the number of children and young people engaged in Community Play initiatives during 2017-18 • Launch of the multi-stakeholder Activity, Promotion and Development Plan by March 2018
Outcomes for local communities and stakeholders	
• All local communities can access opportunities to get involved in indoor and outdoor sport, leisure and recreational activity • Improved provision of indoor and outdoor sport, leisure and recreational facilities • Increase in the number of participants using leisure and recreational facilities • Additional, more efficient and effective channels to access and book indoor leisure facilities and activities • Improved customer satisfaction with indoor leisure facilities • Improved levels of health and wellbeing for local communities	

Corporate Plan Priority	Supported improved health and wellbeing outcomes
Community Plan Outcome	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down enjoy good health and wellbeing
Programme for Government Outcome	We enjoy long, healthy, active lives
Alignment with 7 statutory aspects of performance	Strategic effectiveness / Service quality / Service availability / Fairness / Innovation / Efficiency

Performance Improvement Objective 2

Improve economic growth by creating new business starts, supporting the growth of existing businesses and promoting Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier tourist destination

Senior Responsible Officer: Marie Ward - Director, Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism

Why does this matter

Jobs, earnings and wealth provide people with an opportunity to fulfil their ambitions, develop new skills and enjoy better levels of health and wellbeing. Located on the economic corridor between Belfast and Dublin, and within the Belfast Metropolitan Catchment Area, the Newry, Mourne and Down District has a real opportunity to compete, by driving growth in the business base, increasing productivity and attracting new businesses. As the District continues to recover from the challenges of the recent recession, the local economy has become increasingly vibrant. 7 of the top 100 performing businesses in Northern Ireland are located in Newry, Mourne and Down, alongside the 7,500 VAT registered small and medium sized enterprises, the majority of which fall within the agriculture, distribution and construction sectors.

Whilst 72% of people in Newry, Mourne and Down are economically active, which falls above the Northern Ireland average of 68%, the median gross annual salary is £20,000 which falls below the regional average of £21,345. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council recognises that investment in the local economy will continue to have a positive impact on the wellbeing of local communities and has put in place the building blocks to capitalise on economic strengths and create a climate for innovation, competitiveness and investment. Through the Regional Start Initiative, the Council accelerated local economic development by supporting 236 new businesses starts and promoting 261 new jobs in 2015-16. This growth will continue as the inward investment secured through NI Business Start Up and Rural Development Programmes will make a significant contribution to improving the

local economy and creating more employment opportunities for all.

Tourism is also a critical economic driver in Newry, Mourne and Down, diversifying the local economy, ensuring the viability of small businesses and supporting almost 5,000 jobs. As a popular destination for domestic tourists, the District is rich with tourism assets, scenic beauty and cultural heritage. In 2014, there were 1.5million visits to visitor attractions, with Murlough Nature Reserve being the most popular attraction. In 2016, over 91% of the 128,000 visitors to the Council's four flagship festivals, Footsteps in the Forest, Festival of Flight, Wake the Giant and Skiffie World Festival, rated them as 'good' or 'extremely good'. However, whilst tourism was worth £47.7million to the local economy in 2015, visitor spend in Newry, Mourne and Down declined by 12%, from £55.3million, in 2014. Strengthening tourism is a high priority for the Council and the recently adopted Tourism Strategy seeks to promote Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier, year-round mountain and maritime destination, recognised for its EPIC experiences in outdoor adventure, its rich tapestry of cultural heritage, myths and stories, as well as its authentic local life.

Supporting actions	Measures of success
- Through the NI Business Start Up Programme, support 245 participants and promote 155 new jobs across the District - Support the growth of the existing business base by delivering a targeted programme of activity and developing the social economy - Through the Rural Business Investment Scheme, support the establishment and growth of small and micro businesses, and the creation new jobs in rural areas - Implement the following key projects within the Tourism Strategy: - Prepare a revised application to the UK National Commission for UNESCO for Global Geopark status for the Mourne and Ring of Gullion - Continue to develop the concept of the Great Eastern Greenway through building connectivity between the Newry Canal Towpath and the Omeath to Carlingford	245 business plan applications approved 166 New Business Starts 155 new jobs promoted through business start up activity - The number of businesses supported to increase their turnover, secure new contracts and create new employment opportunities during 2017-18 - The number of social enterprises supported during 2017-18 - The number of micro and small rural businesses supported by March 2020 - The growth of businesses in rural areas by March 2020 - The number of new jobs created in rural areas by March 2020 - Submission of the revised application for Global Geopark status for the Mourne and Ring of Gullion by November 2019 - Delivery of phase 2 of the Carlingford Lough Greenway

Trail • Develop two Destination Experience Development Plans to identify and create 'epic' moments for: - Mourne and Ring of Gullion - The Mourne Coast (to include Downpatrick and its linkages with the coast and Lecale through the life and heritage of St Patrick, and other relevant historical accounts) • Organise and promote 5 flagship festivals across the District: - Footsteps in the Forest (Slieve Gullion) - Skiffies World Festival (Strangford Lough) - Wake the Giant Festival (Warrenpoint) - Festival of Flight (Newcastle) - Maritime Festival (Newry)	by June 2020, including the completion of the greenway between the Weir and Victoria Lough by December 2017 • The development of two Destination Experience Development Plans by March 2018 • Overall growth rate of 6% per annum in overnight expenditure in Newry, Mourne and Down • Increase in the number of visitors to flagship festivals in 2017 • Average spend per group at flagship festivals in 2017 • Level of satisfaction with flagship festivals in 2017
Outcomes for local communities and stakeholders	
• The local economy benefits from an increase in business start ups, the growth of local businesses and support for social enterprises • The rural economy benefits from significant inward investment and the creation and growth of new businesses and jobs • Local communities, businesses and social enterprises benefit from improved access to job, investment, training and mentoring opportunities • Newry, Mourne and Down becomes a more prosperous District • There is an increase in level of tourism and the number of tourists to the District • The Carlingford Lough Greenway creates a world class, cross border green travel route which improves the local living environment and provides communities and visitors with increased opportunities for leisure and recreational activities • Newry, Mourne and Down is recognised as a domestic and international premier tourist destination	
Corporate Plan Priorities	Attracted investment and supported the creation of new jobs Become one of the premier tourist destinations on the island of

	Ireland
Community Plan Outcome	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities
Programme for Government Outcomes	We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy We are an innovative and creative society, where people can fulfil their potential We have more people working in better jobs We are a confident, welcoming, outward looking society We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest
Alignment with 7 statutory aspects of performance	Strategic effectiveness / Service quality / Service availability / Fairness / Innovation

Performance Improvement Objective 3

Deliver urban and rural regeneration initiatives that will create a District where people want to live, work and invest in

Senior Responsible Officer: Marie Ward - Director, Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism

Why does this matter

Newry, Mourne and Down is a predominantly rural District with a number urban settlements around Newry City, Downpatrick, Ballynahinch, Kilkeel, Warrenpoint, Crossmaglen and Newcastle. The heritage and landscape of our District is unique and diverse, and protecting the natural and built environment is a key priority for the Council and its citizens, as it creates a sense of place and plays an important role in improving the health and wellbeing of all.

Significant investment in town centres and villages has delivered new and improved facilities for all those who live, work and visit the area. This investment is set to increase, as the masterplans for Newry City, Ballynahinch, Downpatrick and the South East Coast gain momentum. The Council has attracted inward investment of over £4million to deliver three urban public realm schemes, as well as the heritage led Warrenpoint Municipal Park and Forkhill Greenspace projects, all of which will result in

tangible improvements for local communities and local areas. Through the Rural Development Programme, the Mourne, Gullion and Lecale Partnership has also been awarded £11million, out of the £70million budget for Northern Ireland, to focus on growing rural businesses, facilitating village renewal and improving the rural broadband infrastructure. This significant investment will improve and transform the quality of life for rural communities by 2020.

Road, transport, communications (broadband and mobile) and infrastructure connectivity underpin the development of an area, and are instrumental in supporting access to services and employment, the diversification and expansion of the local economy and tackling social isolation. Whilst the Council has identified a number of projects to improve road, transport and infrastructure connections, access to broadband and mobile networks remain key issues for many rural businesses and communities. It has been recognised that broadband is a basic human right for all citizens, and the Council will continue to advocate on behalf of local communities to address the challenge of improving digital accessibility, so that rural communities can participate fully in all aspects of civic, community and business life.

Supporting actions	Measures of success
• Restore the physical and cultural heritage of Warrenpoint Municipal Park • Invest in high quality infrastructure and public realm schemes in the following urban areas: - Deliver initiatives to improve Newry City Centre, including the Cathedral Corridor shop front scheme, shop local campaign, Newry BID and the purple flag award - Complete the Warrenpoint Public Realm Scheme and deliver initiatives to improve the town centre, including the shop front scheme - Deliver the Downpatrick Public Realm Scheme • Complete the Forkhill Greenspace Project • Progress the implementation of the Rural Development Programme: - Develop and update 42 Village Plans	• The physical re-development of Warrenpoint Municipal Park is completed by May 2018, within budget • Green Flag obtained for environmental sustainability at Warrenpoint Municipal Park by October 2018 • 34% increase in the number of visitors to Warrenpoint Municipal Park, reaching 27,900 per annum by September 2019 • 6% improvement in visitor satisfaction with Warrenpoint Municipal park, reaching 74% by September 2019 • 14% increase in the number of visitors with a good understanding of the heritage value of Warrenpoint Municipal Park, reaching 36% by September 2019 • 9% increase in the number of people who believe the park enhances their quality of life, reaching 40.5% by September 2019 • The public realm schemes in Newry City, Warrenpoint

- Identify a range of physical and environmental regeneration improvement projects in selected villages across the District - Lobby for improved broadband access to meet the needs of rural communities and the rural economy	and Downpatrick are delivered on time and within budget • The creation of a new, 800 meter long village pathway in Forkhill by May 2017 • The completion of 42 Village Plans by March 2018, within budget • The number of village regeneration projects identified and supported by March 2020 • Support towards 3 community broadband schemes in rural areas by March 2020
Outcomes for local communities and stakeholders	
• More visitors are attracted to Warrenpoint Municipal Park and are involved in the heritage of the park through a range of engagement and volunteering opportunities • Enhanced built and natural environment in urban and rural areas, with improved appearance and streetscape • Urban and rural regeneration projects improve local areas and the quality of life for local communities • The Rural Development Programme has a positive impact on rural communities and the rural economy • Significant investment in Village Plans and the regeneration of selected villages across the District • Improved rural digital connectivity in pilot areas	
Corporate Plan Priorities	Led the regeneration of our urban and rural areas Become one of the premier tourist destinations on the island of Ireland Attracted investment and supported the creation of new jobs Protected our natural and built environment Advocated on your behalf specifically in relation to those issues which really matter to you
Community Plan Outcomes	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from prosperous communities All people in Newry, Mourne and Down get a good start in life and fulfil their lifelong potential

Programme for Government Outcomes	We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy We are an innovative and creative society, where people can fulfil their potential We have more people working in better jobs We are a confident, welcoming, outward looking society We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest
Alignment with 7 statutory aspects of performance	Strategic effectiveness / Service quality / Service availability / Fairness / Sustainability / Innovation

Performance Improvement Objective 4

Create a cleaner, greener, more attractive District
Senior Responsible Officer: Canice O'Rourke – Director, Regulatory and Technical Services
Why does this matter The environment is one of the three strategic pillars which underpin the process of community planning. Living in a clean, green, quality environment has a direct impact on the general well being of those who live, work and visit an area, and ongoing engagement consistently highlights that littering, dog fouling, fly tipping and pollution are key issues for local communities. The Council has a key role to play in working with local communities to protect and enhance the local environment, ensuring that Newry, Mourne and Down is a District we can all be proud of. Managing municipal waste is also a key responsibility for local government and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is working in partnership with other local authorities, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, the Strategic Investment Board and Arc 21 to consider and agree a way forward for Northern Ireland to assist in reducing the amount of waste going to landfill and increasing the rate of recycling. Since the merger of the legacy Newry and Mourne and Down District Councils

in 2015, there has been a significant reduction in the amount of waste which is landfilled, largely due to the closure of the Aughnagunn Landfill Site and the new contract with REGEN, which sends previously landfilled waste to a Dirty Material Recovery Facility. In order to meet the 2020 recycling target of 50%, the Council is introducing a range of schemes to extend the collection of dry recyclables and food waste, whilst rolling out educational campaigns to promote a cleaner, greener and more attractive District.

Supporting actions	Measures of success
• Increase the recycling rate by: - Introducing blue bin collections for commercial properties in the legacy Down area - Rationalising how glass is collected in the legacy Newry and Mourne area - Progressing the design, build and opening of the Downpatrick Household Waste Recycling Centre - Delivering a domestic food waste service across the District by extending brown bin collections and rolling out a District wide educational campaign - Delivering educational campaigns in targeted neighbourhoods to close the gap in recycling rates with the District average - Progressing the rationalisation and optimisation of refuse collections across the District • Improve the quality and cleanliness of the local environment by: - Progressing the rationalisation and optimisation of street cleansing schedules across the District	• 44% of household waste collected by the Council is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse) by March 2018 • Reduction in the amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled by March 2018 (<23,675) • The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings • All commercial properties in the legacy Down area have a blue bin collection by March 2018 • Rationalisation of glass collection in the legacy Newry and Mourne area by March 2018 • The Downpatrick Household Waste Recycling Centre is delivered by September 2017, within budget • All domestic properties have a brown bin collection by March 2018 • Increase in recycling rates in identified neighbourhoods by March 2018 • Efficiencies identified through the routes and street cleansing rationalisation and optimisation projects by March 2018

Outcomes for local communities and stakeholders	
- The Council meets landfill and recycling targets - Efficient and effective recycling, composting, bin collection and cleansing services - Local communities benefit from living in a cleaner, greener, quality environment - Improved pride in the District	
Corporate Plan Priority	Protected our natural and built environment
Community Plan Outcome	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down benefit from a clean, quality and sustainable environment
Programme for Government Outcomes	We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment
Alignment with 7 statutory aspects of performance	Strategic effectiveness / Service quality / Service availability / Sustainability / Efficiency

Performance Improvement Objective 5

Encourage and empower local communities to participate in Council engagement structures
Senior Responsible Officer: Michael Lipsett – Director, Active and Healthy Communities
Why does this matter Social connections and interactions are fundamental drivers for improving the physical, mental and emotional well-being of local people. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is committed to investing in communities, building their capacity and empowering them to participate in shaping and designing the policies and services which have an impact on their quality of life. Through our Community Engagement Strategy, we are putting local people at the heart of everything we do, encouraging meaningful two way communication and enabling key stakeholders to influence the development and delivery of community planning outcomes around health and wellbeing, economy, environment and community safety. The Council has established a range of engagement structures to encourage and empower local communities to participate and have a voice on their future and their area. Through the seven DEA Fora across the District, the Council is consulting, involving,

listening and responding to communities, whilst supporting the implementation of the Community Plan at a local level. Made up of Elected Members and representatives from the community and voluntary sector, over the past year, the DEA Fora have held around 20 public meetings, engaged almost 1,500 people on key issues, including community safety and accessing external funding, and assisted over 400 community groups in meeting their objectives.

The Council also recognises the significant role which the voluntary and community sector plays in connecting communities, facilitating a sense of belonging to the area, building trust and tolerance towards others and investing in the capacity of local people. In November 2016, 6,399 volunteers from across the District were registered with Volunteer Now, and the Council continues to support many of these groups through its financial assistance scheme. In 2016-17, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council awarded over £651k to 259 community based projects, enabling voluntary groups to deliver a broad range of initiatives, including summer schemes, Christmas illuminations and capital projects. The Council is committed to encouraging and empowering local communities to have a voice and shape the future of their lives, their District and their future.

Supporting actions	Measures of success
• Develop a corporate Consultation and Engagement Framework to improve the way the Council listens to and takes on board the views of local communities • Level of engagement and participation in the following structures: - Policing and Community Safety Partnership - Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships - DEA Fora - Peace IV Partnership • Reduce the risk of being burgled and address the fear of crime by promoting and encouraging local communities to access the Neighbourhood Watch, 'Good Morning' and 'Home Secure' Schemes • Promote and deliver the financial assistance scheme to community and voluntary groups across the District	• Corporate Consultation and Engagement Framework developed and adopted by September 2017 • The number of meetings of the PCSP / Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships / private DEA Fora / Peace IV Partnership, including attendance levels, during 2017-18 • The number of public meetings and events, including attendance levels, during 2017-18 • The number of capacity building events and programmes, including attendance levels and participant evaluation, during 2017-18 • Facilitation of a focus group, by March 2018, to ascertain the effectiveness of specified community engagement structures and associated capacity building programmes • Increase in the number of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes by March 2018 • Increase in the number of beneficiaries of the 'Good

	Morning' and 'Home Secure' schemes by March 2018 • The number of financial assistance projects funded during 2017-18 • The number and profile of participants involved in projects funded through the financial assistance scheme during 2017-18
Outcomes for local communities and stakeholders	
• More informed decision-making, policy development and service provision, based on the input of local communities and stakeholders • Local communities and stakeholders are actively engaged in supporting the work of the Council and its partners • Confident and empowered local communities • Decrease in the number of people reporting to live in fear • Reduction in the incidents of burglary • Community groups receive financial support towards meeting their objectives and delivering projects across a range of themes, including community safety, good relations, community engagement, sports, events, Christmas illuminations and capital projects • Newry Mourne and Down becomes a more inclusive, cohesive and vibrant District	
Corporate Plan Priority	Empowered and improved the capacity of our communities
Community Plan Outcome	All people in Newry, Mourne and Down live in respectful, safe and vibrant communities
Programme for Government Outcomes	We have a more equal society We have a safe community where we respect the law and each other We are a shared society that respects diversity
Alignment with 7 statutory aspects of performance	Strategic effectiveness / Service quality / Service availability / Fairness / Innovation

Consultation on the draft Performance Improvement Plan and Objectives for 2017-18

I am responding:	as an individual	
	on behalf of an organisation	

Name:	
Job title (if applicable):	
Organisation and address:	
Telephone	
Fax	
E-mail	

Question 1

Which consultation group do you belong to? *Please tick all that apply.*

Resident
 Elected Member
 Local Business
 Local Community Organisation
 Local Voluntary Organisation
 Statutory Organisation
 Other

If other, please provide further information below.

--

Question 2

Do you agree that the draft performance improvement objectives and supporting project(s) are appropriate for our District?

Performance Improvement Objective 1	Agree	Disagree
Encourage healthy lifestyles through increased participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 2	Agree	Disagree
Improve economic growth by creating new business starts, supporting the growth of existing businesses and promoting Newry, Mourne and Down as a premier tourist destination		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 3	Agree	Disagree
Deliver urban and rural regeneration initiatives that will create a District where people want to live, work and invest in		
Comments:		
Performance Improvement Objective 4	Agree	Disagree
Create a cleaner, greener, more attractive District		
Comments:		

Performance Improvement Objective 5	Agree	Disagree
Encourage and empower local communities to participate in Council engagement structures		
Comments:		

Question 3

What alternative performance improvement objective(s) and supporting projects would you suggest?

Question 4

Which of the areas outlined below would you like to see Newry, Mourne and Down District Council make improvements to in the future? (please tick)

Area	
Arts, Culture and Events	
Building Control and Licensing	
Community Services	
Registration Services (Births, Deaths, Marriages & Civil Partnerships)	
Economic Development and Tourism	
Environmental Health	
Leisure and Recreation	
Parks and Open Spaces	
Planning	
Urban and Rural Regeneration	
Waste Collection and Recycling	
Street Cleansing	

Please provide details, in the space provided, concerning the specific areas of the Council that you would wish to see improvements made in.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire. Your feedback is important to us and will help inform the development of the performance improvement objectives 2017-18.

Completed questionnaires, comments or further information on the draft performance improvement plan and objectives should be returned by **19 May 2017** to:

In Writing: Kate Bingham
 Performance Improvement
 Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
 O'Hagan House
 Monaghan Row
 Newry
 Co Down
 BT35 8DJ

Telephone: 0300 013 2233

Email: kate.bingham@nmandd.org

We look forward to hearing from you.

Appendix 2 - Overall approach and timetable to develop and publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18

	Performance Improvement Task	Timetable	Commentary
1	Developing the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18		
1.1	Review progress in delivering the 2016-17 performance improvement objectives.	February/March 2017	The Council will identify progress in delivering the performance improvement objectives outlined in the Performance Improvement Plan 2016-17, for inclusion in the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18.
1.2	Review baseline evidence to identify performance improvement objectives for 2017-18	February 2017	References include: • Community Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down • Community Planning Feedback Report (May 2015) • Community Planning Baseline Evidence Report (August 2015) • DEA Emerging Issues Report (March 2016) • DEA Action Plans (January 2017) • Thematic Action Plan Workshops (Autumn 2016) • Corporate Plan and other key strategies • NI Audit Office – Audit and Assessment Report
1.3	CMT engaged in the development of the draft performance improvement objectives.	21 February 2017	The Council will engage Assistant Directors and their teams in developing the draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18.
1.4	Develop the draft performance improvement objectives, aligned to the seven relevant criteria outlined in the guidance, as well as the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, DEA Action Plans and other key strategies.	February/March 2017	The draft performance improvement objectives will be aligned to the outcomes of the Community Plan, the seven DEA action plans, as well as the Corporate Plan and other key strategies.
1.5	Equality screen the draft performance	March 2017	Draft performance improvement objectives are equality

	improvement objectives.		screened.
1.6	Consider and agree: - The draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18 - The overall approach and proposed timetable for developing and publishing the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18 by 30 June 2017	March / April 2017	To be considered and agreed by: - SMT on 7 March 2017 - Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee on 16 March 2017 - Full Council on 3 April 2017
2	Consultation on the Performance Improvement Plan		
2.1	The proposed 8 week consultation timetable with key stakeholders will consist of the following elements:		
2.2	Electronic survey on the Council website and social media channels	24 March-19 May	Consultation and engagement feedback will be analysed on an ongoing basis, informing the draft performance improvement objectives within the Performance Improvement Plan. The equality screening of the performance improvement objectives will be updated to reflect any amendments.
2.3	Hard copies of the survey made available at public receptions across the Council, including Monaghan Row, Downshire Civic Centre and the Ethnic Minority Support Centre	24 March-19 May	
2.4	Public Advertisements in Local Newspapers	April-May 2017	

2.5	Consultation and engagement on the draft performance improvement objectives 2017-18 with: • Section 75 groups, including Youth Councils, Older People's Forum and Good Relations Fora • Seven DEA Fora, including the public meeting of the Rowallane DEA Forum • Community Planning Partnership and Stakeholder Forum	April–May 2017	
2.6	Analyse feedback from consultation and engagement activity, and propose amendments to the performance improvement objectives where necessary.	May 2017	
2.7	Commence the design of the draft Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18	June 2017	
3	Approval of the Performance Improvement Plan		
3.1	The Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18, with proposed amendments, is considered.	June – July 2017	To be considered by: • SMT on 6 June 2017 • Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee on 15 June 2017 (including a request to publish the Performance Improvement Plan by 30 June 2017) • Full Council on 3 July 2017
4	Publication and Implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan		
4.1	Publish the Performance Improvement Plan, including the agreed performance improvement objectives and supporting	30 June 2017	

	actions and measures, on the Council's website.		
4.2	Circulate electronic/hard copies of the Performance Improvement Plan 2017-18 to consultees and key stakeholders	July 2017	
4.3	Put in place a timetable to monitor the ongoing implementation of performance improvement objectives 2017-18.	30 June 2017	
5	Performance Improvement Audit		
5.1	NI Audit Office to carry out an audit and assessment to ascertain if the Council has fulfilled its statutory duty of performance improvement. This will include: • A forward looking assessment of the Councils likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement • A retrospective assessment of whether the Council has achieved its planned improvements to inform a view regarding the Councils track record of improvement	July - September 2017	Ensure the NI Audit Office receives the necessary evidence and documentation to support the Performance Improvement Audit.
5.2	Council to publish an assessment and comparison of its performance.	30 September 2017	The Council will report on the statutory performance indicators for Planning, Economic Development and Waste Management, identifying trends in performance between 2015-16 and 2016-17.

5.3	The NI Audit Office will issue a report, outlining the findings of the performance improvement audit for the Council.	November 2017	The anticipated timetable is: • Draft report: November 2017 • Final report: 30 November 2017 • Publication of the Council's Annual Improvement Report: February 2018
-----	---	---------------	---

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2017
Subject:	Newry, Mourne and Down Local Development Plan Preparatory Studies Paper 10: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure
Reporting Officer:	Anthony McKay, Chief Planning Officer
Contact Officer:	Andrew Hay, Principal Planning Officer

Decisions required:

Note the content of this report.

1.0 Purpose and Background:

- 1.1 A programme of preparatory work is being undertaken as part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process. Preparatory studies are essential in providing the evidence base for preparing the Local Development Plan (LDP). A reliable and comprehensive evidence base is vital to informing and justifying the 'soundness' of the LDP documents (Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan) and to show how planning policies and proposals help to achieve the social, economic and environmental objectives for the plan area.
- 1.2 The SPR Committee is responsible for the Local Development Plan. All LDP papers are reported to the SPR Committee for noting or decision. All LDP papers will also be presented to the Planning Committee for noting. Depending on the subject matter, a LDP paper will also be presented to any other relevant Council Committee for noting.
- 1.3 'Paper 10: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure' provides members with an overview of matters relating to open space, recreation and leisure and implications for land use in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area,
- 1.4 The paper builds on the existing evidence base and provides information on:
- the nature and benefits of open space;
 - the regional planning context for open space;
 - Government strategies relating to open space and recreation;
 - the role of the LDP in the protection and provision of open space;
 - an overview of the open space and recreational assets within the District;
 - an analysis of outdoor space and children's play provision within the District and future need over the plan period.
- 1.5 Members are asked to note the content of this report. Any comments received will be considered. The paper will be subject to any changes considered necessary in response to any valid comments received at this or any other Committee to which it is presented.

2.0 Key issues:

- 2.1 'Paper 10: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure' informs members about the provision of open space, recreation and leisure within the District and how this will assist the Council in the development of the LDP.

2.2	The paper provides an overview of the policy context and strategies for open space, recreation and leisure and the various public bodies responsible for these areas. It outlines the existing situation, assesses the distribution and accessibility of provision, highlights issues, and indicates future needs for the District.
2.3	The paper assesses the existing open space provision against national recognised standards for playing pitches and children's play areas. Other less formal, passive complementary areas of open space such as woodlands, parks and indoor leisure facilities are also considered in so far as they contribute to the overall provision of open space, recreation and leisure in the District.
2.4	The information gathered and the key findings will be used to inform the preparation of the LDP.
2.5	Data gathered as part of this and other preparatory studies will be used to establish the baseline of the social, economic, and environmental characteristics of the plan area and enable the Council to identify the issues which need to be addressed by the LDP. Furthermore, it will provide a sound basis on which to formulate the plan strategy, policies and proposals within the LDP that will be subject to independent public examination.
3.0	Recommendations:
3.1	Members are requested to note the content of this report.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	N/A
5.0	Equality and good relations implications:
5.1	N/A
6.0	Appendices
	Paper 10: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

**Local Development Plan
Preparatory Studies**

Paper 10: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure

March 2017

Contents	Page Number
PURPOSE AND CONTENT	3
1.0 INTRODUCTION	4
• Definition and explanation of open space	4
• Benefits of Sport in Northern Ireland	5
• Green infrastructure	6
• Multi benefits of outdoor recreation	7
• Sport and recreation in Northern Ireland	7
• Sport and recreation in Newry, Mourne and Down	9
2.0 REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT	
• Programme for Government	10
• Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS)	10
• Strategic Planning Policy Statement	11
-LDP Preparation	12
• Planning Policy Statements	13
• Other Relevant Government Strategies	15
3.0 LOCAL CONTEXT	
• Development Plans	17
• Ards and Down Area Plan 2015	17
• Banbridge/Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015	18
• Master Plans	20
4.0 NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN PLANS AND STRATEGIES	
• Corporate Plan	22
• Community Planning	22
• Play Strategy	22
• Sports Facility Strategy	23
5.0 OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND LEISURE PROVISION IN THE DISTRICT	23
• Active Outdoor Recreation and Open Space provision	23
-Measuring Outdoor Playing space	23
• Future Needs	27
6.0 CHILDREN'S PLAY SPACE PROVISION	
• Children's Play Space Provision	28
-Measuring Children's Play Space Provision	28
• Future Needs	30
7.0 PASSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION & OPEN SPACE	31
• Walking Routes	31
• Cycleways	32
• Parks and Forests	33
• Coast	33
8.0 EXISTING INDOOR RECREATION AND LEISURE	33
• Future Plans	34
9.0 OPEN SPACE WITHIN RESIDENTIAL AREAS	34
10.0 KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION	35
APPENDICES	37-53

Open Space, Recreation and Leisure across Newry, Mourne and Down

Purpose: To provide the Council with an overview of matters relating to open space, recreation and leisure and implications for land use in the Newry, Mourne and Down District.

Content: The paper provides:

- i. The nature and benefits of open space;
- ii. The regional planning policy context for open space;
- iii. Government strategies relating to open space and recreation;
- iv. The role of the local development plan in the protection and provision of open space
- v. An overview of the open space and recreational assets within the District
- vi. An analysis of outdoor space and children's play provision within the District and future need over the plan period.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform members on the provision of open space, recreation and leisure within the Council area and future needs to 2030. It provides an overview of the regional policy context for open space, recreation and leisure and examines initial responses from various public bodies with a responsibility for these topic areas. Consideration of indoor leisure activities is also provided.
- 1.2 The paper assesses the existing open space provision against the Fields in Trust (National Playing Fields Association – NPFA) recommended minimum standard for playing pitches and children's play areas. Other less formal, passive complementary areas of open space in Newry, Mourne and Down District such as woodlands, historic parks, gardens and demesnes and indoor facilities are also considered in so far as they also contribute to the overall provision of areas of open space, recreation and leisure in the District.

Definition and explanation of open space

- 1.3 Open space is defined in Planning Policy Statement 8 (PPS) Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation as:

"all open space of public value, including not just land, but also inland bodies of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation and can also act as a visual amenity."

- 1.4 Open space, sport and outdoor recreation are important components of life. They provide many cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits and contribute positively to physical and mental health and a better quality of life. Open space can enhance the character of residential areas, civic buildings, conservation areas, listed buildings and archaeological sites. It can also help to attract business and tourism and thereby contribute to the process of urban regeneration. The use being made of the countryside for a range of sporting and outdoor recreational activities, particularly where these are associated with farm diversification, can contribute to the process of rural regeneration and help promote natural resource tourism.
- 1.5 Sport is defined as "all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competitions at all levels" (Council of Europe 1992). This paper focuses mainly on outdoor recreation, but it also briefly considers provision of both current and future forms of indoor recreation in the District.

Figure 1 - Benefits of Sport in Northern Ireland

Growing the Economy	In 2010, Sport NI commissioned the Sport Industry Research Centre to reassess the economic contribution of sport. The picture of NI is as follows: • Consumer's expenditure on sport in 2008 was £688m. This represents an increase of 54% over the 2004 figure • Sport and associated industries are estimated to employ in excess of 17,900 people corresponding to 2.3% of total employment in the region • Furthermore, the gross value added of 2.3% is greater than that of a similar UK region, North West England (1.7%) and North East England (2.0%).
Public Health & Well Being	Sport can play a vital role in improving public health and wellbeing. Evidence suggest regular participation in sport and physical activity can: • Contribute to the reduction of illnesses; such as diabetes, some types of cancer, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular disease • Promotes mental well-being; having a positive effect on anxiety, depression, mood and emotion and self-esteem • Help tackle obesity; obesity has become a major public health concern, not only in Northern Ireland, but globally. Rising levels of obesity rates, particularly among children has led to the situation being described as "epidemic".
Community Cohesion & Social Inclusion	In recent years recognition has grown of the 'added value' that sport can bring to communities, promoting social inclusion, contributing to stronger communities and as a key generator of social capital. Sporting activities and events can contribute to the development of stronger social networks and more cohesive communities by providing opportunities for social interaction, which strengthens community involvement, identity and civic pride. When there is an affinity with a team or individual the power of sport makes people feel good and a sense of sharing in the success of others from their country, county, town or community, which can be celebrated collectively.
Improving Northern Ireland's Image	NI is striving to improve its image at home and abroad following decades of civil and political unrest. Government is using a range of initiatives set in the context of a broader vision for a more sustainable, cohesive and prosperous society, which, in turn offers the visitor a world-class experience. Sports events and activity tourism provide numerous opportunities for promoting NI as a flourishing society, proud of its cultural identity. Major sporting events such as the London 2012 Pre Games Training Camps (2011/2012), World Police and Fire Games (2013) and Giro D'Italia Big Start (2014) have all attracted international competitors, spectators, officials and media coverage.

Source: Sport NI Response to Proposed 2015-16 Exchequer Budget Reductions.

Green Infrastructure

- 1.6 Green infrastructure, or blue-green infrastructure, is a phrase used to describe all green and blue spaces in and around our towns and cities. The term allows us to refer to – and consider the collective value of – all of these spaces at once. Component elements of green infrastructure include parks, private gardens, agricultural fields, hedges, trees, woodland, green roofs, green walls, rivers and ponds. The term covers all land containing these features, regardless of its ownership, condition or size.
- 1.7 Green infrastructure incorporates green, blue and yellow space:
 - green space - parks, natural spaces, river banks, village greens etc;
 - blue space - ponds, rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands etc; and
 - yellow space – beaches
- 1.8 In the past, green spaces have often been valued for single uses, such as for sport/recreation, or simply for their aesthetic appeal. The term green infrastructure reflects the fact that green spaces can perform a number of functions, often simultaneously. One site could be providing several functions at once, providing us with multiple benefits. The real benefit of green infrastructure to planning is that it can help deliver other local, regional and national policy objectives, not just those related to green space.
- 1.9 The challenge is ensuring that green infrastructure is capable of providing functions which will meet numerous planning objectives; this requires thorough design, planning and management. Success is reliant on a shared understanding between developers, planners etc. of what green infrastructure is, what it can achieve and how to achieve this.

Figure 2: Multi- benefits of outdoor recreation



Source: Multi Benefits of Outdoor Recreation- Source: Our Great Outdoors, The Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for Northern Ireland, March 2014

Sport and recreation in Northern Ireland

- 1.10 District Councils are obliged to make provision for recreational facilities under the Recreation and Youth Service Order 1986. Other bodies who contribute to the provision of such facilities include the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the Department for Communities (DfC) the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and the Education Authority.
- 1.11 As well as having responsibility for sport and recreation provision, the Council is leading the community planning process for the District, working in partnership with statutory agencies and the community, voluntary and business sectors to plan for and improve services that matter to local people, including sport and recreational facilities.

1.12 The report from the DfC 2015/16 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) provides data in relation to sport participation by the adult population in Northern Ireland. This report illustrates a number of key findings:

- 2015/16, more than half of adults in Northern Ireland (53%) had participated in sport and physical activity within the last 12 months, a similar figure to 2014/15 (55%). A target was set in the strategic document Sport Matters, to halt the decline in sports participation by 2013. This was achieved in 2013 and has been maintained in the following two years.
- In 2015/16 around half of adults (47%) normally participated in sport and physical activity on at least one day a week. This figure was similar to the previous year, 2014/15 (49%).
- More than a fifth of adults (21%) were members of a sports club in 2015/16, which is also similar to the previous year, 23% in 2014/15.
- Over the time period from 2007/08, sport participation by adults living in the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland initially decreased before returning to 46% in 2015/16. Sport participation by adults living in the least deprived areas has remained relatively static over the same time period at around 65%.

Figure 3 Engagement¹ in culture and leisure activities by adults in Northern Ireland, 2014/15-2015/16

Sport	Adults			
	2014/15		2015/16	
	%	Base	%	Base
Sport participation	55	3,348	53	3,286
Normally participates in sport or physical activity at least one day per week ²	49	3,349	47	3,286
Member of a sports club	23	3,349	21	3,286

Source: Continuous Household Survey

¹Data presented relates to participation, attendance and visits in the last 12 months unless otherwise stated.

² Participation at least one day per week excludes those who had walked for recreation only.

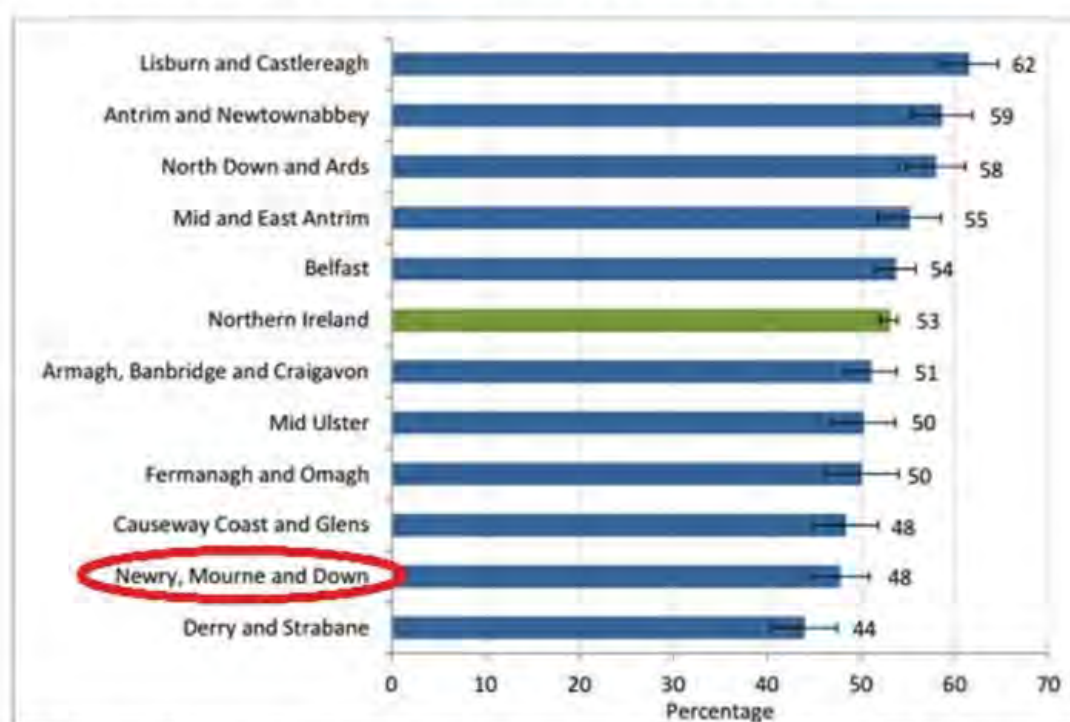
1.13 In the same survey, according to parents, 86% of children had participated in at least one sport within the previous year (2014/15), outside of school or afterschool with 84% participating outside of school and 51 % in afterschool sport.

1.14 The most popular sports to take part in outside of school within the year 2014/15 were 'Swimming or diving' (38%), football (33%) and cycling (26%). These were the top three sports for boys also (36%, 51% and 26%, respectively). For girls the top sports outside of school within the previous year were 'Swimming or diving' (41%), cycling (25%) and 'Keep-fit, Aerobics, Yoga, Dance exercise' (24%).

Sport and recreation in Newry, Mourne and Down

- 1.15 There are a range of parks and children's play facilities across the District. The area is presently well served by a wide range of formal private recreational clubs including soccer, rugby, cricket, Gaelic games and golf. The widespread of school playing fields throughout the area also offers future potential for community use. The Council is also actively involved in community partnerships for the development and operation of recreational sites.
- 1.16 DfC prepared a report for the new Local Government Districts which is based upon a combination of the continuous household survey results for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14. This report illustrates the difference in sport participation rates amongst adults within the previous year. Newry, Mourne and Down is ranked joint 9th with Causeway Coast and Glens when compared to sport participation across the council districts and is also below the Northern Ireland average - see figure 4 below.

Figure 4 - Sport Participation in 2014 by Council Area



The black error bar at the end of each horizontal column represents the range within which we can be 95% certain that the true population proportion lies (i.e. 95% confidence interval).

Source: Engagement in Culture, Arts and Leisure by adults in Northern Ireland's new council areas – Findings from combined Continuous Household Surveys 2011 – 2014 May 2015

2.0 Regional Policy Context

(a) Programme for Government 2011-2015 (PfG)

- 2.1 The Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) published the Programme for Government Building a Better Future on 12th March 2012. Included within the strategy priorities 1-4 set out for the Assembly term 2011 to 2015 are multiple references to improving the health, including mental health, and well-being of the population; unlocking the potential of the leisure sector as an instrument for positive change; and seeking to encourage greater involvement in sporting activities to advance social cohesion and integration – all of which have direct links to the provision and accessibility of open space and recreation.
- 2.2 The PfG specifically identifies the Play and Leisure Action Plan as one of its 'building blocks' to underpin the first strategic priority of creating opportunities, tackling disadvantaged and improving health and well-being.
- 2.3 Last year, the Executive agreed the draft Programme for Government Framework 2016-21. The draft framework contains 14 strategic outcomes which, taken together, set a clear direction of travel and enable continuous improvement on the essential components of societal wellbeing. They touch on every aspect of government, including the attainment of good health and education, economic success and confident and peaceful communities.
- 2.4 The draft PfG states its purpose is 'Improving wellbeing for all - by tackling disadvantage, and driving economic growth'. A key outcome of the draft that is particularly relevant to the topic of open space, recreation and leisure is 'we enjoy long, health, active lives'. Specific targets have not been set at this stage but will follow in the final programme for government following the consultation period that closed in December 2016.

(b) The Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS)

- 2.5 The importance of open space, sport and outdoor recreation to health and the environment is acknowledged in the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2035 (RDS). The following Regional Guidance (RG) in the RDS and Spatial Framework Guidance (SFG) are relevant to this paper:

<i>RG 7 Support urban and rural renaissance</i>	The RDS recognises that regeneration is necessary to create more accessible vibrant city and town centres which offer people more local choice for shopping, social activity and recreation. It aims to ensure that environmental quality in urban areas is improved and maintained, particularly with adequate provision of green infrastructure. Part of the process of urban and rural renaissance requires even greater significance being given to the design and management of the public realm. It is
---	--

	important to promote recreational space within cities, towns and neighbourhoods, and new developments or plans should make provision for adequate green and blue infrastructure. This is important near designated nature-conservation sites as it will help reduce recreational pressures on these sites.
<i>RG 11 Conserve, protect and, where possible, enhance our built heritage and our natural environment</i>	The RDS recognises that built heritage is a key tourism and recreational asset and that it makes a valuable contribution to the environment, economy and society. Regarding built heritage the key policy aim is to identify, protect and conserve the built heritage and maintain the integrity of built heritage assets including historic landscapes. With regard to the natural heritage the key aim is to sustain and enhance biodiversity, protect and encourage green and blue infrastructure within urban areas, and conserve, protect and enhance areas recognised for their landscape quality. This policy aims to identify, protect and manage ecological networks. It states that such networks could also be of amenity value if linked to the green infrastructure provided by walking and cycling routes to heritage and other recreational interest. This policy also considers the establishment of one or more National parks which would conserve and enhance the natural, built and cultural heritage of areas of outstanding landscape value while promoting the social and economic development of the communities they support.
<i>SFG 13 Sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside</i>	This includes establishing the role of multi-functional town centres for business, housing, administration, leisure and cultural facilities for both urban and rural communities.

(c) Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

- 2.6 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) was published on the 28th September 2015. The SPPS reduces 20 separate planning policy statements to one. One of the SPPS's core planning principles includes improving health and well-being. This is a key priority of the Northern Ireland Executive and this is reflected in the Programme for Government 2011-2015 and in the RDS 2035. The draft SPPS contains objectives in respect of open space, recreation and leisure and sets out the considerations that councils may wish to pursue in the preparation of LDPs.

- *Regional Strategic Policy Objectives*

Safeguard existing open space and sites identified for future such provision;
Ensure that areas of open space are provided as an integral part of new residential development and that appropriate arrangements are made for their management and maintenance in perpetuity;
Facilitate appropriate outdoor recreational activities in the countryside;
Ensure that new open space areas and sporting facilities are convenient and accessible for all sections of society, particularly children, the elderly and those with disabilities;
Achieve high standards of siting, design and landscaping for all new open space areas and sporting facilities; and
Ensure that the provision of new open space areas and sporting facilities is in keeping with the principles of environmental conservation and helps sustain and enhance biodiversity.

- *LDP Preparation*

2.7 The SPPS states that in plan making Councils should:

- bring forward an Open Space Strategy that must reflect the aim, objectives and policy approach of the SPPS, tailored to the specific circumstances of the plan area;
- bring forward appropriate local policies and proposals for the area informed by a survey/ assessment of existing open space provision and future needs;
- have a policy presumption against the loss of open space to competing land uses irrespective of its physical condition and appearance;
- bring forward policy to require new residential development of an appropriate scale (generally 25 or more units, or on sites of one hectare or more) to provide adequate and well-designed open space as an integral part of the development;
- locate intensive sports facilities within settlements in order to maximise the use of existing infrastructure. It notes an exception for a sports stadium may be allowed outside of a settlement where clear criteria is established; and
- contain policy for the consideration of outdoor recreation in the countryside, taking account of a range of issues including visual and residential amenity, public safety (including road safety), any impact on nature conservation, landscape character, archaeology or built heritage and accessibility.

2.8 In preparing a LDP Councils should assess the existing provision of open space in the plan area against the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) recommended minimum standard of 2.4 hectares of 'outdoor playing space' per 1000 population (commonly referred to as the '6 acre standard'). This assessment should consider the level of 'outdoor playing space' provision in the plan area, and the distribution and accessibility of that land.

2.9 Zonings for future needs should take into account the following:

- accessibility to and from existing and proposed housing areas;
- the potential for any detrimental impact on biodiversity or on sensitive environmental areas and features;
- the contribution that open space can make to the quality of the environment, sense of place and community life;
- the importance of protecting linear open spaces such as pedestrian and cycle routes, community greenways, former railway lines and river and canal corridors many of which are valuable in linking larger areas of open space and providing important wildlife corridors/ ecological networks;
- promoting and protecting public access to and along the coast;
- making adequate provision of green and blue infrastructure; and identifying and designating areas of open space which perform a strategic function, such as landscape wedges in urban areas.

2.10 Where appropriate, key site requirements for zoned residential land should include guidance on the provision of areas of public open space as an integral part of the development.

2.11 Where residential zonings occur in close proximity to existing or zoned open space, plans will normally provide guidance on the need for linkages between the development and these areas in order to facilitate ease of access

(d) Planning Policy Statements

2.12 The following Planning Policy Statements (PPS's) provide the planning policy context for open space, recreation and leisure. The key policy objectives are noted below.

PPS2 Natural Heritage	To seek to further the conservation, enhancement and restoration of the abundance, quality, diversity and distinctiveness of the regions natural heritage. To further sustainable development by ensuring that biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, economic and environmental development. To assist in meeting international (including European), national and local responsibilities and obligations in the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage. To contribute to rural renewal and urban regeneration by ensuring developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment.
------------------------------	---

	To protect and enhance biodiversity, geodiversity and the environment.
PPS7 Quality Residential Environments	To ensure quality in residential development adequate provision should be made for public and private open space and landscaped areas as an integral part of the development.
PPS8 Open Space, Sport And Outdoor Recreation	To safeguard existing open space and sites identified for future such provision. To ensure that areas of open space are provided as an integral part of new residential development and that appropriate arrangements are made for their management and maintenance in perpetuity. To facilitate appropriate outdoor recreational activities in the countryside. To ensure that new open space areas and sporting facilities area convenient and accessible for all sections of society, particularly children, the elderly and those with disabilities. To achieve high standards of siting, design and landscaping for all new open space areas and sporting facilities. To ensure that the provision of new open space areas and sporting facilities is in keeping with the principles of environmental conservation and helps sustain and enhance biodiversity.
PPS21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside	To manage growth in the countryside to achieve appropriate and sustainable patterns of development that meet the essential needs of a vibrant rural community; To conserve the landscape and natural resources of the rural area and to protect it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development and from the actual or potential effects of pollution; To facilitate development necessary to achieve a sustainable rural economy; including appropriate farm diversification and other economic activity; and To promote high standards in the design, siting and landscaping of development in the countryside.

(e) Other Relevant Government Strategies

- 2.13 The Northern Ireland Government has launched several important policy documents in recent years which promote the delivery of enhanced facilities for open space, sport and recreation. These strategies re-affirm the importance of sport and recreation and are expected to be delivered by a combination of central government departments together with Council and the community/voluntary sectors.

Play and Leisure Policy Statement for Northern Ireland

- 2.14 This document was produced by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in 2009. The aim of this policy framework is to improve existing play and leisure provision for all children and young people from 0 - 18 years. As a result, the Play and Leisure Implementation Plan (2006-2026) was produced in 2011. This specifies high level outcomes with emphasis on the value placed on play, improved play and leisure facilities for all children and young people in order to support their development, enjoyment and growth.

Sport Matters The NI Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009-2019

- 2.15 This strategy was delivered by Sport Northern Ireland working in partnership with the former Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL). It sets out a new shared sporting vision of 'a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport', as well as the key strategic priorities for sport and physical recreation, and informs the direction of future investment – underpinning three areas; Participation, Performance, and Places. It sets out the case for on-going and increased investment in sport and physical recreation to deliver a range of sporting outcomes and support the wider social agenda in areas such as education, health, the economy and the development of communities over the period 2009-2019. It explains how sport in Northern Ireland will be developed over the next ten years and affirms Government commitment to put in place effective structures and mechanisms in support of a vision.

Active Places Research Report 2009 & Bridging the Gap 2014 Update

- 2.16 This report provides an evidence base to inform the strategic development of sports facilities in Northern Ireland. The 2009 report identified unmet demand and shortfalls for sports facilities such as sports halls, swimming pools, tennis courts, athletic facilities and pitches in Northern Ireland. The 2014 update presents facility shortfall tables for Pitches and Sports halls only.

The facility shortfall tables presented in the 2009 Report excluded school sports facilities due to their limited availability for community use. However, in light of Community Use of Schools guidance published by Sport NI and the Department of

Education, it is important to recognise the potential value of school sports facilities in addressing the facility shortfalls throughout Northern Ireland.

Community Use of Schools (January 2014)

- 2.17 This document was produced at the result of collaborative work between the former Department Of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), Sport NI, The Department of Education and other educational and non-educational stakeholders. It provides practical guidance to achieving community use of school sports facilities. There are a range of educational, recreational and sporting facilities which can be used to meet a variety of needs not only for pupils, but also local communities.

DARD - The Rural White Paper Action Plan – June 2012

- 2.18 This action plan aims to identify and address the key challenges facing rural communities. One of the rural visions within this document is for the continuing development of linkages between rural and urban areas so that everyone can enjoy the beauty and uniqueness of rural places and the facilities and services of larger towns and cities. It sets out a number of policy priorities one of which includes: "to safeguard the beauty and fabric of our rural areas and increase opportunities for all to enjoy the benefits of the countryside".

Mountain Bike Strategy for Northern Ireland 2014-2024

- 2.19 This Strategy was prepared by Outdoor Recreation NI in May 2014. The vision of this strategy is to make NI a world class mountain bike destination. It identified Tollymore Forest Park as a potential location for a National Mountain Bike Trail Centre.

Sports Facilities Strategy for Northern Ireland

- 2.20 Sports NI, has been working, in partnership with the District Councils, to develop a Sports Facilities Strategy for Northern Ireland and the 11 District Council Area Reports. The strategy identifies the need for sports facilities of Northern Ireland wide significance, sports facilities that are of cultural importance, high performance training and competition sports facilities and local sport facility needs (i.e District Council areas). District Council Area Reports will flow out of the Strategy and identify the need for local facilities and recommend locations for the development and/or refurbishment of sports facilities. The Council's Sports Facility Strategy is further noted below.

Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2015 - 2020

- 2.21 This plan highlights the importance of making the outdoors accessible to everyone and the opportunities within rural areas and the urban fringes. It highlights that access to green space has been recognised across the world to be very important

for people's health, especially mental wellbeing. It acknowledges that Northern Ireland has extensive natural resources and wonderful landscapes which have the potential to be fully maximised through our great outdoor activities. The vision for the action plan is, *"a culture of dynamic, sustainable outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland"*.

3.0 Local Policy Context

Development Plans

- 3.1 The Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 (ADAP) and the Banbridge/Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP) are the current statutory plans for the District and provide the framework against which to assess development proposals. Newry City and the five main towns within the District also have their own Town Centre Masterplan which were completed by the former Department of Social Development (DSD) in conjunction with the legacy Councils and are concerned with urban regeneration initiatives in each respective town centre. The Council is currently carrying out a review of the action plans identified in these master plans with a view to agreeing a list of priority actions for each plan that could be achieved within the life of the current Council.

Ards and Down Area Plan 2015

- 3.2 The ADAP identifies the various resources and types of open space that are located within the District. It notes that natural resources, such as Strangford Lough and the Mourne Mountains, provide a wealth of opportunities for active outdoor pursuits. It also notes the area contains a variety of informal recreational open space, particularly parkland with Castlewellan and Tollymore Forest Parks being notable examples. In addition it states that informal recreation facilities are associated with natural resources such as rivers, canals, lakes, heritage sites and disused railway tracks with Tyrella Beach and Murlough Nature Reserve being popular examples. Opportunities for cultural recreation are provided at places like Castleward and other National Trust properties and historic monuments.
- 3.3 The plan does not contain any specific policies with regard to open space, sport and recreation. It does however identify existing recreational open spaces and amenity land within the major settlements and relevant villages throughout the plan area. It also identified lands within some urban areas for proposed open space, to meet future demand, where there was a commitment to provide open space by an enabling authority. Areas of open space, whether identified or not by the plan, were to be safeguarded by Policy OS1 in PPS8 as no additional policies were included in the plan.
- 3.4 The plan identified a total of eleven sites for proposed amenity space in the plan area. Six of these were located in Downpatrick, one in Saintfield, two in

Ballynahinch, one in Newcastle and one in Ballykinler. (Further information on the planning history of these sites is included in appendix 1).

- 3.5 Lands ideally suited for amenity, recreation and open space as part of future housing developments were also identified in some larger settlements and criteria for their development was provided as part of the key design considerations for the zoned housing lands.
- 3.6 The ADAP calculated the level of open space provision within the plan area taking account of land and facilities that were firstly in the ownership of the legacy Down District Council and secondly in private ownership.
- 3.7 It used these figures to assess the outdoor open space provision against the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) recommended a minimum standard of 2.4 hectare 'outdoor playing space' per 1000 population. The plan calculated the existing level of provision, and subsequent need, on the provision that was in the Council's ownership.
- 3.8 As shown in figure 5 overleaf it found that the total area of active recreation provision owned by the former Down District Council was 63.05 hectares with 61.1 hectares being comprised of outdoor sports (playing fields) and 1.95 hectares children's playing areas. It therefore concluded that the Down District had a deficit of both outdoor sports space (41.3 hectares) and children's play areas (49.25 hectares) and the deficit could increase (as a result of population growth) over the plan period to 56.37 hectares and 56.78 hectares respectively. This calculation included the total population of the Down District i.e urban and rural while the existing provision only included that of the towns and villages. (The breakdown of the provision across the settlements is detailed in Appendix 3).

Banbridge / Newry & Mourne Area Plan 2015

- 3.9 The Plan area covers a largely rural area which includes much of the Mournes Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (including Slieve Croob), the Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the shores of Carlingford Lough.
- 3.10 BNMAP identifies the natural resources within the plan area, such as Camlough Lough, Slieve Gullion Forest Park, Kilbroney Forest Park, Silent Valley and Newry Canal and Tow Path, that provide numerous opportunities for open space, sports and outdoor recreational activities.
- 3.11 The plan identified major areas of existing open space, sport and outdoor recreation but no additional lands for open space were identified. Existing areas of open space, whether identified by the plan or not, were to be safeguarded under policy OS1 in PPS 8 as the plan did not introduce separate policies.

- 3.12 It notes the Department (former DoE) would reassess open space provision and if a deficit was established the Department would work with the Council to explore the appropriate mechanisms to address this.
- 3.13 The total area of active recreation provision in the Newry and Mourne area identified by the BNMAP (as shown in Figure 5 below) was 110.54 hectares with 98.86 hectares being comprised of outdoor sport provision (primarily playing fields) and 11.68 hectares of children's play areas. The plan calculated this provision to include lands/ facilities located in the City of Newry, towns and villages that were in the legacy Newry and Mourne Council ownership and those in private ownership including GAA, Education facilities, NI Housing Executive and Churches. (The breakdown of the provision across the settlements is detailed in Appendix 3).
- 3.14 The BNMAP concluded that, when compared to the NPFA recommended 2.4 hectare per 1000 population standard there was a deficit of 17.50 hectares outdoor sport and children's play areas in the plan area. This calculation did not include the total population of the plan area as it excluded the rural population.

Figure 5: Outdoor Sports and Children's Play Area Provision identified by ADAP and BNMAP

Development Plan	Outdoor Sports (Playing Fields)	Children's Play Areas	Total
ADAP (Towns & Villages)	61.1*	1.95*	63.05*
BNMAP (City, Towns and Villages)	98.86	11.68	110.54
NMD (City, Towns, Villages)	159.96	13.63	173.59

*ADAP calculated outdoor sports provision based on the legacy Down District Councils ownership. It then calculated a private ownership category of private ownership (34.63ha) that would be more in line with the approach of BNMAP.

Newry Masterplan

3.15 The Masterplan for Newry was published in October 2011. The Masterplan proposes the following in relation to recreation and sporting opportunities;

- Creating a world class waterfront by capitalising on the Clanrye river and the Newry canal that runs through the city centre. This was to include the re-opening of the Newry Canal to boat traffic as part of a national connection between Lough Neagh and Carlingford Lough,
- Development of 'The Newry Super Greenway'- a network of greenways linking the City's neighbourhoods to each other and the city centre,
- Regenerating Newry's primary streets including Hill Street and Abbey Way with public realm upgrades and improving the connections from attractions such as Bagenal's Castle and St Patrick's Cathedral with the rest of the city centre;
- Establishing a new network of city parks to include improving linkages and co-ordinated enhancements to three parks (Heather Park, Kilmorey Park and The Rocks) and the creation of a new, larger public park as part of the redeveloped grounds of former Abbey Grammar School, and;
- Sensitively enhancing Daisy Hill Wood (Local Nature Reserve) for wildlife conservation and public recreation as a vital asset for the City.

Downpatrick Masterplan

3.16 The Downpatrick Masterplan was published in July 2010. In terms of open space the master plan focuses on the Quoile Nature Reserve to the north of the town. This is an important and sensitive area of conservation and recreation. The Masterplan proposes that the Quoile River will play a central role as an amenity for both local residents and visitors to Downpatrick, and as a place to relax, spend time and play. The proposal for a Quoile River Country Park presents the opportunity for encouraging activities along the river such as walking, cycling, fishing and canoeing.

3.17 The master plan also notes that the opportunity exists to enhance links between the Quoile area and the Town Centre. Other areas of amenity open space are located at the Town Park and at The Grove, adjacent to Down Cathedral and the St Patrick's Heritage Centre. The legacy Down District Council proposed to acquire additional land adjacent to Pemberton Park to add to the existing Town Park.

Ballynahinch Masterplan

3.18 The Ballynahinch Masterplan was published in October 2014. It notes that natural resources such as the Ballynahinch river which runs through the centre of the town and the drumlin landscape that surrounds the town offer large areas of openspace within a short distance of the town centre. However, use of these areas is limited. The masterplan therefore proposed a number of initiatives to improve their use including;

- the extension of riverside pathways along the entire length of the river for walking and cycling,
- development of a new street and linear river park,
- creation of drumlin parks as community parks developing a network of new walking and cycling links between them, and;
- creation of a Lough Park with improved recreational facilities, allotments and enhanced network of pathways through the wetland habitat.

South East Coast Masterplan

3.19 The Masterplan for the South East Coast was published in January 2013. A theme of the masterplan is to develop leisure and recreation in the three towns. The proposals included:

3.20 -Newcastle

- Identification of major development opportunity sites including Donard Park for the location of a leisure centre.
- Redevelopment of Castle Islands Park to include a family zone, adventure zones and Eco-zone.
- It also notes the development of the proposed 'Donard Gondola', to provide access to the Mourne for all.

3.21 -Kilkeel

The master plan proposes to create a riverside park and walkway from Town Square to the Harbour providing a high quality park and pedestrian link. This large green space also presents an opportunity to create a new iconic play area. Other proposals included an improved esplanade with play and picnic facilities and improved access points to the beach to encourage more outdoor interaction and activity.

3.22 -Warrenpoint

The master plan seeks to promote and develop the town's reputation as a hub for water sports and activities, utilising its location on Carlingford Lough. Proposals include the extension of the promenade along Rostrevor Road and the development of a new outdoor multi-activity area at Conallon Park with potential for an indoor facility alongside it. The plan also seeks to revitalise the public spaces within the town centre, creating event space and making it more attractive, people friendly and less car dominated.

4.0 Newry, Mourne and Down Plans and Strategies

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan

- 4.1 The Council's mission as detailed in the Corporate Plan 2015-19 is to lead and serve a District that is prosperous, healthy and sustainable.
- 4.2 The Council has identified eight strategic objectives that it aims to have achieved by 2019. One of these is that it will have 'Supported improved health and well-being outcomes' by participating in improving quality of life and reducing health inequalities, primarily through programmes, services and access to open spaces.

Community Planning

- 4.3 Community Planning came into operation on 1st April 2015 as part of the full implementation of local government reform. The new duty of community planning requires councils as the lead partner to be responsible for making arrangements for community planning in their areas and it requires statutory bodies to participate in the process. The Council, statutory bodies and local communities will develop and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of the area, promoting community cohesion and improving the quality of life of its citizens.
- 4.4 The Community Plan is to be the overarching strategic plan for integrated planning and delivery of services in Newry, Mourne and Down. It provides a framework for the other strategies and plans the Council will put in place to contribute towards the outcomes in the community plan and it is based on a detailed analysis of future risks and opportunities for Newry, Mourne and Down.
- 4.5 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's draft Community Plan (Nov 2016) "Living Well Together" aims to provide a framework for collaborative working in order to support positive change for communities. The vision of the Community Plan is that:

"Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs"

District Council Play Strategy

- 4.6 The Council finalised its Play Strategy for the District in February 2017. It is a five year strategy that will act as the guidance document to develop if needed or create a more efficient, effective play provision within the District. The strategy also gives guidance to the Council over the next five years where the Council is required to continue to monitor policy areas and develop those highlighted in areas which fall short of the Play Guidance detail.

District Council Sports Facility Strategy

- 4.7 The Council finalised its Sports Facility Strategy for the District in February 2017. It is a 10 year strategy that provides a framework for the future prioritisation, development and provision of sports facilities at local level, to meet identified community need. The Strategy reflects the wider – NI 10 Year Plan for the provision of Strategic Sports Facility Strategy for Northern Ireland (2016), which focuses on the need for future provision that are of cultural significance, as well as those that provide for high performance training and competition. These facilities contribute to the vision and targets set out within strategic documents such as the Programme for Government (2011-2021), Building a Better Future (2011-15) and Sport Matters, the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation (2009-19). At local level, the identification of need for sports facility provision is also aligned to the Councils Corporate Plan 2015-2019 and the new Community planning process.

5.0 Open Space, Recreation and Leisure Provision in the District

- 5.1 The District benefits from a wide range of existing open space and recreation assets which are integral to our heritage, identity and economy. A variety of open spaces in public and private ownership also contribute to the quality of life for those who live within and visit the District. These include formal parks and gardens, sports and recreation grounds, children's playgrounds, and less formal open spaces.

5.2 Active Outdoor Recreation & Open Space Provision

-Measuring Outdoor Playing space

Both PPS8 and the SPPS make reference to assessing existing open space provision against the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) which operates under the name Fields in Trust. It recommends a minimum standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population for 'outdoor playing space'. This is commonly referred to as the Six Acre Standard (SAS) and is comprised of 1.6 hectares (4 acres) of outdoor sport and 0.8 hectares (2 acres) of children's play area.

- 5.3 The SAS was established as a guide to ensure that sufficient land is set aside in appropriate locations to enable the population to participate in sports, outdoor play, games and other physical recreation. It is noted that the SAS is not a legislative requirement, but is commonly used as a benchmark in spatial planning throughout the United Kingdom. It should be noted however, that the SAS mainly highlights the quantitative aspects of provision and does not consider aspects such as quality or demand.
- 5.4 Governments throughout the UK have called for more clearly defined and adopted policies for planning standards for open space, sport and recreation including

outdoor facilities for sport and play. They called for local determination and adoption of standards relating to quantity, quality and accessibility. That said, the nature of the NPFA's own recommendations have been changed to recognise this and are still recognised as a useful tool for planning authorities to refer to, use or adopt. The Fields in Trust 2015 guidance 'Beyond the six acre standard' retains the same headline rates of provision but draws out new recommendations for accessibility, the application of standards and the minimum dimensions of formal outdoor space. The standards also no longer differentiate between urban and rural areas.

5.5 Outdoor Playing space is made up of two components:

-The first is land provided for outdoor sport, principally for adults and youths. This refers to all playing pitches and other outdoor recreational sports grounds such as bowling greens and tennis courts which are available for use by the public. It also includes private sports facilities which serve the recreational needs of their members or the public.

-The second is play space for children which consists of Casual Play areas and Equipped Playgrounds that can be complemented by other facilities including multi-use games areas (MUGAs) and skateboard parks etc.

5.6 The NPFA standard is a useful way to measure formal outdoor playing space but it does not take into account indoor sport and recreation facilities or other outdoor areas including Parks and Country Parks, General Amenity Areas such as riverside walks or Private Playing Fields including stadiums or pitches that are not available for general public use that can all contribute to recreation provision.

5.7 The figure 6 below shows the Fields in Trust recommended benchmark guidelines for formal outdoor space.

Figure 6: Fields in Trust recommended benchmark guidelines- formal outdoor space

Open Space Typology	Quantity Guideline (hectares per 1000 population)	Walking Guideline (walking distance: metres from dwellings)
Playing Pitches	1.20	1200m
All Outdoor Sports	1.60	1200m
Equipped/ designated play areas	0.25	LAPs - 100m LEAPs - 400m NEAPs - 1000m
Other Outdoor provision (NUGAs and skateboard parks)	0.30	700m

Source: 'Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard' England, Oct 2015.

- 5.8 The Sport NI Report 'Active Places- Bridging the Gap' analysed the adequacy of existing sports facility provision in Northern Ireland. It carried out an audit of the current stock of sports facilities as well as information relating to accessibility, universal access and condition.
- 5.9 Sport NI completed a 2014 update of this report quantifying all pitches in the 11 Local Government Districts. Using the SAS baseline it assessed the need for pitches based on 3 acres per 1000 population (approx. 1.2hectare). It produced two tables:
- Playing Pitches Including Educational Synthetic but Excluding Grass (figure 7 overleaf)
 - Playing Pitches Including educational Synthetic and including Grass (figure 8 overleaf)
- 5.10 While the SAS recommends the value of a synthetic pitch to be twice that of a grass pitch Sport NI recommended the value to be four times that of a grass pitch due to the additional usage a synthetic pitch can withstand.

Figure 7: 2014 Quantity of playing pitches in District Councils Areas (including Education Synthetic pitches but excluding grass pitches).

District Council	2011 Population Projection	Acres Recommended by SAS	Existing Provision			Shortfalls		
			Grass	Synthetic		SNI Standard		
			Total Grass Acres	Existing Acres	SNI by 4	Total Acres SNI	Perceived Acres Shortfall	Pitches Required
Ards/North Down	155,882	468	141	17	69	209	258	103
Lisburn/ Castlereagh	178,544	535.632	168.97	19.03	76.12	245.09	290.54	116
Antrim/Newtownabbey	132,389	397.167	121.05	15.44	61.76	182.81	214.36	86
Mid Antrim	132,378	397.134	162.1	10.83	43.32	205.42	191.71	77
Derry/Strabane	150,592	451.776	206.22	11.41	45.64	251.86	199.92	80
Belfast	263,313	789.939	377.41	49.07	196.3	573.69	216.25	86
Armagh/Bann	190,559	571.677	331.79	23.38	93.52	425.31	146.37	59
Causeway Coast	140,436	421.308	316.46	14.6	58.4	374.86	46.448	19
Newry/Down	164,514	493.542	370.5	15.15	60.6	431.1	62.442	25
Fermanagh/Omagh	112,400	337.2	260.36	6.61	26.44	286.8	50.4	20
Mid Ulster	129,915	389.745	316.93	21.97	87.88	404.81	15.07	6
Totals	1,750,922	5253.12	2772.79	204.49	818.98	3590.75	1661.37	665

Source: Sports NI – Update of the Active Places Research Report. *Average pitch size is 2.5 acres

- 5.11 From this table it can be seen that the District was considered to have an under provision of 25 pitches.
- 5.12 Figure 7 (above) was completed based on 2011 population projections which show Newry, Mourne and Down to have a population of 164514. However, NISRA has since released NI 2011 Census figures (March 2015) which shows the actual population to have been 171533. Using this figure the provision of playing pitches can now be calculated more accurately against the NPFA standard as set out overleaf.

Population Amended to actual 2011(2011 Census) = 171533

Acres recommended by SAS = $(171533 \div 1000) \times 3$ acres = 514.60

Acres existing (SNI) = 431.1

Required Acres = 514.60- 431.1 = 83.5

Required Pitches = $83.5 \div 2.5$ (average pitch size) =33.4 = **33 pitches required**

- 5.13 This shows that the District has a shortfall of 33 pitches when calculated to exclude education grass pitches.

Figure 8: 2014 Quantity of playing pitches in District Council Areas (including education synthetic pitches and including education grass pitches).

			Existing Provision			Shortfalls		
			Grass	Synthetic			SNI Standard	
District Council	2011 Population Projection	Acres Recommended by SAS	Total Grass Acres	Existing Acres	SNI by 4	Total Acres SNI	Perceived Acres Shortfall	Pitches Required
Ards/North Down	155,882	468	180	17	69	249	219	88
Lisburn/ Castlereagh	178,544	535.632	241.57	19.03	76.12	317.69	217.94	87
Antrim/Newtownabbey	132,283	397.167	214.25	15.44	61.76	276.01	121.16	48
Mid Antrim	132,378	397.134	257.79	10.83	43.32	301.11	96.024	38
Derry/Strabane	150,592	451.776	293.51	11.41	45.64	339.15	112.63	45
Belfast	263,313	789.939	520.21	49.07	196.3	716.49	73.449	29
Armagh/Bann	190,559	571.677	460.27	23.38	93.52	553.79	17.887	7
Causeway Coast	140,436	421.308	498.64	14.6	58.4	557.04	-135.7	-54
Newry/Down	164,514	493.542	546.55	15.15	60.6	607.15	-113.6	-45
Fermanagh/Omagh	112,400	337.2	352.45	6.61	26.44	378.89	-41.69	-17
Mid Ulster	129,915	389.745	456.19	21.97	87.88	544.07	-154.3	-62
Totals	1,750,816	5253.12	4021.43	204.49	818.98	4840.39	412.8	164

Source: Sports NI – 2014 update of the Active Places Research Report

*Average pitch size is 2.5 acres

- 5.14 From this table (figure 8 above) it can be seen that the District was considered to have a surplus of 45 pitches.
- 5.15 Again this was calculated on a projected 2011 population of 164514. The calculation overleaf shows the provision of playing pitches to include education synthetic and grass pitches for the actual 2011 population of 171533.

Population Amended to Actual 2011 (2011 Census) = **171533**

Acres recommended by SAS = $(171533 \div 1000) \times 3$ acres = 514.60

Acres existing (SNI) = 607.15

Required Acres = $514.60 - 607.15 = -92.55$

Required Pitches = $-92.55 \div 2.5$ (average pitch size) = $-37.02 = 37$ surplus pitches

5.16 Future Needs

An assessment of the future needs of the District over the 15 year plan period can be calculated. Assuming the population of Newry, Mourne and Down District grows to 194994 in 2030 (NISRA, May 2016) and using Sport NI's methodology the future need of the District can be calculated as shown below:

5.17 **Excluding education grass pitches:**

Projected population 2030 (NISRA May 2016) = **194994**

Acres recommended by SAS = $(194994 \div 1000) \times 3$ acres = 584.98

Acres existing (SNI) = 431.1

Required Acres = $584.98 - 431.1 = 153.88$

Required pitches = $153.99 \div 2.5$ (average pitch size) = $61.55 = 62$ pitch shortfall

5.18 **Including education grass pitches:**

Projected population 2030 (NISRA May 2016) = **194994**

Acres recommended by SAS = $(194994 \div 1000) \times 3$ acres = 584.98

Acres existing (SNI) = 607.15

Required Acres = $584.98 - 607.15 = -22.17$

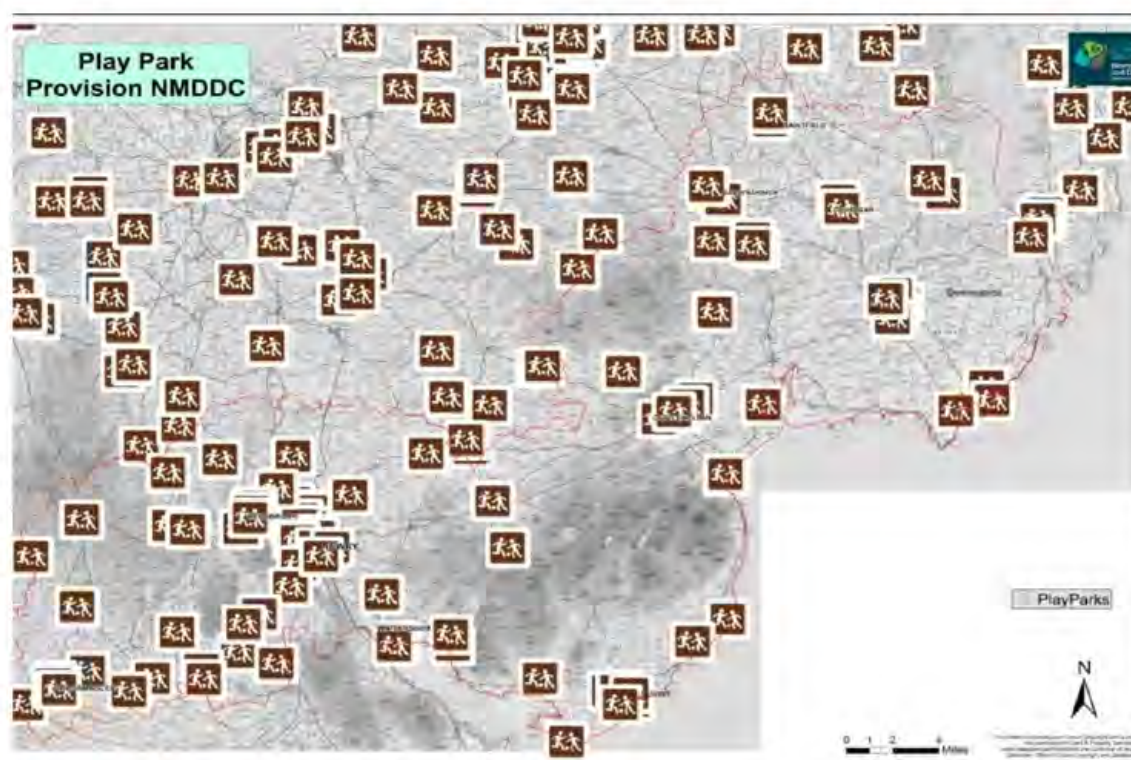
Required Pitches = $-22.17 \div 2.5 = -8.87 = 8$ surplus pitches

5.19 Playing pitches are noted in the NPFA standard as providing for 1.2 hectare of the 1.6 hectare required for outdoor sport. The remainder would comprise of uses such as bowling greens and tennis courts. The Council's Sports Strategy identified 12 outdoor bowls club sites and 7 tennis court sites within the District.

6.0 Children's Play Space Provision

- 6.1 NPFA/ Fields in Trust's 'Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play' sets out a standard of 0.8ha per population of Children's Play Space with a minimum standard of 0.6ha. As shown previously (in Figure 6) the 2015 guidance 'Beyond the Six Acre Standard' provides a benchmark of 0.25ha per 1000 population for equipped play areas. There are a number of outdoor play areas located throughout the District. These are primarily located within the urban areas with the City of Newry, all the towns and all but two of the villages in the district (Attical and Mayobridge) benefiting from a fixed play area. In addition some small settlements also benefit from equipped children's play areas (see appendix 5 for further detail). The map below (figure 9) provides information on the geographical distribution of play parks throughout the District that are provided and maintained by the Council. It demonstrates that most of the District's settlements have some form of play park within or near to them.

Figure 9: Map showing the geographical distribution of play parks in the District



Source: NMD Council Sports Facility Strategy

- Measuring Children's Play Space Provision

- 6.2 Using the Fields in Trust's recommendation of 0.25ha per 1000 population for equipped/ designated play area provision the required amount of play space can be calculated as shown overleaf:

Population 2011 (2011 Census) = **171533**

Hectares recommended by SAS= $(171533 \div 1000) \times 0.25$ hectares = 42.88 ha

Existing provision (identified in ADAP and BNMAP) = 13.63 ha

Required Play Space= $137.22 - 13.63 = 29.25$ ha

This indicates a deficit of 29.25ha of children's outdoor play space.

6.3 During the LDP process children's play space provision will be assessed in two tiers: the overall quantum and the spatial distribution. Relative to each other the spatial distribution is seen as more important as it relates to access provision within the various settlements i.e. in relation to children's homes.

6.4 NPFA/ Fields in Trust define a three tier hierarchy of play facilities:

- LAP - These are unsupervised small open spaces specifically designed for young people for play activities close to where they live. Although without play equipment, LAP's have characteristics that make the area conducive to children's play. Such characteristics include ease of access, a relatively level site, informal surveillance and modest provision of landscaping so that play is not inhibited. As illustrated above, the FIT consider that LAP's should be within 1 minute walking time from home.
- LEAP - These are unsupervised play areas that are equipped for children of early school age. While sharing similar characteristics to LAP's, LEAP's feature a range of different types of play equipment. The FIT consider these should be located within 5 minutes walking time of home.
- NEAP - These are also unsupervised but they are intended to serve a substantial residential area. While sharing similar characteristics to LEAP's, NEAP's feature a significant range of different types of play equipment. It is equipped mainly for older children but also having opportunities for play for younger children. The FIT recommend that these should be located within 15 minutes walking time of home.

6.5 It also recommends different travel times and distances depending on the nature of the facilities as detailed in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10: Recommended Walking Times to Children's Playing Space

Children's Playing Space	Walking Time	Pedestrian Route	Straight Line Distance
LAP	1 minute	100 metres	60 metres
LEAP	5 minutes	400 metres	240 metres
NEAP	15 minutes	1000 metres	600 metres

Source: NPFA 2008

- 6.6 Figure 11 below shows the geographical distribution of LEAPs and NEAPs within the District. There are currently 107 fixed play areas within the District comprising of 106 LEAPs and 1 NEAP located at Slieve Gullion.
- 6.7 While sharing similar characteristics to LEAP's, NEAP's are intended to serve a substantial residential area. They feature a significant range of different types of play equipment mainly for older children but also having opportunities for play for younger children. The FIT recommend that these should be located within 15 minutes walking time of home.

Figure 11: Map showing the spatial distribution of LEAPs and NEAP in the District



Source: NMD Councils Sports Facility Strategy

Future Needs

- 6.8 Again using NISRA population projections it is possible to assess the future needs of the District over the 15 year plan period. Assuming the population grows to 194994 in 2030 the NPFA standard can be applied as shown below:

Projected 2030 population= 194994

Hectares recommended by SAS= $(194994 \div 1000) \times 0.25$ hectares = 48.75 ha

Existing Provision (identified by ADAP and BNMAP) = 13.63 ha

Required Play Space= 48.75-13.63 = 35.12ha required

- 6.9 This is an approximation based on the total projected population for the District. As noted in the previous preparatory paper on Population and Growth (paper 2) almost 40% of the District's population live in rural areas. The dispersed rural nature of the population has implications for the provision of fixed play areas as there may not be an established need and it is not always a viable option.
- 6.10 The Council's Play Strategy outlined the methodology used for identifying need throughout the District. Using the benchmark of 150 children or young people for urban (100 for rural areas) it identified a number of areas where there was a gap in provision- Mayobridge, Ballymartin, Kilmore, Kilclief, Megennis Villas (Newry) and Bannamaghery Villas (Saintfield). In addition it also identified low value play areas that require upgrading, removal or site transformation.
- 6.11 The LDP process will include the completion of survey work to gather further information on the existing level of open space provision within the District including Casual Play Area provision that contributes to the NPFA standard.

7.0 Passive Outdoor Recreation & Open Space

- 7.1 In addition to playing pitches and children's play areas there are many opportunities for outdoor recreation that do not contribute to the NPFAs formal outdoor sports standard provision but still provide valuable opportunities for outdoor activity and recreation. The District is renowned for its wealth of opportunities for outdoor recreation. In fact one of the objectives of the Council's 'Economic Regeneration and Investment Strategy 2015-2020' is to become NI's premier outdoor/ adventure destination. The section below provides further information on some of the informal open spaces within the District.

Walking Routes

- 7.2 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PROWs) in District. Public Rights of Way are created through the 'Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983. Under this order Councils have a duty 'to assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment any public right of way, and compile and preserve maps and other records of public rights of way in their District'. (Details of the PROWs are included in appendix 6).
- 7.3 The Ulster Way is a 625mile (1000km) circular walking route that encircles the six counties of Northern Ireland. Within the District the Ulster Way comprises of five sections:
- The Lecale Way (Strangford to Newcastle) 34 miles (55km)
 - Mourne Way (Newcastle to Rostrevor) 26 miles (42km)
 - Rostrevor to Newry 10 miles (16km)
 - Ring of Gullion Way (Newry to Carnbane) 37 miles (59km) and;
 - Newry Canal Way (Carnbane to Portadown) 17.5 miles (28km)

These routes provide important linkages to other town, villages and areas of open space and should be identified and protected in the LDP.

Cycle Ways

-National Cycle Network

- 7.4 The National Cycle Network is a comprehensive network of safe and attractive cycling routes throughout the UK, developed by the charity Sustrans. In Northern Ireland, the Network extends to more than 800 miles, mostly on quiet country roads and includes 106 miles of traffic free paths.

Figure 12: Map showing the National Cycle Network



Source: CycleNI Website

- 7.5 There are three national cycle network routes that run through the District. The Regional Route (No. 20) runs along the shore of Strangford Lough from Comber to Downpatrick. The National Route 99 runs along the southern shores of Strangford Lough to Newcastle while the National Route 9 follows the Newry Canal Towpath from Portadown to Newry and then veers off towards Bessbrook and Camlough finishing close to Slieve Gullion Courtyard Complex.
- 7.6 In addition CycleNI has identified over twenty cycle routes in the District ranging from 0-60 miles in length. The District is also a popular Mountain Bike destination with two of NI's three National Mountain Bike Trails in Rostrevor and Castlewellan.

(Rostrevor won multiple Mountain Bike NI Awards in 2016). There is also a regional trail in Castle Ward and a local facility in Tollymore.

Parks and Forests

- 7.7 There are numerous country parks, forests, parks and gardens throughout the District that are owned by public bodies, including the Council, which offer valuable open space and recreation opportunities for activities such as walking, hiking, running, cycling and mountain biking. (Details of these areas and other assets are included in Appendices 7 & 8).
- 7.8 Evidence of the quality of some of the Districts open space assets is demonstrated with the various awards they have received. For example Slieve Gullion Forest Park was awarded the Green Flag Award. This is a prestigious award setting an international benchmark standard for the management of parks and green spaces. A Green Flag is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent facilities.

Coast

- 7.9 The District has 100miles of coastline and is home to Strangford Lough, Carlingford Lough, a number of beaches and inland waterways including canals, rivers and lakes that all offer water-based activity opportunities including canoeing, kayaking, diving, bird watching, fishing, swimming, boating, yachting, jet skiing, pier jumping, banana boating and wet bouldering.

(Appendix 8 provides further information on the outdoor recreation provision in the District).

8.0 Existing Indoor Recreation and Leisure

- 8.1 Outdoor recreation and leisure facilities are supplemented by indoor facilities. The Council provides a significant number of indoor leisure facilities in the District. It is currently constructing replacement Leisure Centres in Newry and Downpatrick. Both of these centres will include a swimming pool and will be in addition to existing swimming pool facilities in the Kilkeel Leisure Centre. Each of the existing, and proposed, centres provide a number of other facilities including sauna, steam room, sports hall, activities hall, squash courts and fitness suite.
- 8.2 In addition to the leisure centres the Council also provides a number of indoor leisure and community centres throughout the District that provide a number of facilities including fitness suites, sports/ multi-purpose halls and meeting rooms.
- 8.3 The facilities provided by the Council are supplemented by those provided by some schools, GAA clubs, Churches and private enterprises such as fitness suites, including private gyms and hotels.

8.4 The Council's Sports Strategy identified a number of facilities in the District that were considered to be accessible to the community. These included 18 boxing clubs, 13 sports hall sites, 3 squash court facilities and 18 fitness gyms with over 20 fitness stations.

8.5 The District also benefits from a variety of other indoor leisure and recreation facilities including museums, art galleries, children's indoor play centres and entertainment venues including restaurants, pubs, nightclubs, cinemas, bingo halls and amusements arcades located primarily in the larger settlements across the District.

8.6 -Future Plans

The vision of the Council's Sports Facility Strategy is the 'Development of an evidence based assessment of facility need, which will inform and prioritise future investment in and development of, a network of high quality sports facilities, addressing the needs for increased community participation' in the District.

8.7 The Council in its Sports Strategy identified gaps in the District's sports provision and noted it has committed to providing:

- 36 badminton court sports hall spaces which will meet the projected need until 2037
- additional water space will be required by 2037 (approximately 212sqm)
- an all-weather pitch at Saintfield to replace the out-dated shale hockey pitch
- a tennis bubble to provide all year round tennis at Newry and Newcastle Tennis Clubs
- each DEA with a sports hub over time

It also identified:

- the need for an athletic facility in and around Downpatrick/ Newcastle
- that yachting and wet sports facilities could be enhanced particularly at Annalong, Newcastle and Dundrum.
- that use of the Newry Canal and disused quarries could also be improved.

9.0 Open Space within Residential Areas

9.1 This includes formal and informal play areas for children. While facilities for adults and youths may be located within a reasonable distance of housing areas it is imperative that children's play areas are immediately adjacent to or within such areas. PPS 8 Open Space, Sport & Outdoor Recreation, Policy OS 2 states that new residential developments for 25 units or more, or on site of one hectare or more,

will only be permitted where public open space is provided as an integral part of the development. There are some exceptions to this requirement e.g apartment developments or specialized housing where a reasonable level of private communal open space is provided. Otherwise, where public open space is required, the precise amount, location, type and design of such provision, will be negotiated with applicants having regard to the following:

- A normal expectation will be at least 10% of the total site area;
- For residential development of 300 units or more, or for development sites of 15 hectares or more, a normal expectation will be around 15% of the total site area; and
- Provision at a rate less than 10% of the total site area may be acceptable where the residential development is located within a town or city centre; is close to and would benefit from ease of access to areas of existing public open space; provides accommodation for special groups; or incorporates the 'Home Zone' concept.

9.2 For residential developments of 100 units or more, or development sites of 5 hectares or more, an equipped children's play area will be required as an integral part of the development.

10.0 Key Findings and Conclusion

10.1 The purpose of this paper has been to provide an overview of open space provision within the District incorporating pitch provision and children's play space provision. This paper has assessed the future needs of the Council area over the plan period to 2030. The distribution and accessibility of such provision has also been assessed at a general level.

- Open Space and Recreation is an important part of the Councils vision;
- Importance of recreation and blue and green infrastructure are recognised in the RDS;
- The SPPS sets out a number of strategic objections and policy directions that the LDP must address in relation to open space, sport and outdoor recreation;
- Application of the NPFA standards, as required by the SPPS, demonstrates that at this point, when excluding education grass, the District would require 33 additional playing pitches however if education grass was included it would in fact have a surplus of 45 pitches;
- In terms of future need over the plan period when excluding education grass 62 additional pitches would be required, however when including education grass there would be a surplus of 8 pitches over the period up to 2030;
- Outdoor space in terms of children's play provision is focused in the urban areas with the City of Newry, all the towns and all but two of the villages (Attical and

Mayobridge) benefiting from a fixed children's play area(s). In addition some small settlements also have a fixed children's play area. The Council's play strategy identified a gap in provision in Mayobridge, Ballymartin, Kilmore, Kilclief, Megennis Villas (Newry) and Bannamaghery Villas (Saintfield).

- The District benefits from numerous informal and passive recreation facilities which are well distributed throughout the plan area, in both urban areas and the countryside. These are not included in the outdoor playing space calculations but do provide invaluable recreational spaces;
 - The District also benefits from indoor recreational and leisure facilities, many of which are provided by the Council, that are primarily located within the larger settlements.
 - Further consideration of the quantum and distribution of children's play provision will be necessary following survey work to fully ascertain the existing provision in the District.
- 10.2 These key findings will be used to inform the preparation of the LDP. The LDP will also take account of the Council's Play Strategy, Sports Facility Strategy and draft Community Plan.
- 10.3 This paper has been based on a desk top exercise. In developing this baseline evidence further work will be required including detailed survey work and analysis of open space, sport and recreation facilities within the District. Consultation with relevant bodies such as the Education Authority and NI Housing Executive who own or control significant quantities of open space will also be carried out.
- 10.4 Taking into account the policy approach of the SPPS, it is suggested that key actions of the local development plan at strategy level may include the following:
- (i) provide policy for the protection and safeguarding for public open space;
 - (ii) the needs identified are taken account when formulating both the aims and objectives of the plan and future policy.
 - (iii) provide adequate and well-designed open space in new housing developments as an integral part of the development;
 - (iv) facilitate where possible large scale leisure proposals on opportunity sites within or near town centres and smaller scale proposal elsewhere within settlement limits;
 - (v) protect environmental open spaces for example parks, gardens and linear open space such as pedestrian and cycle routes/walkways and river corridors that have open space value.

Appendix 1 – Planning Histories for sites identified in ADAP as proposed amenity space.

Downpatrick

Lands at Pemberton Park	No relevant history
Lands at Sampson's Stone	No relevant history
Land within The Meadows Development	R/2006/1045/O Housing development Approved 27/09/2012
	R/2006/0424/RM 96 dwellings Approved 16/5/2007
Lands to the North of Ballyhornan Road	No relevant history
Lands East of Rathkeltair Road and North of Ardenlee Gardens	R/2012/0513/F 16 Houses Approval 01/07/2014
Lands at the junction of Ballyhornan and Struell Wells Road	No relevant history

Ballynahinch

Windmill Hill	R/2001/1018/F Construction of paths, pedestrian access at Windmill Avenue, a random stone wall and a ramp and steps at Windmill Lane for access to park Approval 11/11/2004.
Adjacent to Ballynahinch River	No relevant history

Newcastle

Adjacent to Ashleigh House	R/2000/0537/O & R/2002/0351/RM Phase 1 Housing. Approved 16/1/2001 and 6/9/2004 respectively.
	R/2003/1509/RM Phase 2 Housing. Approved 19/1/2005.
	R/2006/0390/F Phase 3 Housing. Approved 9/4/2010.

Ballykinler

Marian Park	R/2013/0426/F Playground Approval 14/11/2013.
-------------	---

Saintfield

Town Hill	No relevant history
-----------	---------------------

Appendix 2 – Sport Facilities in Newry, Mourne and Down

An Riocht GAC	Club
Ardglass GAC	Club
Atticall GAC	Club
Ballyholland Harps GAC	Club
Ballykinlar GAC	Club
Ballymartin GAC	Club
Ballynahinch United	Club
Castlewellan GAC	Club
Bright GAC	Club
Bryansford GAC	Club
Camloch Craobh Rua Hurling Club	Club
Camlough Rovers FC	Club
Carrickcruppin GAA	Club
Castlewellan GAC	Club
Clonduff GAC	Club
Craobh Rua Camlocha Hurling Field	Club
Crossmaglen Rangers GFC	Club
Cullaville GAC	Club
Dorsey Emmetts GAC	Club
Drumaness GFC	Club
Drumgath GAC	Club
Dundrum GFC	Club
Kilclief Ben Dearg GAC	Club
Loughlinisland GAC	Club
Mayobridge GAC	Club
Mullaghbawn Cuchullains GAC	Club
Newry Rugby Football Club	Club
Peadar O'Doirnin Park	Club
Saval GAA	Club
Shamrocks GAA	Club
Shane O'Neills GAA	Club
Showgrounds Newry	Club
Silverbridge Harps GFC	Club
St Brigid's Amateur Boxing Club	Club
St Bronagh's GAA	Club
St John's GAC Drumnaquoile	Club
St Killian's GFC	Club
St Malachys GFC Youth Club	Club
St Mary's GFC Burren	Club
St Michael's GFC Newtownhamilton	Club
St Moninna's GAC	Club
St Patrick's GAC Cullyhanna	Club
St Patrick's GAC Dromintee	Club
St Patrick's GAC Saul	Club
Teconnaught GAC	Club
Warrenpoint GAC	Club
Wolfe Tones GAC Killyleagh	Club
Castlewellan Football Club	Club

Glenn GAC	Club
Ballynahinch Rugby Club	Club
Cloughreagh Community Centre	Community
Longstone Community Hall	Community
Annsborough Playing Fields	District Council
Carginagh Road Playing Fields	District Council
Churchill Park	District Council
Crossmaglen Playing Fields	District Council
Derrylecka Playing Fields	District Council
Donard Park	District Council
Down Leisure Centre	District Council
Downpatrick Road Football Pitch	District Council
Drumlane Football Pitch	District Council
Drumaness Mills Football Club	District Council
Dublin Road Playing Fields	District Council
Dundrum Playing Fields	District Council
High Street Soccer Pitch	District Council
Kilbroney Park	District Council
Kilkeel Sports Centre and Macauley Park	District Council
Killyleagh Football Club	District Council
Kilmore Playing Fields	District Council
Langley Road Playing Fields	District Council
Marian Park Ballykinlar	District Council
Meadow Football Pitch	District Council
Millburn Park	District Council
Milltown Playing Fields	District Council
Mourne Esplanade Football Pitch	District Council
Newry Swimming Pool	District Council
Norman Brown Park	District Council
Orior Park	District Council
Owen Roe Park	District Council
Robert Adams Park	District Council
Russell Gaelic Union	District Council
Strangford Playing Fields	District Council
Abbey Christian Brothers Grammar School	Education
Anamar Primary School	Education
Annalong Primary School	Education
Assumption Grammar School	Education
Castlewellan Primary School	Education
De La Salle Secondary School	Education
Down High School	Education
Downpatrick Primary School	Education
Downshire Primary School	Education
High School Ballynahinch	Education
Holy Family Primary School Downpatrick	Education
Kilkeel High School	Education
Killowen Primary School Newry	Education
Newtownhamilton High School	Education
Sacred Heart Grammar School	Education
Shimna Integrated College	Education
St Colman's College	Education
St Colman's High School Ballynahinch	Education
St Colman's Primary School Saval	Education

St Colmcilles High School	Education
St Columbans College	Education
St Joseph's Boys High School Newry	Education
St Joseph's High School Newry	Education
St Joseph's Primary School Bessbrook	Education
St Joseph's Primary School Crossgar	Education
St Joseph's Primary School Killough	Education
St Louis Grammar School Newry	Education
St Malachy's High School Castlewellan	Education
St Malachy's Primary School Carnagat	Education
St Malachy's Primary School Castlewellan	Education
St Malachys Primary School Downpatrick	Education
St Marks High School Warrenpoint	Education
St Mary's High School Downpatrick	Education
St Marys Primary School Annalong	Education
St Mary's Primary School Mullaghbawn	Education
St Mary's Primary School Newcastle	Education
St Mary's Primary School Saintfield	Education
St Nicholas Primary School Ardglass	Education
St Patrick's Grammar School Downpatrick	Education
St Patrick's Primary School Castlewellan	Education
St Patrick's Primary School Crossmaglen	Education
St Patrick's Primary School Newry	Education
St Paul's High School Newry	Education
Tyrella Primary School Downpatrick	Education
Windsor Hill Primary School	Education

Source: <https://www.opendatani.gov.uk>

Appendix 3

Open Space Identified in BNMAP

Settlement	Outdoor Sport	Children's Play Area	Total
Newry City	36.23	4.97	41.2
Crossmaglen	5.28	0.13	5.41
Kilkeel	7.73	0.33	8.06
Newtownhamilton	3.94	0.06	4
Warrenpoint	6.85	0.36	7.21
Annalong	1.95	0.53	2.48
Attical	1.12	0	1.12
Ballyholland	2.65	0.21	2.86
Ballymartin	1.12	0.42	1.54
Bessbrook	2.22	1.5	3.72
Burren	6.43	0.63	7.06
Camlough	5.02	0.31	5.33
Cullyhanna	1.6	0.05	1.65
Forkhill	2.01	0.1	2.11
Hilltown	2.86	0.25	3.11
Jonesborough	0.26	0.04	0.3
Mayobridge	3	0.46	3.46
Meigh	1.55	0.17	1.72
Mullaghbane	2.9	0.04	2.94
Rostrevor	4.14	1.12	5.26
TOTAL	98.86	11.68	110.54

Ownership: Mostly NMDC but also GAC/GFC/GAA/ CCMS/SELB/NIHE/CHURCH/PRIVATE

Active Amenity Open Space and Recreation Provision Identified in ADAP

Settlement	Outdoor Sport (DDC owned)	Children's Playground (DDC owned)	Total (DDC Owned)	Outdoor Sport (Private)	Total Outdoor Sport *
Downpatrick	10.67	0.43	11.1	10.28	20.95
Ballynahinch	7.05	0.2	7.25	2.35	9.4
Newcastle	12.93	0.27	13.2	0.12	13.05
Annsborough	3.27	0	3.27	0	3.27
Ardglass	2.36	0.14	2.5	0	2.36
Ballykinler	0.97	0	0.97	1.96	2.93
Castlewellan	4.23	0.24	4.47	1.84	6.07
Crossgar	4.08	0.17	4.25	0.73	4.81
Drumaness	1.98	0.13	2.11	6.8	8.78
Dundrum	1.70	0.05	1.75	3.68	5.38
Killough	2.22	0.01	2.23	0	2.22
Killyleagh	3.71	0.05	3.76	4.89	8.6
Saintfield	1.3	0.05	1.35	1.98	3.28
Shrigley	0	0.07	0.07	0	0
Strangford	1.81	0.10	1.91	0	1.81
The Spa	0	0.04	0.04	0	0
Annacloy	2.82	0	2.82	0	2.82
TOTAL	61.1	1.95	63.05	34.63	95.73

*Total Outdoor Sport includes land/ facilities in the legacy Down District Councils ownership and private ownership

Appendix 4

Fixed Play Parks Newry, Mourne and Down

Newry, Mourne & Down Council Fixed Play Parks		
Name	Location	DEA
Annalong Cornmill Play Park	Annalong	Mournes
Mona View Play Area/Grass Area	Annalong	Mournes
Annsborough Play Park	Annsborough	Slieve Croob
Ardglass Playing Fields	Ardglass	Downpatrick
Quay Street	Ardglass	Downpatrick
Seaview	Ardglass	Downpatrick
Innisfree Park Play Area/Grass Pitch/Bitmac Area	Ballyholland	Crotlieve
Bishopscourt	Ballyhornan	Downpatrick
Ballykinlar Play Park	Ballykinlar	Slieve Croob
Pious Hill Play Area	Ballymartin	Mournes
Ballynahinch Centre	Ballynahinch	Rowallane
Hillfoot Junior Play Park	Ballynahinch	Rowallane
Hillfoot Toddler Play Park	Ballynahinch	Rowallane
Langley Road Play Park	Ballynahinch	Rowallane
Belleek Village Green/Play Area	Belleek	Slieve Gullion
Drumilly Play Area (Oliver Plunkett Park)	Belleek	Slieve Gullion
Carrickvista Recreation Area (Grass Area/Kickabout)	Bessbrook	Slieve Gullion
Charlemont Square Play Area/Grass Area	Bessbrook	Slieve Gullion
College Square Play Park	Bessbrook	Slieve Gullion
Father Cullen Park Play Area	Bessbrook	Slieve Gullion
Pond Field Play Park	Bessbrook	Slieve Gullion
Burren Village Green/Play Area	Burren	Crotlieve
Burrenbridge Recreation Area	Burrenbridge	Mournes
Oliver Plunkett Park/Quarter Road Play Area	Camlough	Slieve Gullion
Burrenbridge Road	Castlewellan	Mournes
Bunkers Hill Play Park	Castlewellan	Slieve Croob
Mourne Gardens Play Park	Castlewellan	Slieve Croob
Clough Play Park	Clough	Slieve Croob
Lislea Drive Play Park	Crossgar	Rowallane
Westlands Play Park	Crossgar	Rowallane
Ardross Park Play Area/Grass Area/Kickabout/Basketball Court	Crossmaglen	Slieve Gullion
Creggan Play Area	Crossmaglen	Slieve Gullion
Culloville Play Park	Crossmaglen	Slieve Gullion
Lismore Park Play Area	Crossmaglen	Slieve Gullion
Rathview Park Play Area	Crossmaglen	Slieve Gullion
Cullyhanna Play Area (St Patricks Park)	Cullyhanna	Slieve Gullion
Ardmore	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Ballymote Centre	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Bridge Street	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Knocknashinna	Downpatrick	Downpatrick

Marion Park	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Model Farm	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Saul GAC	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
St Dymnys	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Upper Scotch Street	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Cumber Road Play Park	Drumaness	Slieve Croob
Dan Rice Hall	Drumaness	Slieve Croob
Drumaroad Play Park	Drumaroad	Slieve Croob
Barnmeen Play Area	Drumgath	Crotlieve
Inner Bay Play Park	Dundrum	Slieve Croob
St Donard's Walk	Dundrum	Slieve Croob
Bog Road Play Area	Forkhill	Slieve Gullion
Drumintee Play Area	Forkhill	Slieve Gullion
Fairview Park Play Area	Forkhill	Slieve Gullion
Lurganare Play Area	Glen	Crotlieve
Spelga Park Play Area	Hilltown	Crotlieve
Jonesborough Play Area	Jonesborough	Slieve Gullion
Kilcoo GAC	Kilcoo	Mournes
Ballymaderphy Play Area	Kilkeel	Mournes
Bencrom Play Area	Kilkeel	Mournes
Cranfield Play Park	Kilkeel	Mournes
Hillside Drive Grass Area/Play Area	Kilkeel	Mournes
Kitty's Road Play Area	Kilkeel	Mournes
Mourne Esplanade Play Area	Kilkeel	Mournes
Rooney Road Play Area	Kilkeel	Mournes
Scrogg Road Play Area	Kilkeel	Mournes
Killough Playing Fields	Killough	Downpatrick
Bridge Centre	Killyleagh	Rowallane
Leitrim Play Park	Leitrim	Slieve Croob
Maghera Play Park	Maghera	Mournes
Meigh Play Park	Meigh	Slieve Gullion
Conway Park Play Park	Mullaghbawn	Slieve Gullion
Backfield Play Park	Newcastle	Mournes
Castle Park	Newcastle	Mournes
Downs Road Play Park	Newcastle	Mournes
Islands Park	Newcastle	Mournes
Newcastle Centre	Newcastle	Mournes
Carnbane Gardens Play Area	Newry	Newry
Carrivemaclone Play Area	Newry	Newry
Derrybeg Play Area/Kickabout	Newry	Newry
Emmett Street Play Area	Newry	Newry
Heather Park Play Park	Newry	Newry
Latt Crescent Play Area	Newry	Newry
Lisdrumgullion Play Park	Newry	Newry
Loanda House/Barcroft Play Park	Newry	Newry

Martin's Lane	Newry	Newry
Mourneview Park Play Area	Newry	Newry
Peter McParland/Barley Lane Park Play Area	Newry	Newry
Raymond McCreesh/Patrick Street Play Park	Newry	Newry
Shandon Park Play Area	Newry	Newry
Springhill Drive Play Area	Newry	Newry
Windmill Road Play Area	Newry	Newry
Latt Villas Play Area	Newry	Slieve Gullion
Newtowncloughoge Play Area	Newry	Slieve Gullion
Altnamackin/Fane Grove Play Park	Newtownhamilton	Slieve Gullion
Dungormley Play Area	Newtownhamilton	Slieve Gullion
Kilbroney Park Play Area	Rostrevor	Crotlieve
Lislane Play Park	Saintfield	Rowallane
Newline Play Park	Saintfield	Rowallane
Granite View Play Area	Saval	Crotlieve
Shrigley Play Park	Shrigley	Rowallane
Lisnalee Play Area	South Armagh	Slieve Gullion
Slieve Gullion Play Park	South Armagh	Slieve Gullion
Tullydonnell Play Area	South Armagh	Slieve Gullion
Hillside Play Park	Spa	Slieve Croob
The Links	Strangford	Downpatrick
Clonallon Park Play Park	Warrenpoint	Crotlieve
Ringmacilroy Play Park	Warrenpoint	Crotlieve
Warrenpoint Park Play Area	Warrenpoint	Crotlieve
Whitecross Play Park	Whitecross	Slieve Gullion
Down Legacy Total 46		
Newry & Mourne Legacy Total 64		
17 No. Play Park Sites with no equipment Not Listed		

Source: NMD Council

Appendix 5

Settlements Fixed Play Provision

SETTLEMENTS	FIXED PLAY AREA PROVISION
CITY	
Newry	✓
TOWNS	
Crossmaglen	✓
Kilkeel	✓
Newtownhamilton	✓
Warrenpoint/ Burren	✓
Downpatrick	✓
Ballynahinch	✓
Newcastle	✓
VILLAGES	
Annalong	✓
Attical	
Ballyholland	✓
Ballymartin	✓
Bessbrook	✓
Camlough	✓
Cullyhanna	✓
Forkhill	✓
Hilltown	✓
Jonesborough	✓
Mayobridge	
Meigh	✓
Mullaghbane/ Mullaghbawn	✓
Rostrevor	✓
Annsborough	✓
Ardglass	✓
Ballykinler	✓
Castlewellan	✓
Clough	✓
Crossgar	✓
Drumaness	✓
Dundrum	✓
Killough	✓
Killyeagh	✓
Saintfield	✓
Shrigley	✓
Strangford	✓
The Spa	✓
SMALL SETTLEMENTS	
Altnamacken/ Cortamlet	
Ballymadeerfy	
Ballmoyer	
Barmeen	✓
Belleek	✓

Creggan	
Cullaville	
Dorsey	
Drumintee	
Dunnaval/ Ballyardle	
Glassdrumman (Co. Armagh)	
Glassdrumman/ Mullartown	
Glen	✓
Greencastle	
Jerrettspass	
Killeen	
Killowen	
Lislea	
Longstone	
Lurganare	
Mullaghglass	
Newtowncloghoge	
Sheeptown	
Silverbridge	✓
Tullyherron	
Whitecross	✓
Annacloy	
Ballyalton	
Ballyhornan	
Ballynoe	
Bryansford	
Burrenbridge	✓
Carrickinab	
Chapeltown	
Clonvaraghan	
Coney Island	
Darragh Cross	
Derryboye	
Drumaghliis	
Drumaroad	✓
Kilclief	
Kilcoo	✓
Kilmore	
Loughinisland	
Maghera	✓
Raholp	
Saul	
Seaforde	

Source: Playboard NI

Appendix 6

Public Rights of Ways in Newry, Mourne and Down

Description of PROW	Length (metres)	Status
Sampson's Lane, Downpatrick	600	PROW
Park Lane/Saul Lane, Harry's Loney	650	PROW
Belfast Road to Jane's Shore, Downpatrick	950	Public path
English Street to Market Street, Downpatrick	110	PROW
Net Walk and Shore Loney, Killyleagh	900	PROW
The Broadmeadows, Killyleagh	600	PROW
Green Lane, Raleagh	1200	Bridle path
Chapel Pad, Drumaness	480	PROW
St Marys Primary School, Killyleagh	275	Footpath
Harmony Hill, Drumaness	1150	Bridle way
Riverside Walk, Ballynahinch	600	Footpath
Tannaghmore Rd to Newcastle Rd, Loughinisland	450	Footpath
Cumran Lane, Clough	1750	Footpath
Ballywillwill Rd to Clonvaraghan Road	950	Bridle path
Clonvaraghan Road to Slievehanny Road, Castlewellan	1490	Bridle Path
Drumsnade Road to Tannaghmore Road, Ballynahinch	3000	Bridle Path
Castlewellan Road to the Square, Clough	500	Footpath
Magheratimpany Rd to Newcastle Rd, Drumaness	200	Footpath
Ringhaddy Road to Quarterland Road, Killinchy		Footpath
Carrownacaw Road to the Ballyculter Rd, Raholp	720	PROW
Castle Flannen, Kilclief	80	PROW
Bishopscourt Rd to Glebe Rd	900	PROW
Ballyhornan to St Patrick's Well, Sheepland	4100	PROW
Killough to St John's Point	2950	PROW
Lough Money to Ballystokes	1450	PROW
Ballyalton to Ballysugagh	1700	PROW
The Shore to Raholp	1150	PROW
Raholp to Lough Money	1400	Bridle path
Castle Lane, Ardglass	130	Footpath
Downpatrick Rd to Castle Street, Strangford	1400	Public path
Strangford Road to Porthamish, Ballyhornan	645	Footpath
Sheepland Road to Ballyhornan to Sheepland PROW	40	Footpath
Drumroe Road to Churchtown Road, Strangford	570	Carriage way
Bath Lane, Newcastle	90	PROW
Glen River, Newcastle	4600	PROW
King Street to South Promenade, Newcastle	44	Footpath
Trassey Track	6840	PROW
Kilcoo Graveyard	350	PROW
Magee's Walk, Castlewellan	100	PROW
Rock Lane, Castlewellan	1100	PROW
Cow Lane, Castlewellan	850	PROW
Caskell Lane, Castlewellan	750	PROW
Castle Lane, Dundrum	550	PROW
Back Lane, Dundrum	400	PROW
Dam Walk, Dundrum	950	PROW

Tipperary Lane, Newcastle	700	Footpath
Wild Forest Lane, Newcastle	1600	Bridle path
McSherry's Lane, Castlewellan	1850	Bridle path
Manse Lane, Dundrum	200	PROW
Drumree Cemetary	1830	Bridle path
Drumree Road to Carnacaville Road Laneway, Castlewellan	2000	Bridle path
Drumree Cemetary to Drumree Carnacaville Road	470	Bridle path
Lower Burren Road to Newcastle Road PROW	500	Footpath
Carnacaville Road to Church Hill Road, Newcastle	580	Bridle path
Barbican Farm to Wild Forest Lane	600	Bridle path
Tullybrannigan Rd to Tullybrannigan Rd Loop	1080	Bridle path
Ballylough to Annsborough Primary School	600	Bridle path
Kilmegan Road to the Priests Road	820	Bridle path
Wateresk Road to Kilmegan Road	1200	Bridle path
Ballybannon Road to Waterest Road	1300	Bridle path
Drumree Road to Dundrinne Road Upper	750	Bridle path
Dundrinne Road to Brook Cottage	550	Bridle path
Green Lane, Burrenreagh, Castlewellan	550	Footpath
Macleans Close, Bryansford Road, Tullyree	600	Footpath
Dundrinne Road to Ballybannon Road, Castlewellan	2000	Bridle path
Drumree PROW to Newcastle Road, Newcastle	150	Footpath
Byransford Road to Tullyree Road	1600	Footpath
Primrose Lane, Newcastle	60	Footpath
Porters Lane, Newcastle	60	Footpath
Dromara Road to Castle Hill, Dundrum (Quarry Lane)		Footpath
Beach Avenue, Newcastle	57	Carriage way
Mound of Down to the Belfast Road, Downpatrick	240	Footpath
Adders Loanain -Millvale Road to join the Moat Pad, Ballyward	1250	Footpath
Flush Road to Eelwire Road, Ballyward	950	By-way (foot, horse and vehicle)
Glen Loanin-Moneyanabane to Drumboy Road, Dromara	1100	Bridle path
Darby's Loanin-Moneyanabane Road to Castlewellan Road, Dromara	1100	Bridle path
Scotch Rock Pad-Slievenaboley Road to Rathfriland Road, Ballyward	2290	Footpath
Windy Gap Pad-Slievenaboley to Legananny Road, Ballyward	1500	Footpath
Bellman's Loanan from Windsor ave to upper Damolly Road, Newry	210	footpath
Moygannon Road to foreshore at Dobbin Point, Warrenpoint	200	Footpath
Yelverton Lane, from Killowen Road to foreshore, Ballyedmond, Rostrevor	665	Footpath
Fairy Glen, from Newtown Road to Forestbrook Road, Rostrevor	700	Footpath
Manus Lane, Rooney Road to Harbour Road, Kilkeel	160	Footpath
Cloughmore Stone to Shore Road, Rostrevor, via Fiddlers' Green	1700	Footpath
Dog Kennel Lane, Kennard Villas to Upper Damolly Road, Newry	800	Footpath
Rathfriland Road to Crieve Road, Newry (Upper Lane)	600	Footpath
Orchard Hill to Summerhill, Warrenpoint	50	Footpath
Rathfriland Road to Crieve Road, Newry (Lower Lane)	600	Footpath
Newtown Road to Forestbrook Road, Rostrevor	160	Footpath
"Crilly's Loanan", Father Cullen Park to Camlough Road, Bessbrook	800	Footpath
Kilkeel Road to junction of Baan and Rocky Rivers		footpath
Mayo Road to Chapel Hill Road, Mayobridge	400	Footpath
Millvale Road Bessbrook to Craigmore Road Newry	1000	Footpath
Canal Towpath, Newry, from Canal Quay to Gambles Road	10350	Footpath

Drumlough Road to Drumlough School Road, Rathfriland	1200	Footpath
Killowen Road to the foreshore, between No. 1 and No. 5 Killowen Road, Rostrevor	55	Footpath
Old Warrenpoint Road to Dual Carriageway, Newry	60	Footpath
Glen Loanan, Ballymartin	240	Footpath
Ballard Road to Slieve Gullion South Cairn	3500	Footpath
Shean Road to Urney Graveyard, Forkhill	800	Footpath
Ballynabee Road, Camlough to Father Cullen Park, Bessbrook	600	Footpath
Ameracam Lane to Fair Road, Cranfield	1330	Footpath
Ballymoyer Forest	400	Footpath
Warrenpoint Road to Foreshore, adjacent to Rosses Quay, Rostrevor	105	Carriageway
Hickey's Lane, Armagh Road to Canal towpath, Newry	400	Footpath
Ulster Avenue to the Harbour, Annalong	310	Footpath
100m South of No. 80 Shore Road, Rostrevor	40	Footpath
Killowen Road to the foreshore adjacent to No. 9 Killowen Road	70	Footpath
"Old Schoolhouse Lane", Killowen Road to Killowen Old Road, Ballyedmond, Rostrevor	170	Footpath
Killowen Road to foreshore, Rostrevor at Killowen Cottage, adjacent to 67 Killowen Road, Rostrevor	230	Footpath
Killowen Road to the foreshore, adjacent to Killowen Outdoor Education Centre, Rostrevor	105	Footpath
Ballinran Road to Aughnahoor Road, Kilkeel	1500	Bridleway
Chapel Road to Seafin Road, Meigh	100	Carriageway
"Hip Road", Carewamean Road, Carrickbroad to border with the Irish Republic	200	Footpath
Hanna's Close, Kilkeel	1000	Footpath
Kilkeel Road to the foreshore, Moneydarragh Beg, Ballymartin	100	Footpath
Camlough River to Father Cullen Park, Bessbrook	405	footpath
Concession rd to the Border with the Republic of Ireland	240	Carriageway
Greenpark Road to Drumsesk Road, Rostrevor	550	Footpath
Drumsesk Road, Rostrevor to Moygannon Road, Warrenpoint	1500	Footpath
Hillhead Road to Flagstaff Road, Newry	600	Footpath
Millvale Road at Beetle row to Derrymore Road	400	Footpath
Millvale Road at the Old Mill to Derrymore Road	700	Footpath
Shannagh drive to Coastal path, Annalong	100	footpath
Kileavy Old Church (Ballintemple Road) to Saint Moninna,s Well	575	footpath

Source: NMD Council

Appendix 7

FORESTS	OWNERSHIP
Annalong Forest	Forestry Service NI
Ballymoyer Forest	Forestry Service NI
Bohill Forest	Forestry Service NI
Camlough Forest	Forestry Service NI
Castle Ward Forest	Forestry Service NI
-Castlewellan Forest	Forestry Service NI
Cold Brae Forest	Forestry Service NI
-Daisy Hill Wood LNR	Forestry Service NI
Donard Forest	Forestry Service NI
Drumkeeragh Forest	Forestry Service NI
Fathom Forest	Forestry Service NI
Hollymount Forest	Forestry Service NI
Mourne Forest	Forestry Service NI
Narrow Water Forest	Forestry Service NI
Rostrevor Forest	Forestry Service NI
Tollymore Forest	Forestry Service NI
Slieve Gullion Forest	Forestry Service NI

WOODLANDS	OWNERSHIP
Nut Wood	Woodland Trust
Glass Water Wood	Woodland Trust
Pond Water and Compass Hill	Woodland Trust
Windmill Hill Wood	Woodland Trust
Carnbane Wood	Woodland Trust
Daisy Hill Wood	Woodland Trust

Source: Woodland Trust Website <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/map/47%20Ballytrim%20Road,%20Killyleagh,%20BT30%209/54.40200599031809/-5.70200252532959/10/>

FOREST/ COUNTRY PARKS/ GARDENS	OWNERSHIP
Castle Ward	National Trust
Castlewellan Forest Park	Forestry Service NI
Delamont Country Park	Forestry Service NI
Derrymore House	National Trust
Kilbroney Forest Park	NMDDC
Rowallane Garden	National Trust
Slieve Gullion Forest Park	Forestry Service NI
Tollymore Forest Park	Forestry Service NI

OTHER RESOURCES	OWNERSHIP
Murlough National Nature Reserve	National Trust
Newry Canal Tow Path	NMDDC & ABCBC
The Mourne	Various
Silent Valley	NIW
Strangford Lough	Various
Carlingford Lough	Various

BEACHES

Cranfield Beach, Kilkeel

Murlough Beach

Newcastle Beach

Tyrella

Warrenpoint

GOLF COURSES and DRIVING RANGES

Ardglass Golf Club

Ashfield Golf Club, Cullyhanna

Bright Castle Golf Club, Downpatrick

Cloverhill Golf Club, Mullaghbawn

Crossgar Golf Club

Downpatrick Golf Centre

Golf Centre, Newcastle

Kilkeel Golf Club

Mayobridge Golf Club

Mourne Golf Club, Newcastle

Newry Golf Inn Academy

Royal County Down Golf Club, Newcastle

Royal County Down Ladies Golf Club, Newcastle

St Patricks Golf Club, Downpatrick

Spa Golf Club, Ballynahinch

Warrenpoint Golf Club

ACTIVITY CENTRES- PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

Acton Adventures, Poyntzpass

Bluelough Adventure Centre, Castlewellan Forest Park

Clearsky Adventure Centre, Castleward Estate

East Coast Outdoor Activity Centre, Rostrevor

Flagstaff Adventure, Newry

Greenhill YMCA, Newcastle

Life Adventure Centre, Castlewellan

Peak Discovery, Tollymore, Newcastle

Rock and Ride Outdoors, Kilcoo

Tollymore National Outdoor Centre, Newcastle

26 Extreme, Warrenpoint

Appendix 8

Outdoor Activities and Facilities in the District

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	FACILITY
Activity Centres	Tollymore National Outdoor Centre, Newcastle; East Coast Outdoor Activity Centre, Rostrevor;; Acton Adventures, Poyntzpass; Greenhill YMCA, Newcastle; Peak Discovery, Tollymore, Newcastle; Life Adventure Centre, Castlewellan; Rock and Ride, Kilcoo; Flagstaff Adventures, Newry; Bluelough Adventure Centre, Castwellan Forest Park; 26 Extreme, Warrenpoint; Clearsky Adventure Centre, Castleward Estate
Angling	There are numerous locations for angling within the District with Strangford and Carlingford Loughs and its many rivers and lakes.
Athletics	There is a 6 lane athletics track with field events at St Colman's College, Newry
Bowling	There are 12 outdoor bowls club sites in the District.
Canoeing	Two of NI's nine recognised Canoe Trails are located in the District: Strangford Lough and South East Coast Trails
Cricket	There are four cricket club grounds located in the District: Dundrum, Downpatrick, Saintfield and Drumaness Cricket Clubs.
Cycling	CycleNI has identified over twenty cycle routes in the District ranging from 0-60 miles in length. The District is also a popular Mountain Bike destination with two of NI's three National Mountain Bike Trails in Rostrevor (Multiple Mountain Bike NI award winner in 2016) and Castlewellan. There is also a regional trail in Castle Ward and a local facility in Tollymore.
GAA	There are 45 GAA Clubs located in the District.
Golf	There are 16 golf courses/ driving range facilities within the District including Royal County Down (Mens and Ladies), Kilkeel, St Patricks, Downpatrick, The Spa, Crossgar, Ardglass, Bright Castle, Warrenpoint, Mayobridge, Ashfield, Cloverhill, Mourne, Golf Centre, Newcastle, Downpatrick Golf Centre and The Golf Inn, Newry.
Hockey	There are a number of men and womens hockey teams that train in the District including Ballynahinch, Down, Saintfield, Kilkeel and Newry
Horse riding	There are many equestrian centres in the district which provide opportunities for all abilities. They include: Mourne Trail Riding Centre; Lessans Riding Stables, Saintfield; Gamer keepers Lodge Equestrian Centre, Kilkeel; Western Style Horse Riding, Hilltown; Mount Pleasant Trekking Centre& Mount Pleasant Equestrian Centre, Castlewellan. There is also a racecourse in Downpatrick.
Motorsports	There are 4 motor sports facilities in the District

Rugby	There are rugby clubs in Ballynahinch and Newry. A number of schools also offer rugby including High School Ballynahinch; Down High School, Downpatrick; Kilkeel High School and St Colman's College, Newry
Soccer	There are approximately 42 soccer clubs in the District.
Swimming	Tropicana Outdoor Pool in Newcastle is open July and August.
Tennis	There are a number of tennis club sites in the District including: Downpatrick Tennis Club (Down High School), Newcastle Tennis Club, Warrenpoint Tennis Club, Newry Tennis Club, Mourne Esplanade, Kilkeel, Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor and Annalong Tennis Court
Watersports	There are a number of watersport opportunities in the District with Strangford and Carlingford Loughs, inland rivers and lakes. The Council's Sports Strategy identified 10 sites that offer water sports in the District.

*This list is not exhaustive but indicates the main activities available within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Area.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2017
Subject:	Newry, Mourne and Down Local Development Plan Preparatory Studies Paper 12 (Part 1): Countryside – Landscape Character Assessment
Reporting Officer:	Anthony McKay, Chief Planning Officer
Contact Officer:	Andrew Hay, Principal Planning Officer

Decisions required:

Note the content of this report.

1.0 Purpose and Background:

- 1.1 A programme of preparatory work is being undertaken as part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process. Preparatory studies are essential in providing the evidence base for preparing the Local Development Plan (LDP). A reliable and comprehensive evidence base is vital to informing and justifying the 'soundness' of the LDP documents (Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan) and to show how planning policies and proposals help to achieve the social, economic and environmental objectives for the plan area.
- 1.2 The SPR Committee is responsible for the Local Development Plan. All LDP papers are reported to the SPR Committee for noting or decision. All LDP papers will also be presented to the Planning Committee for noting. Depending on the subject matter, a LDP paper will also be presented to any other relevant Council Committee for noting.
- 1.3 'Paper 12 (Part 1): Countryside – Landscape Character Assessment' provides members with an overview of the Landscape Character Assessment for the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area,
- 1.4 The paper builds on the existing evidence base and provides information on:
- the regional planning context in the assessment and protection of our landscape;
 - an analysis of the existing Landscape Character Assessments and associated guidance as they apply to the District.
- 1.5 Members are asked to note the content of this report. Any comments received will be considered. The paper will be subject to any changes considered necessary in response to any valid comments received at this or any other Committee to which it is presented.

2.0 Key issues:

- 2.1 'Paper 12 (Part 1): Countryside – Landscape Character Assessment' provides members with a report on the Landscape Assessment for the District, highlighting the diverse mix of landscapes within the Newry, Mourne and Down area, while identifying the issues influencing the landscape condition and sensitivity, which will assist the Council in the development of the LDP.
- 2.2 Newry, Mourne and Down District is comprised of a diverse and varied landscape including the Mourne Mountains, Slieve Gullion, a sensitive coastline including Strangford and Carlingford

	Loughs, distinctive woodlands, prominent ridges, a series of drumlins, river corridors and basins, with many of these landscapes having international or national conservation designations associated with them.
2.3	This paper identifies the diverse landscapes within the Plan Area and the varying degree of capacity to absorb further development due to the vulnerable nature of a large portion of the District. This therefore involves recognising the differences between areas that are particularly sensitive to change and those with lower sensitivities which could potentially provide opportunities to accommodate sustainable development, identifying any potential constraints to future development while also taking into account the role and responsibilities of rural settlements.
2.4	The Districts landscape has many different roles including serving as an important tourist asset, providing a rich resource of agricultural land which in turn plays a pivotal role in the Districts economy while also being rich in archaeological, historical and nature conservation all of which are worthy of protection.
2.5	The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) forms an integral part of the Development Plan process and forms one of the interrelated strands of the Countryside Assessment. The LCA process identifies and describes the variations in the character of landscapes by explaining the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process will therefore play an important role in developing and adding to a robust evidence base which is required to inform the Local Development Plan
2.6	In addition to identifying the key characteristics of each landscape character area, the report also assesses the principal forces for change and issues influencing landscape condition and sensitivity.
2.7	This paper forms part of the Countryside Assessment for the District and is to be read in conjunction with Paper 6: Environmental Assets together with Paper 12 (Part 2): Countryside – Rural Pressure Analysis and Paper 13: Settlement Appraisals which are currently under preparation.
2.8	The information gathered and the key findings will be used to inform the preparation of the LDP.
2.9	Data gathered as part of this and other preparatory studies will be used to establish the baseline of the social, economic, and environmental characteristics of the plan area and enable the Council to identify the issues which need to be addressed by the LDP. Furthermore, it will provide a sound basis on which to formulate the plan strategy, policies and proposals within the LDP that will be subject to independent public examination.
3.0	Recommendations:
3.1	Members are requested to note the content of this report.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	N/A
5.0	Equality and good relations implications:
5.1	N/A
6.0	Appendices
	Paper 12 (Part 1): Countryside – Landscape Character Assessment



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**

**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

**Local Development Plan
Preparatory Studies**

**Paper 12 (Part 1): Countryside - Landscape
Character Assessment**

March 2017

Contents	Page Number
Figure Table	1
Purpose and Content	2
1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Regional Planning Context	4
(a) Regional Development Strategy 2035	4
(b) Strategic Planning Policy Statement	4
(c) Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside	5
(d) Planning Policy Statement 2: Natural Heritage	5
(e) Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning Archaeological and the Built Heritage	6
(f) Existing Development Plans	6
3.0 Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment	7
4.0 NIEA Supplementary Planning Guidance – Wind Energy Development in NI Landscapes	14
5.0 Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment	17
6.0 Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment	22
7.0 Local Biodiversity Action Plans	25
8.0 Local Landscape Policy Areas	28
9.0 Conclusions	29
Appendix 1 – Landscape Character Areas and Wind Energy Classification for Newry, Mourne & Down District	31
Appendix 2 - Criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity	53
Appendix 3 - NMD Regional Seascape Character Areas	55

Figure Table

Figure 1	Landscape Character Areas for Northern Ireland
Figure 2	Landscape Character Areas within Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Figure 3	Wind Turbine Applications with LCA Wind Energy Sensitivity Ratings
Figure 4	Regional Landscape Boundaries overlaid with Local Landscape Character Areas
Figure 5	The landscape wheel
Figure 6	Regional Seascape Character Areas
Figure 7	Priority Habitats within Newry, Mourne & Down District

Landscape Character Assessment of Newry, Mourne and Down District

Purpose

To provide members with a report on the Landscape Assessment for the District highlighting the diverse mix of landscapes within the Newry, Mourne & Down Council area while identifying the issues influencing the landscape condition and sensitivity.

Content

The paper provides information on:-

- (i) The regional planning context in the assessment and protection of our landscape,
- (ii) An analysis of the existing Landscape Character Assessments and associated guidance as they apply to the District.

Introduction

1.0 The Newry, Mourne & Down District is comprised of a diverse and varied landscape including the Mourne Mountains, Slieve Gullion, a sensitive coastline including Strangford and Carlingford Loughs, distinctive woodlands, prominent ridges, a series of drumlins, river corridors and basins with many of these landscapes having international or national conservation designations associated with them.

1.1 This paper identifies the diverse landscapes within the Plan Area and the varying degree of capacity to absorb further development due to the vulnerable nature of a large portion of the District. This therefore involves recognising the differences between areas that are particularly sensitive to change and those with lower sensitivities which could potentially provide opportunities to accommodate sustainable development, identifying any potential constraints to future development while also taking into account the role and responsibilities of rural settlements.

1.2 The Districts landscape has many different roles including serving as an important tourist asset, providing a rich resource of agricultural land which in turn plays a pivotal role in the Districts economy while also being rich in archaeological, historical and nature conservation all of which are worthy of protection.

1.3 The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) forms an integral part of the Development Plan process and forms one of the interrelated strands of the Countryside Assessment. The LCA process identifies and describes the variations in the character of landscapes by explaining the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process will therefore play an important role in developing and adding to a robust evidence base which is required to inform the Local Development Plan

1.4 In addition to identifying the key characteristics of each landscape character area, the paper also assesses the principal forces for change and issues influencing landscape condition and sensitivity

1.5 This paper forms part of the Countryside Assessment for the District and is to be read in conjunction with Paper 6: Environmental Assets Paper together with Paper 12 (Part 2): Countryside - Rural Pressure Analysis and Paper 13: Settlement Appraisals which are currently under preparation.

2.0 Regional Policy Context

2.1 The Regional Planning Policy context is provided by the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) and a suite of regional planning policy statements. A summary of these documents and how they pertain to the plan making process and the Countryside Assessment are provided in the following section.

(a) The Regional Development Strategy 2035

2.2 The RDS provides an overarching strategic framework to facilitate and guide the public and private sectors. Sustainable development is at the heart of the RDS and therefore aims to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations.

2.3 The RDS provides long term policy direction to guide the public, private and community sectors in the form of both regional and spatial framework guidance. The policy which is most relevant to this paper is Regional Guidance 11 which aims to 'Conserve, protect and, where possible enhance our built heritage and our natural environment' through;

- Recognising and promoting the conservation of local identity and distinctive landscape character,
- Conserving, protecting and where possible enhance areas recognised for their landscape quality, and
- Protecting designated areas of countryside from inappropriate development (either directly or indirectly) and continuing to assess areas for designations.

(b) Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland

2.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) published in September 2015 places sustainable development at the heart of the planning system with the three pillars of sustainable development being defined as social, economic and environmental. These factors should therefore be integrated into the formulation of all plans and policies. With regards to the environment the SPPS sets out the need to protect and enhance the built and natural environment, including heritage assets, seascape and landscape character.

2.5 The SPPS places an emphasis on the protection of special landscapes from inappropriate development, overdevelopment and the need for Councils to take into account Landscape Character Assessments. The SPPS advises that;

'In preparing Local Development Plans (LDPs) councils must take account of the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland, the SPPS and any other policies or advice in guidance issued by the Department such as Landscape Character Assessments and conservation area design guides'

2.6 The SPPS also states that when formulating policies and plans, planning authorities will be guided by the precautionary approach in that, where there are significant risks of damage to the environment, its protection will generally be

paramount, unless there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. Preserving and improving the natural and built environment is deemed as being fundamental in achieving the long term public interest of sustainable development.

2.7 The SPPS states that where there are areas of the countryside which exhibit exceptional landscapes, and visual amenity value such as lough shores and important views and vistas development should only be permitted in exceptional circumstance. The SPPS therefore suggests that additional layers of policy control may be considered to protect against adverse development.

2.8 Therefore one of the key aims of this paper is to begin discussion as to whether the District would benefit from further designations or amending those that are currently in place. Members should therefore consider whether lands which currently lie outside designated and controlled areas such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are worthy of a different layer of protection such as Special Countryside Areas (SCA) to which there are currently 3 in the District, Mourne, Ring of Gullion and Slieve Croob SCA's or Areas of High Scenic Value (AHSV). The District currently shares a small portion of the Magheraknock Loughs AHSV which is located to the north of Ballynahinch.

2.9 The SPPS also states that the LDP process plays an important role in identifying key features and assets of the countryside and balancing the needs of rural areas and communities with the protection of the environment. It states that this process should include an environmental assets appraisal and landscape assessment which will provide the evidence base for the purposes of bringing forward an appropriate policy approach to development in the countryside.

(c) Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside (PPS21)

2.10 The RDS and SPPS are complemented by Planning Policy Statements with the most relevant one to this paper being PPS 21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside. This documents sets out policies for managing development in the countryside with one of its key themes being to conserve the landscape and natural resources of the rural area, to protect it from excessive inappropriate or obtrusive development and from the actual or potential effects of pollution. PPS21 also outlines the four interrelated strands of the Countryside Assessment which includes the Landscape Assessment.

(d) Planning Policy Statement 2: Natural Heritage (PPS2)

2.11 PPS2 sets out the Department's planning policies for the conservation, protection and enhancement of our natural heritage, which is defined as 'the diversity of our habitats, species, landscapes and earth science features'. This policy recognises that natural heritage features will normally be identified as part of the Countryside Assessment carried out in association with the plan preparation. Local designations arising from the plan should be identified and policies brought forward for their protection and where possible their enhancement.

PPS2 also indicates that the plan process should seek to identify and promote the design of ecological networks throughout the plan area.

(e) Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeological and the Built Heritage (PPS6)

2.12 In the preparation of LDPs the Council will take full account of the implications of proposed landuse zonings, locations for development and limits of development on all features of the archaeological and built heritage and their settings within a plan area. These features have been identified in Paper 6: Environmental Assets which has added to the this section of the Countryside Assessment.

(f) Existing Development Plans for Newry, Mourne & Down

2.13 The Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 (ADAP) and the Banbridge/Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP) are the current statutory plans for the District and provide the framework against which to assess development proposals.

2.14 In preparing LDPs, Councils shall bring forward a strategy for sustainable development in the countryside together with appropriate policies and proposals that reflect the aims, objectives and policy approach of the SPPS, while also tailoring the Plan to the specific circumstances of the plan area.

2.15 The LDP process will play an important role for councils in identifying key features and assets of the countryside and balancing the need of rural areas and communities with the protection of the environment.

3.0 Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment

3.1 *'Landscape character is what makes an area unique. It is defined as 'a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse'. Informed and responsible decisions on the management and planning of sustainable future landscapes can only be made if proper regard is paid to their existing character'* (RDS 2035 – Building a better future Page 50)

3.2 The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape is commonly known as Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). LCA documents identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive by mapping and describing character types and areas.

3.3 Northern Ireland is currently covered by an existing Landscape Character Assessment Series. These documents were undertaken by the former Department of the Environment, Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) to distinguish local identities and to assess the visual aspects of landscape character.

3.4 In recognizing the importance of sustaining local identity EHS in association with the former Planning Service, commissioned a survey from environmental consultants Environmental Resources Management (ERM), which resulted in the identification of 130 distinct character areas within Northern Ireland shown in Fig 1.



Figure 1 – Landscape Character Areas for Northern Ireland

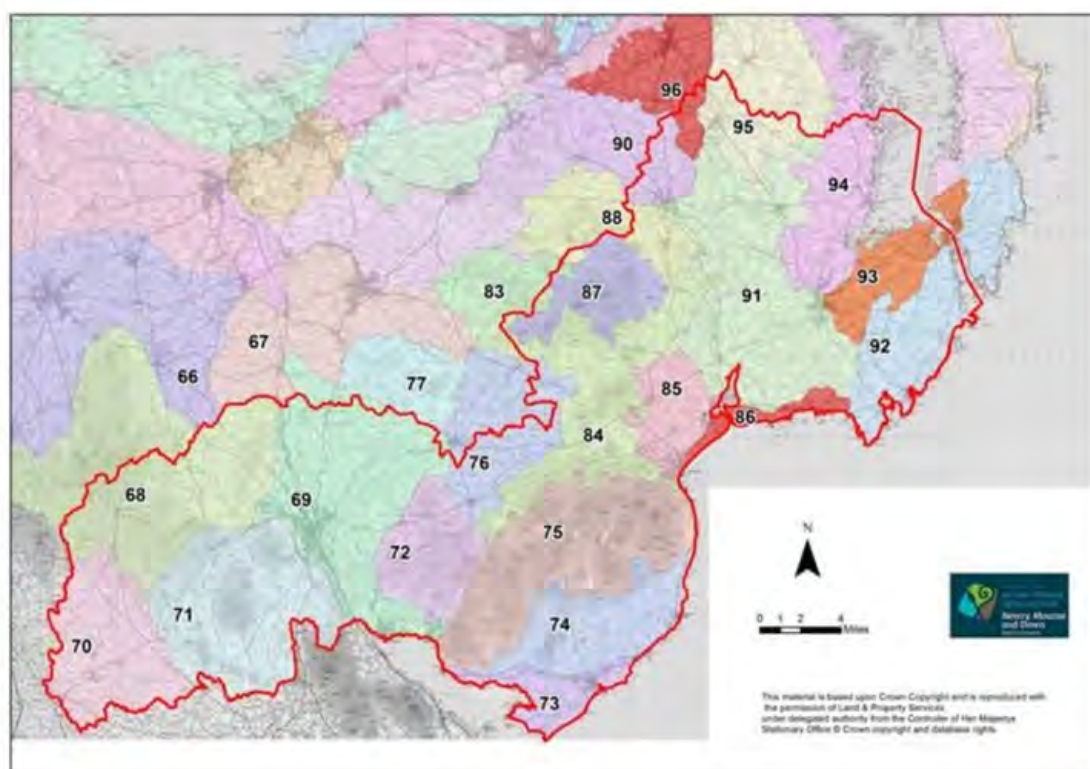
3.5 The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA) subdivided the countryside into 130 LCAs to highlight the variations in landscape character across Northern Ireland. For each LCA, the key characteristics were described and detailed descriptions of these landscapes are provided in the accompanying Landscape Character Assessment Reports. Taking into account historic features, habitats, landmarks, field and settlements patterns as well as considering local materials and building styles while also containing valuable ideas, suggestions and advice which may have the potential to further assist the aims of the LDP. Each LCA has also considered local patterns of geology, landform, land use, cultural and ecological features while detailing the landscapes condition and its sensitivity to change.

3.6 Listed below are the relevant LCA's for the District with a description of each of the relevant LCA's and their sensitivity to wind energy development are detailed within Appendix 1. Within each of these Landscape Character Areas it should be noted that considerable variation in the levels of vulnerability can be found which reflects the strategic level of these groupings.

- 66. Armagh Drumlins
- 67. Armagh/Banbridge Hills
- 68. Carrigatuke Hills
- 69. Newry Basin
- 70. Crossmaglen Drumlins and Loughs
- 71. Ring of Gullion
- 72. Slieve Roosley
- 73. Kilkeel Coast
- 74. Kingdom of Mourne
- 75. Mourne Mountains
- 76. Ballyroney Basin
- 77. Iveagh Slopes
- 83. Lower Slieve Croob Foothills
- 84. Mourne Foothills
- 85. Newcastle Valleys
- 86. Tyrella Coastal Dunes
- 87. Slieve Croob Summits
- 88. Craggy Dromara Uplands
- 90. Ravarnet Valley
- 91. Quoile Vally Lowlands
- 92. Ballyquintin and Lecale Coast
- 93. Portaferry and North Lecale
- 94. Strangford Drumlins and Islands
- 95. Ballygowan Drumlins
- 96. Castlereagh Plateau

3.7 Off the 25 LCAs (LCAs) included within the District a substantial number of these traverse the Districts boundary into neighbouring council areas as shown within Figure 2. Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Council share 8 LCA's with the District and include the Armagh Drumlin, Armagh/Banbridge Hills, Carrigatuke Hills, Newry Basin, Ballyroney Basin, Iveagh Slopes, Lower Slieve Croob Foothills and the Mourne Foothills.

FIGURE 2 – Landscape Character Areas included within Newry, Mounre & Down District Council



CODE	NAME	CODE	NAME
66	Armagh Drumlins	84	Mourne Foothills
67	Armagh/Banbridge Hills	85	Newcastle Valleys
68	Carrigatuke Hills	86	Tyrella Coastal Dunes
69	Newry Basin	87	Slieve Croob Summits
70	Crossmaglen Drumlins and Loughs	88	Craggy Dromara Uplands
71	Ring of Gullion	90	Ravarnet Valley
72	Slieve Roosley	91	Quoile Valley Lowlands
73	Kilkeel Coast	92	Ballyquintin and Lecale Coast
74	The Kingdom of Mourne	93	Portaferry and North Lecale
75	Mourne Mountains	94	Strangford Drumlins and Islands
76	Ballyroney Basin	95	Ballygowan Drumlins
77	Iveagh Slopes	96	Castlereagh Plateau
83	Lower Slieve Croob Foothills		

3.8 NMD also share 2 LCA's with Lisburn & Castlereagh City Centre these being Craggy Dromara Uplands and Ravarnet Valleys. 5 LCA's are also shared with Ards & North Down Borough Council and these include Ballyquinton & Lecale Coast, Portaferry & North Lecale, Strangford Drumlins & Islands, Ballygowan Drumlins and the Castlereagh Plateau.

3.9 The NILCA also identified Areas of Scenic Quality (ASQ's) which represent the second tier in the hierarchy of landscape classifications and may include significant sites or features of nature conservation, historic or cultural importance. In many instances these areas may also be visually prominent landscapes such as ridgetops, scarp slopes or lough shores. This classification then aids in LDPs designating Areas of High Scenic Value (AoHSV)

3.10 Presently the Newry, Mourne & Down District contains 3 AONB's which cover 55.7% of the District due to the landscapes being recognised as being of regional or local importance. The District includes a small portion of Magheraknock Loughs AoHSV which is found north of Ballynahinch and is therefore mainly included within the neighbouring Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area. AoHSV designation with the District is therefore something that members may wish to consider implementing within the new Area Plan to protect landscapes which are characterised by visually pleasing patterns or combinations of landscape elements free from major intrusion.

3.11 Since the publication of the NICLA series through both natural and man-made forces landscapes have continued to evolve and change. By tailoring individual approaches to reflect and respond to each distinct landscape their character can be both reinforced and enhanced for the benefit of future generations.

Key settlements and landscapes identified within NILCA series

3.12 Landscape sensitivity is based on the ability for an individual area to accommodate specific types of change of development without significant adverse impacts on its landscape character, visual amenity or landscape value. A broad overview of the District has been provided below highlighting some of the distinctive areas which add to the creation of a highly valuable and distinctive landscape.

3.13 The central core of Down is dominated by the rugged uplands of Slieve Croob which are generally surrounded by marginal farmland. Roads traversing this area often provide long views across the foothills to the Mourne and over the surrounding drumlin lowlands and deep valleys. The area has a relatively enclosed landscape with a domestic scale and diverse intricate pattern with the drumlins providing a scenic landscape settling for Strangford Lough. Careful consideration must be given to the distinctively low drumlin topography with its infinite variety of long established characteristics/patterns alongside the protection on the long intricate coastline. To the west of Tyrella and Murlough sand dunes together with the long sandy beaches and mudflats of Dundrum Bay form part of the diverse range of coastal features found within the District.

3.14 The Mourne and The Ring Gullion dominate the eastern section of the District with the landscape then moving towards a gradual transition of extensive foothills

and drumlins. The steep Mourne Mountain slopes provide a dramatic backdrop to the striking and unified farmland which is defined mainly by distinctive stone walls which then descend onto the surrounding coast. To the west, the scenic deep waters of Carlingford Lough, the surrounding forested area and the steep sided valley of the Newry River are some of the defining characteristics.

3.15 Within the NILCA series reference is made to six of the larger settlements within the Newry & Mourne section of the District while in contrast, settlements varying in scale and nature are referred to within the former Down segment of the Council area in terms of important landscapes. These documents have assessed and evaluated the landscapes while providing a tool to analyse the relative vulnerability of the different landscape elements, features and patterns which contribute to landscape character. A synopsis of their landscape setting is detailed below.

3.16 *Newry City Landscape Setting* - Newry has a superb landscape setting. The town is sited on the Newry River at the head of Carlingford Lough and is flanked by strong ridge-lines with a north-south alignment. The eastern fringe of the Ring of Gullion dominates views to the west and Slieve Roe is prominent to the east. The town has expanded from its centre on the narrow flat valley floor to the slopes of the ridges on either side. To the east, the long, shallow valleys of the Derryleckagh area contain a series of bogs and loughs of ecological value. To the north, the ridges are influenced by drumlins but the valley of the Newry River is a strong feature. Newry has a dense town centre with attractive stone buildings and winding streets with traditional buildings rendered or built of local light grey stone. The central bridges, canal and churches are also deemed as focal points.

3.17 *Crossmaglen Landscape Setting* - Crossmaglen is a border market town, located around a square and presently dominated by its vacant police station. It is an attractive small town set within a historic landscape of loughs, hummocks and fens.

3.18 *Kilkeel Landscape Setting* - Kilkeel is an expanded fishing village located along the coast to the south of the Mourne. The harbour is close to the confluence of the Kilkeel River and the Aughrim River. Both watercourses flow in steep, narrow valleys and are relatively inconspicuous within the town. There are long, dramatic views to the Mourne to the north of Kilkeel which suffer from the impact of extensive ribbon development. This blurs each of the entrances to the town and detracts from the character of the attractive open stone wall landscape surrounding the town.

3.19 *Warrenpoint Landscape Setting* - Warrenpoint has a dramatic landscape setting on the shores of Carlingford Lough at the entrance to the Newry River. The town is backed by the foothills of the Mourne and has views to the steep, wooded slopes of Anglesey Mountain on the opposite shores. The industrial port is on the flat strip of land to the west of the town and its cranes are prominent on the approach road from the north. Narrow Water Castle and the Narrow Water estate form the gateway to Warrenpoint from the north. There are long views along the waterfront from the coastal road to the east. The town is backed by the steep slopes of Slievecarnane.

The lower slopes have an intricate pattern of streams, with numerous archaeological sites on local ridge-tops.

3.20 Annalong Landscape Setting - Annalong is a small coastal port close to the foot of the Mourne. The town has a stunning setting and is dwarfed by the peaks of Slieve Donard and Slieve Binnian to the north. The port is at the mouth of the Annalong River, which flows through the built up area in a rocky gully. Like Kilkeel, Annalong is surrounded by ribbon development, which blurs the immediate landscape setting.

3.21 Rostrevor Landscape Setting - Rostrevor is at the head of the Kilbroney / Rostrevor River, on the northern shores of Carlingford Lough. It is an attractive town, backed by the steep mountain slopes of Slievemartin, with stunning views across the Lough to Carlingford Mountain in the Republic to the south. Rostrevor is squeezed against the side of an attractive wooded glen and the opposite side of the river has been developed as a park (Kilbroney Park). This is a popular recreational resource and the start of some long distance walks into the mountains. The glen is locally known as Fairy Glen.

3.22 Within the NILCA series reference is also made to 14 principle settlements within the previous Down District which are listed as follows Ardglass, Ballyhornan, Ballynahinch, Castlewellan, Clough, Crossgar, Downpatrick, Dundrum, Drumaness, Killough, Killyleagh, Loughinisland, Newcastle and Saintfield. A synopsis of the character of a number of the larger settlements is detailed below.

3.23 Downpatrick Landscape Setting - Downpatrick has a distinctive and historic landscape setting with a sequence of impressive views along the northern approach. The Quoile River and loughs to the north along with the drumlins to the south-west and the undulating ridge-tops of Slievegrane and Struell Hills to the east add to the impressive setting of this market town. The Finnebrogue woodland estate to the west and the steep slopes above the race course to the south west of the town offer additional enclosure to the settlement.

3.24 Ballynahinch Landscape Setting - Ballynahinch has an attractive landscape setting provided by a series of distinct and undeveloped drumlins. The town lies in a hollow between the drumlins with little development creeping up the slopes. Approaches across and around the drumlins given sudden and unexpected views of the settlement with the Monalto Estate providing a wooded backdrop to the west.

3.25 Newcastle Landscape Setting - Newcastle impressive setting is characterised by the striking contrast between the Mourne mountains backdrop, the flat dune landscape at the shore and the series of river valleys which radiate inland from the town. Reference should also be made to the locally distinctive landscape within the town, including the Shimna valley, Tipperary Wood and Donard Park and the river corridors associated with the Glen, the Tullybrannigan and the Burren rivers.

3.26 Ardglass Landscape Setting - Ardglass is a very distinctive coastal fishing village. Rocky headlands provide a strong landscape setting and the large harbour

has a robust character and a diverse mix of buildings and open space. Local landmarks include a prominent church on the summit of the steep southern headland and the castle.

3.27 The settlement is situated on a low hill, Green Hill which is quite prominent in the local landscape, particularly from the west and south west. It is located between two headlands referred to in the NILCA as providing a landscape setting for the village. Isabella Tower is a significant local landmark

3.28 *Castlewellan Landscape Setting* - The wooded slopes of Castlewellan Country Park provide a strong backdrop while the mature planting in Bunkers Hill provides further enclosure and setting to the south. Extensive views of the Mourne Mountains to the south also add to the setting of this village.

3.29 *Killyleagh Landscape Setting* – Killyleagh is a distinctive town with the prominent castle and wooded estate forming a backdrop to the west of the settlement, while the harbour and Strangford Lough to the east offer a natural focus. Prominent lands west of Shrigley Road, Coily Hill to the north west and lands between Comber Road and Holm Bay to the north east of the village also provide distinctive landscape settings.

4.0 NIEA Supplementary Planning Guidance - Wind Energy Development in NI Landscapes (2010)

4.1 In addition to NILCA 2000 further broad strategic guidance with regard to the sensitivity of Northern Ireland's landscape is contained within NIEA Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes (2010). This document contains an assessment of each of the 130 LCAs by highlighting and detailing the visual impact of wind energy development by referencing the characteristics associated with each LCA using the criteria detailed in Appendix 2.

4.2 The supplementary guidance indicates some of the landscape challenges and opportunities that should be taken into account when considering the location, siting, layout and design for wind energy development proposals while also indicating potential transboundary issues in relation to existing and future development. Although this document is specifically concerned with the impact of wind energy development it is also considered to be a useful tool in identifying those landscapes that are particularly vulnerable to change while remaining mindful that within each LCA there may be considerable variation in the sensitivity level of the landscapes.

4.3 Within this guidance each LCA is given an overall sensitivity level using a five point scale ranging from a high to low scaling system. The sensitivity level for each LCA has been assessed by considering the combined weight of many factors including the enclosure, visibility, condition, scenic, perceptual and natural heritage qualities of the landform.

4.4 Figure 3 details the location of approved, refused and pending applications for wind turbines within the District. An analysis of the most recent data suggests that approximately 270 wind turbine applications have been approved in the District between the period 1st April 2002 and 31st March 2015 while approximately 60 have been refused in the same timeframe. It should also be noted that from this most recent data was published by the Department of Infrastructure significant progress has been made on the number of applications being processed for wind turbine development within the District. An analysis of internal figures show that of the proposals for wind energy development submitted on or before the 31st March 2015 approximately 21 turbine applications have issued as approvals, 23 issued as refusals, 12 have been withdrawn before a decision has been issued leaving approximately 14 turbines legacy applications.

4.5 Of the 25 LCA's that fall within the Newry, Mourne and Down District 13 LCA's fall within the high sensitivity wind energy rating which equates to 66% of the total area of the District, 9 within the high to medium category which measures as 26% of the District leaving 3 LCAs which were all graded as having a medium sensitivity. These LCAs are Armagh/Banbridge Hills (67), Carrigutuke Hills (68) and Iveagh Slopes (77) and equate to 8% of the District. As shown in Figure 3 all three of the medium sensitivity landscapes lie on the periphery of the District which highlights

the fact that the District, in its entirety remains sensitive to wind energy and other forms of development.

4.6 Figure 3 also highlights that certain sections of the District have experienced a higher concentration of acceptable proposals for wind energy development than others. Within the timeframe of 2002 to 2015 the highest concentration of approvals were found in the following LCA's. Within Quoile Valley Lowlands LCA 38 wind turbines were approved while 32 were approved within The Mourne Foothills LCA both of which have been identified as having a high sensitivity rating in the Wind Energy Planning Guidance. Figure 3 indicates that while there has been quite an even distribution of approvals throughout the Quoile Valley Lowlands LCA approvals appear to be concentrated in the eastern section of The Mourne Foothills with approximately 10% of the wind turbines being located in the southern sections of the LCA and therefore in close proximity to the Mourne Mountains LCA which is also protected under an AONB designation.

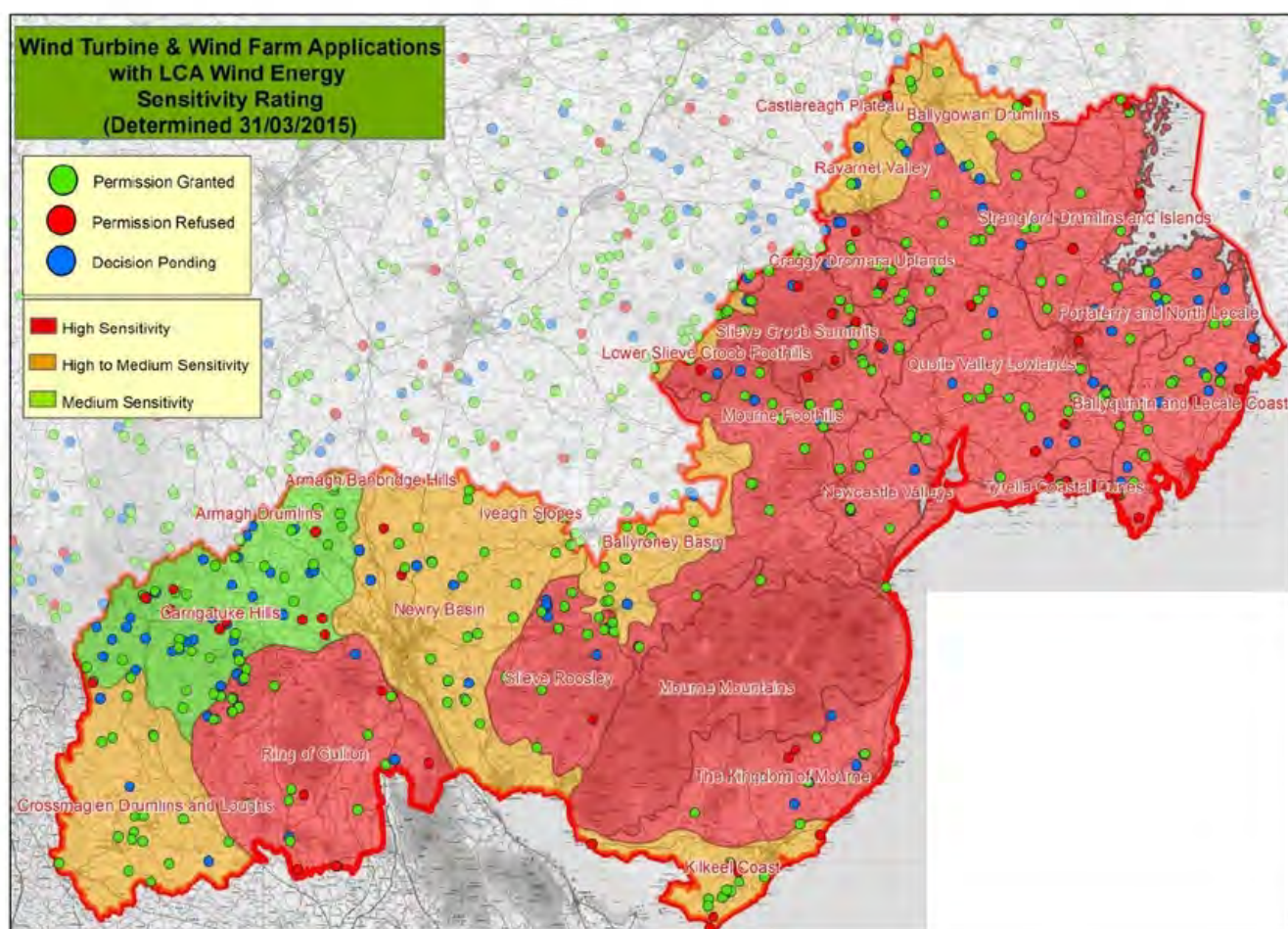
4.7 Carrigatuke Hills has the third highest concentration of approvals with 29 turbines granted. Again they appear evenly spread across the LCA. As this LCA has a medium sensitivity rating in terms of wind energy development it would have been expected that a higher proportion of wind turbines would be situated in this locality rather than those outlined in paragraph 4.6.

4.8 In contrast, other areas of the District appear to be comparatively unaffected by wind energy development. The Mourne Mountain LCA has neither any pending nor granted applications located within its entirety, while others including Ravarnet Valley LCA has only 1 approval followed closely by Castlereagh Plateau which has permission granted for 3 turbines. When assessing this data one should be mindful that only a portion of both these LCAs are included within the District.

4.9 Of the LCAs which are included in their entirety within the District the other LCAs which appear to be largely unaffected by wind turbine development include Tyrella Coastal Dunes LCA which has approval for 4 turbines and the Newcastle Valley LCA and Portaferry & North Lecale LCA which both have approval for 5 turbines each. Attributing factors to the small number of approvals in these localities could include a number of factors, for example the overall scale of the Tyrella Coastal Dunes LCA is significantly smaller than the majority of the other LCAs while the Newcastle Valley and Portaferry & North Lecale LCAs are both in close proximity to a number of international designations such as Special Area of Conservation, RAMSAR sites and SPA's.

4.10 In terms of other notable relationships between the LCA's and wind energy development trends can be found within the Ring of Gullion LCA. Given the fact that the majority of this LCA is designated as an AONB there have been a significant number of wind turbines approved within this area. In total, 17 approvals have been processed but on examination of Figure 3 it can be seen that the majority of these are located around the periphery of the locality with a cluster located along the shared boundary with the Carrigatuke Hills LCA and therefore not in close proximity to the AONB designation.

FIGURE 3 – Wind Turbine Applications with LCA Wind Energy Sensitivity Rating



As outlined in Paper 9: Public Utilities it must be considered as part of the LDP process as to whether specific areas within the District should be zoned specifically for turbine development which would help to eradicate the piecemeal development which is currently found in some sections of the District.

It should also be noted that within many of the LCAs that considerable variation maybe evident in sensitivity level across each individual area, reflecting the fact that the LCAs by definition are broad character or identity areas. The overall sensitivity level is therefore the level that prevails over most of the LCA's geographic area and is indicative of the relative overall sensitivity of each LCA. A high sensitivity level does not necessarily mean that there is likely to be no capacity for wind energy development within a given LCA and conversely a low sensitivity does not mean that there are no constraints to development.

5.0 Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment

5.1 The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment 2016 (NIRLCA) was developed by NIEA as a map based resource available online to provide advice and guidance to decision makers and the general public.

5.2 The main purpose and aims of the NIRLCA is to provide an up-to-date evidence base which will enable people to make informed decisions concerning the planning and protection of Northern Ireland's landscapes by :-

- Providing a regional framework for landscape character,
- Guiding strategic decisions about landscapes,
- Serving as an impartial evidence base,
- Giving context for more detailed local landscape studies,
- Outlining a basis for monitoring landscape change,
- Providing a comparable baseline with the rest of UK, and
- Being readily updateable and accessible via an online presentation.

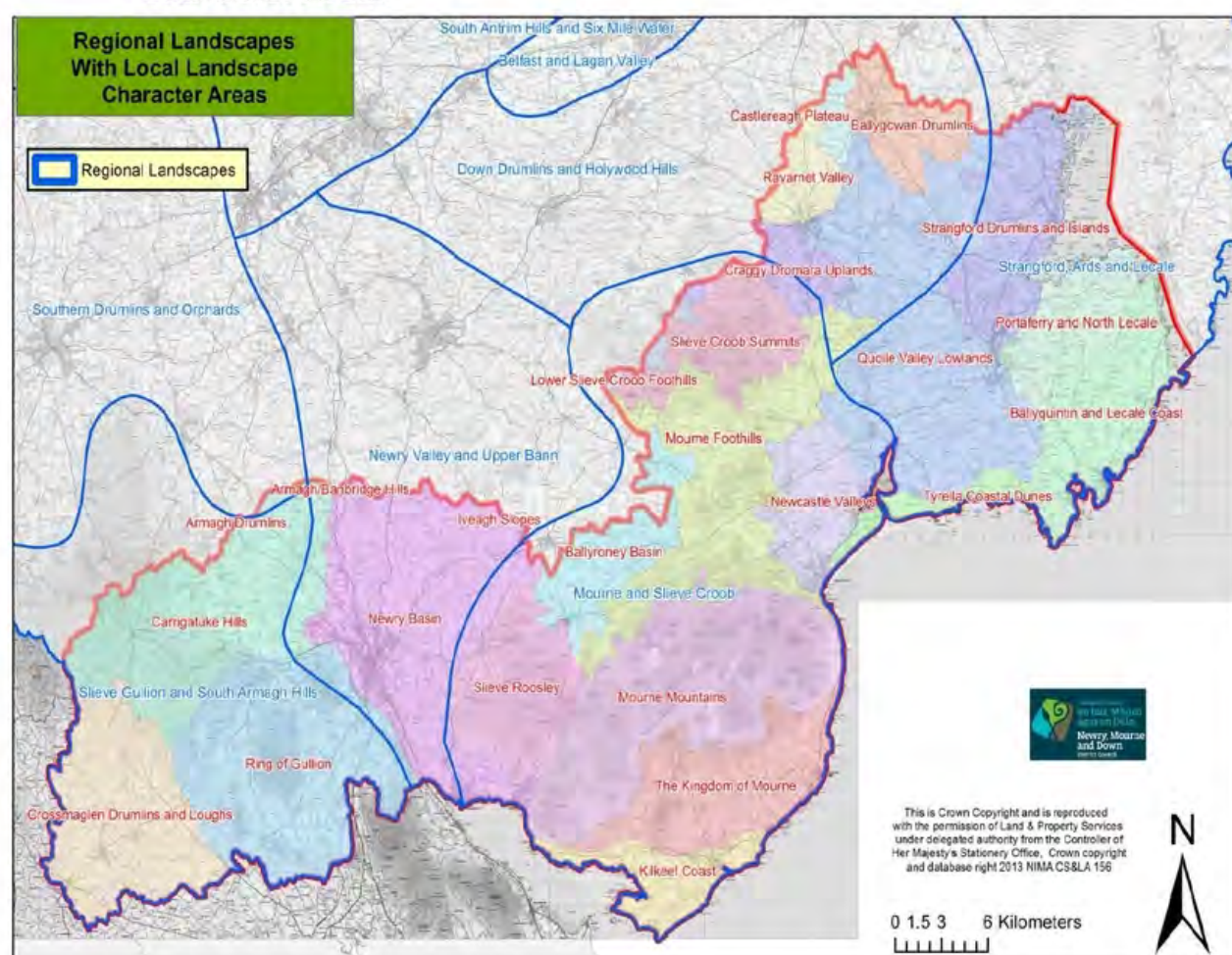
5.3 As outlined previously there has been substantial building and other development in both the urban and rural areas of Northern Ireland in recent years including single dwellings and renewable energy projects which have impacted on the character of many of our landscapes since the publication of the NILCA 1999. As such, the NIRLCA does not draw directly from this study, though the document serves as a valuable source of detailed information on the landscape.

5.4 This document has divided Northern Ireland into 26 discrete areas, referred to as regional landscape character areas (RLCA). The NIRLCA provides a strategic view of the landscape by drawing together information on both place and people which has facilitated in the creation of the unique landscapes found in Northern Ireland. It is intended that each of these areas is a recognisable landscape; with its own distinct character and sense of place with names which should be locally understood and clearly associated with the area. The assessment identifies 5 Regional Landscape Character Areas for the Newry, Mourne and Down Council Area with Figure 4 demonstrating how they read in relation to the 25 LCA's found within NMD.

- 22 - Down Drumlins and Holywood Hills
- 23 - Newry Valley and Upper Bann
- 24 - Slieve Gullion and South Armagh Hills
- 25 - Mourne and Slieve Croob
- 26 - Strangford, Ards and Lecale

5.5 Within this document NIEA has taken the opportunity to encourage all individual Councils to review and refine landscape character assessments at a local scale. Concerns however have been raised by various bodies that if work is carried out in a piecemeal approach the independence of the existing LCA document will be called into question. It is felt that the NIRLCA document offers a significant generalisation of the previous work carried out within this area of expertise and offers a broad strategic and regional overview of the intrinsic landscape of the province.

Figure 4: Regional Landscape Boundaries overlaid with Local Landscape Character Areas



5.6 Figure 5 which details the 'The Landscape Wheel' classifies the various influences which contribute to our surrounding landscapes. Through identifying these different elements which include both natural and human influences within the landscape it aids in the ability to recognise the distinct patterns which make one area of landscape different from another.

5.7 As outlined below there are concerns that the NIRLCA remain vague and lack significant detail to aid in the Development Plan while also lacking sufficient detail so to allow informed decisions to be made within the Development Management process when assessing planning applications for wind turbines and wind farm proposals.

Figure 5 - The landscape wheel



5.8 It is felt that the Landscape Character Assessment provides a more comprehensive analysis of landscapes of the province and therefore supports both areas of planning by identifying distinct areas which are vulnerable to change and other areas which may be worthy of additional protection or designations such as Areas of High Scenic Value, Local Landscape Policy Areas or Countryside Policy Areas.

5.9 The 5 regional landscapes areas within the Council District are identified below along with some of the concerns that are associated with these designations.

(a) NIRLCA 22 - Down Drumlins and Holywood Hills

5.10 It is acknowledged that this RLCA is generally recognisable at a regional level and possesses similar characteristics throughout the area. The difficulties which arise from a plan making perspective centre around the fact that the area extends across 5 different Councils. Therefore agreement would need to be sought from each Council to ensure that a consistent approach is taken when classifying the condition and sensitivity of the area.

(b) NIRLCA 23 - Newry Valley and Upper Bann

5.11 In the southern section of this NIRLCA the Newry Basin LCA (69) along with narrow eastern sections of the Carrigatuke Hills (68) and Ring of Gullion (71) LCAs are incorporated into this designation with the landscape being dominated by Newry

City and an extensive drumlin topography to the south and east. These lands are nestled between the uplands of the Mourne to the east and Slieve Gullion to the west and therefore both these boundaries are easily recognisable while the northern boundary merges into the adjoining Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council District.

5.12 Due to its intrinsic location between 2 distinctive landforms this landscape therefore plays a pivotal role in providing panoramic views of both mountain ranges and in doing so heightens the visual sensitivity of the landscape. Therefore grouping the area together with less distinct landscapes to the north raises concerns that this may detract from the area.

(c) NIRLCA 24 – Slieve Gullion & South Armagh

5.13 This RLCA encompasses 3 of the original LCAs and it is considered that due to the significant and distinct variations in the sensitivity of the landscape there may be merit in having retained the designations as per the 1999 publication. The topography of this large area includes smooth rolling hills, deep wooded valleys, rolling drumlins, bogs, loughs and the striking Ring of Gullion. In grouping these 3 areas together in terms of landscape there may therefore be a risk diminishing the integrity of The Ring of Gullion.

5.14 These concerns are intensified by the fact that the Ring of Gullion is designated as an AONB and is therefore recognised as having a unique landscape. In grouping these 3 areas together it may lead to a relaxation in granting certain types of development which may not be deemed acceptable under the previous Landscape Character Areas such as wind energy development, which in turn may lead to a further degradation of these protected landscapes.

5.15 On the contrary it is recognised that there is a strong social and community cohesion already existing within this area even when taking into consideration the sparse settlement arrangement.

(d) NIRLCA 25 - Mourne and Slieve Croob

5.16 The Mourne and Slieve Croob NIRLCA contains 13 of the original Landscape Character Areas and therefore covers a significant portion of the Newry Mourne & Down District. The fact that the original Character Assessment document felt it both appropriate and beneficial to divide the area into so many sections highlights the diversity and complexity of this given landscape. The new designation groups together the Mourne Mountains (84) and Slieve Croob summits (87) with numerous other landscapes including coastal areas, flat open expansive areas, rolling hillsides and geometric pastures. It is therefore felt that due to their distinct and unique dramatic peak formation of the Mourne and the rugged rounded summits of these landscapes that there would be considerable merit in retaining the original individual designations of these mountainous landscapes.

5.17 On the contrary it is however accepted that almost all this RLCA is highly sensitive to wind energy development and this may have played a significant role in designating the regional boundary.

(e) NIRLCA 26 - Strangford, Ards and Lecale

5.18 This RLCA groups 5 of the former LCA's together. The flat open and exposed coastal area along with lough shores define the eastern and southern limits of this character area and contain extensive sand dunes, mudflats, islands and inlets and therefore contrast significantly with the undulating drumlin landscapes of the Quoile Valley Lowlands, Strangford Drumlins and Islands and Portaferry and North Lecale.

5.19 Grouping together a deeply rural area which includes a substantial number of small coastal settlements with the large town of Downpatrick, the largest settlement in the eastern portion of the District may have the potential to introduce conflicts in terms of landscape policy. The introduction of this larger RLCA has also led to both the Tyrella Coastal Dune LCA and the Quoile Valley Lowlands LCA being distributed between 2 of the regional zonings which in turn has led to the river courses of the River Quoile and Blackstaff being separated along with significant differences in the complex topography of the landscapes.

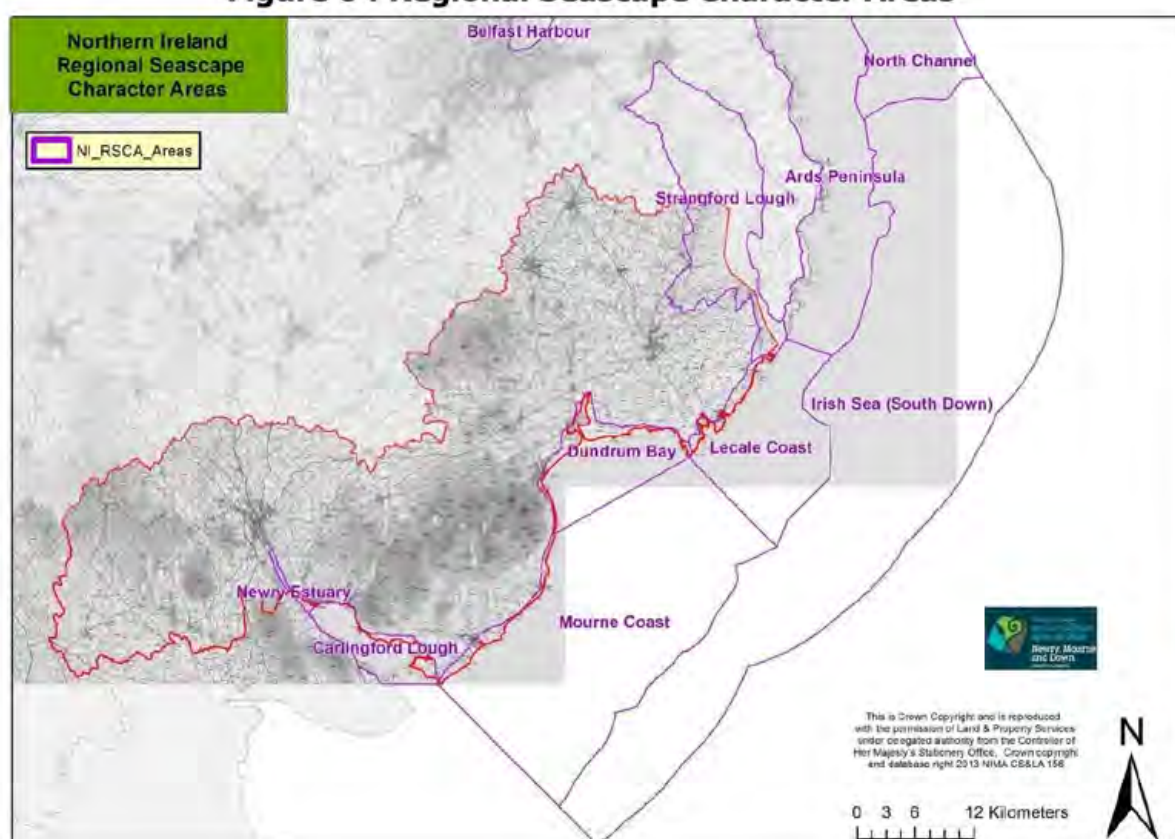
6.0 Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment (NIRSCA)

6.1 The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) commissioned and published the NIRSCA in 2014 which provided a strategic understanding of different areas of regional seascape character along the entire Northern Ireland coast. This will contribute to the aims of the European Landscape Convention through promoting the protection, management and planning of the seascape, and to support European co-operation on landscape issues. The objectives of the study includes relating the description of each seascape character area to its neighbouring terrestrial landscape character areas (as described in the Northern Ireland Character Assessment, 2000) and to take account of boundaries identified in relation to neighbouring seascape areas for the British and Irish coastline. A Seascape Character Area is defined as a unique geographic area of land, intertidal and marine area with a recognisable sense of place and identity.

6.2 As shown in Figure 6 the 7 Regional Seascape Character Areas within the Newry, Mourne and Down Council area include:

- 16 - Strangford Lough
- 17 - Lecale Coast
- 18 - Dundrum Bay
- 19 - Mourne Coast
- 20 - Carlingford Lough
- 21 - Newry Estuary
- 24 - Irish Sea (South Down)

Figure 6 : Regional Seascape Character Areas



6.3 A synopsis of the location, setting and key characteristics of the each of the Regional Seascapes can be found in Appendix 3.

6.4 The LDP area contains an extensive coastline measuring more than 100 miles, which is a critical element in the area's landscape, biodiversity, attractiveness and economy. Large parts of the coast are designated nature sites, due to their productive and biologically diverse ecosystems – such as mudflats, sand dunes, reefs and cliffs and therefore protection of this resource much be given careful consideration.

6.5 The undeveloped coast is generally included within the countryside and plays a fundamental role in the Landscape Character of the District. As outlined in the SPPS the coast must be protected from inappropriate development through conserving the natural character and landscape of the undeveloped coast while protecting it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development.

6.6 Within the LDP process an opportunity therefore exists to review and consider the best manner in which to ensure suitable protection to the coastal zone. As detailed in Paper 8: The Coast the previous draft Banbridge, Newry & Mourne Area Plan 2015 (dBNMAP) contained a Coastal Policy Area (CPA) (Policy COU 2). Following the introduction of PPS21 and the loss of the majority of Green Belt/Countryside Policy Area designations this limited coastal policy designation was removed from the plan prior to final adoption.

6.6 The opportunity now exists as part of the new plan process to review this previous CPA and consider whether it should form part of an enlarged coastal zone with both a landward and seaward element. A synopsis of the information contained with the Draft Plan is detailed below.

6.7 The CPA in the Plan Area extended from an area in Newry City south of the Greenbank Industrial Estate to beyond Maggie's Leap, 1km south of Newcastle. It extends to the Low Water Mark, and included the narrow strips of coast between the High Water Mark and the Low Water Mark along with other selected land.

6.8 The CPA followed the shores of Carlingford Lough and then travelled along the east coast of the Mourne between Greencastle and Maggie's Leap. The Policy Area was contained totally within the Newry and Mourne District, with breaks at Warrenpoint Port, Warrenpoint Watersports Centre, Kilkeel Harbour and Annalong Port. The CPA runs parallel to the protected A2 route between Newry and Killowen and then moves away from the road to follow the coast before coming together again between Glassdrumman and Maggie's Leap.

6.9 The CPA included portions of a number of landscape character areas including Newry Basin, Mourne Mountains, Kilkeel Coast and The Kingdom of Mourne, with descriptions included in Appendix 3A of this report.

6.10 The CPA can be considered in three sections:

1. Newry City to Rostrevor;

2. Rostrevor to Kilkeel; and
3. Kilkeel to Plan boundary, north of Shannaghmore Outdoor Pursuits Centre.

6.11 Newry City to Rostrevor

The CPA began south of the Greenbank Industrial Estate in Newry City and followed the channel of the Carlingford Lough inlet, past Victoria Lock towards Warrenpoint. It included mud and shingle either side of Newry River between Greenbank and Narrow Water Castle. The CPA excluded Warrenpoint Port area, before resuming at the Warrenpoint Marina and travelling along the coast between Warrenpoint and Rostrevor. It consisted of all land between the road and the Lough, except for occupied dwellings along the coastline past Dobbins Point and Rosetta towards Rostrevor. In Rostrevor, the Policy Area passed the weir, excluding the Ghann River and continues to the Quay on Shore Road, east of the village.

6.12 Rostrevor to Kilkeel

The second leg of the CPA extended from Rostrevor Quay through to Kilkeel. This area contains a strip of land that travels past Killowen point, Sheep Rock, Greencastle Point, Soldiers Point, Cranfield Point, Nicholsons Point, along the beach at Kilkeel, south of Mourne Esplanade and concludes at Kilkeel Harbour. The first 3-4 km of this leg included undeveloped land south of the A2 coastal road from Rostrevor to Killowen Cottage at Sheep Rock. The next 7-8 km was principally the rock / sand / shingle / mudflats area between Sheep Rock and Greencastle Point. The final 9-10 km of this leg ran from Greencastle Point to Kilkeel Harbour. This portion of the Policy Area includes undeveloped land and rock/sand/shingle/mudflats south of Greencastle Pier Road, Ameracam Lane, Cranfield caravan park and Windmill Road. This final segment finished by following the sand and shingle coastal strip south of Mourne Esplanade to the harbour in Kilkeel.

6.13 Kilkeel to Plan boundary, north of Maggie's Leap

The final section of the Policy Area resumed east of the Kilkeel Harbour along the shore front, and continues past Kilkeel Point, Lee Stone Point, Ballykeel Point and Mahulas Well, south of Ballymartin. It then follows the sand and shingle coastal strip south of Ballymartin and continues as a thin strip beyond Long Point, Black Rock, Murphy's Point to Wreck Port south of Annalong to the Port where the CPA broke before resuming on the northern side of the port. It resumed on the northern side of Annalong Port, with the shore area of shingle and flat rock to LWMMT, continues to Mullartown Point, Glassdrumman Port, east of Dunmore Cottages, Dunmore Head and includes the area around the Crock Horn Stream between Green Harbour and Ballagh Bridge. The CPA then continued north beyond Portmore, east of the Ballagh Road, past William's Harbour and includes the ruins of St. Mary's Church, before carrying on past The Broad Cove to the Plan boundary 100m north of Maggie's Leap.

7.0 Local Biodiversity Action Plans

7.1 As outlined in the Environmental Assets Paper, paragraphs 2.14 to 2.25 conserving the biodiversity of the District is best achieved by the designation, protection and the management of the most important nature conservation sites within our Council area, many of which fall within the rural areas of the District.

7.2 At a local level the aim of the 3 Biodiversity Action Plans which currently serve the District is to guide the conservation and enhancement of the biodiversity within the locality while identifying a sample of the rich natural heritage and habitats that also exist. It is also intended that the delivery of agreed actions for priority habitats and species that are both under pressure and in decline will continue through local partnerships.

7.3 Outlined below are a number of the habitats and species within the District which add to the rich tapestry of biodiversity and landscape within our locality. Those represented in the Council Area include

- Woodlands including mixed ashwoods, oakwoods, parkland and species rich hedgerowns
- Wetlands including rivers, streams, lakes, fens and reedbeds
- Peatlands including lowland raised bog, European dry heath and montane heath
- Coastal areas including maritime cliffs and slopes, sand dunes and saltmarshes
- Marine including mudflats and saline lagoons
- Grasslands including arable or cultivated land, lowland meadows and floodplain grazing marsh
- Urban habitats and green spaces, industrial sites and gardens

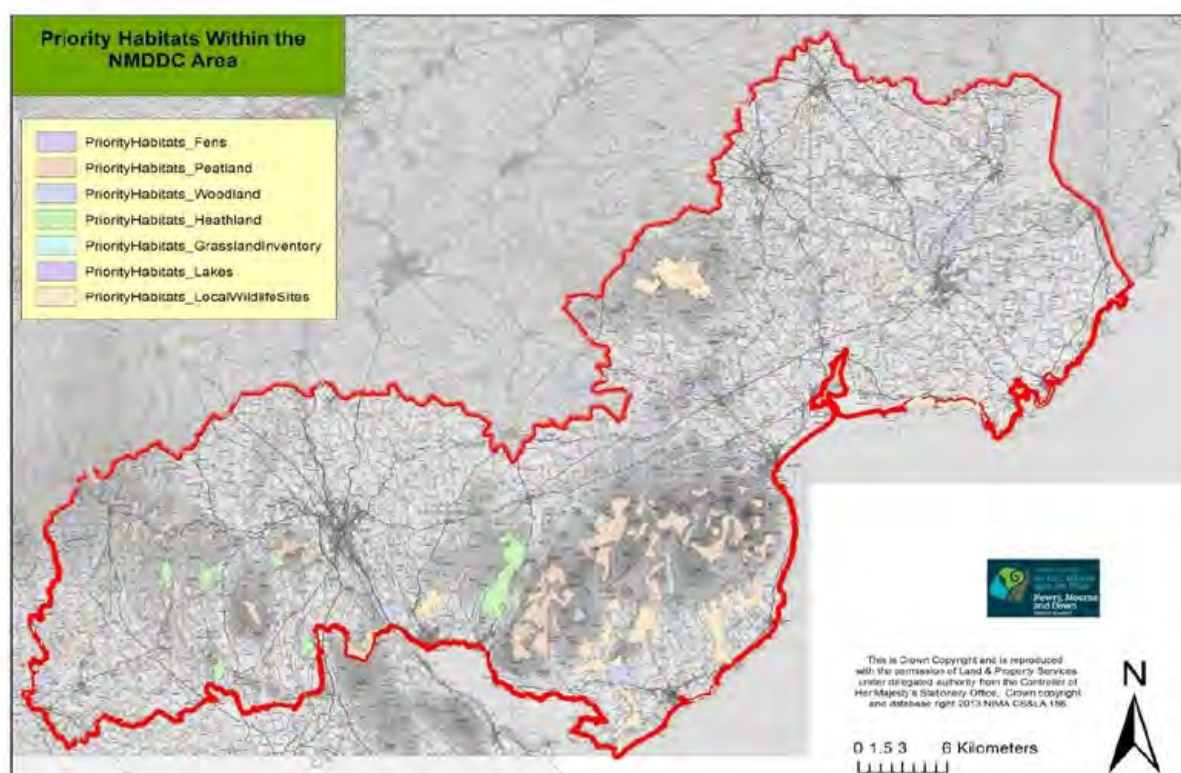
7.4 Detailed below and shown in Figure 7 are a number of examples of each of these diverse environments found within our District.

7.5 Woodlands play an important part in the heritage, culture and biodiversity of Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland remains the least wooded country in Europe with only 6% of the available land. Examples within our District include Bohill Forest Nature Reserve, Castleward Country Park, Tollymore and Castlewella Forest Park, Fathom Mountain, Rostrevor Oakwood, Creggan Poets Glen

7.6 Wetlands support a variety of plants and animals such as invertebrates, fish, amphibians, mammals and birds. Examples of wetlands include the Newry River, Shimna River ASSI, Aughnadarragh Lough ASSI, Loughkeelan ASSI and Greenan Lough ASSI

7.7 Peatland and Heathland are characteristic of the Irish landscape due to the cold, wet climate found in this area. Areas of interest with regards to this habitat include the Eastern Mourne, Black Lough ASSI, Drumlougher Lough ASSI and Cashel Lough which are home to areas of lowland and blanket bog alongside upland and montane heath.

Figure 7: Priority Habitats within Newry, Mourne & Down District



7.7 Coastal The Districts coastline is a characteristic feature extending from Killyleagh including Strangford Lough around the coast to Carlingford Lough. It supports an array of valuable coastal habitats such as maritime cliffs and slopes, coastal vegetated shingle, saltmarshes, sandy beaches, extensive sand dunes systems and many important species. Important coastal features within the area include Murlough National Nature Reserve, Dundrum Bay dunes, Tyrella Beach, Killard Point (ASSI), Mill Bay (ASSI).

7.8 Marine The District includes Strangford Lough which is the only Marine Nature Reserve in Ireland and is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SCA). There is a diverse marine habitat in the district which supports a number of internationally important species. The Council area also contains many other diverse habitats including Carlingford Lough and Dundrum Bay.

7.9 Grasslands Grassland habitats found within the Council area include lowland meadow, lowland dry acid grassland and purple moor grass. Agriculture is one of the major land uses in the district which has an impact on both the landscape and biodiversity of the District.

7.10 Gardens and green spaces Often overlooked urban spaces which include gardens, urban parks and industrial sites offer special importance in relation to biodiversity and the species they offer shelter and a haven for.

Each of the above areas contain many of our key flora and fauna species with further information included within the Biodiversity Strategies covering the District.

8.0 Local Landscape Policy Areas

8.1 At a local level Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) are those areas within or adjoining settlements that are considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance, and therefore worthy of protection from undesirable or damaging development. In accordance with SPPS and PPS 6, LLPAs are designated to help protect such environmental assets. LLPAs may include:

1. archaeological sites and monuments and their surroundings;
2. listed and other locally important buildings and their surroundings;
3. river banks and shore lines and associated public access;
attractive vistas, localised hills and other areas of local amenity importance;
and
4. areas of local nature conservation importance, including areas of woodland and important tree groups

8.2 LLPAs will help to ensure that new development does not dominate areas of distinctive landscape and townscape character. They may also function as buffer zones between different uses and help to reduce the likelihood of over-intensive development. LLPAs will help to protect those features considered of greatest importance to the local landscape setting.

8.3 With regard to the Newry, Mourne & Down landscape it is worth noting that LLPA's have been designated across the District and are identified in the existing legacy Area Plans. The features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of an LLPA are specific to individual settlements and differ from place to place. The Ards & Down Plan 2015 and the Banbridge/Newry & Mourne Area Plan 2015 have identified landscape features and spaces in and around the periphery of settlements which are deemed visually important. These designations can provide a setting to the settlement or represent individual features which enhance the settlement of the District. Further details of LLPA's, including maps indicating their boundaries is contained Paper 6: Environmental Assets.

8.4 In reference to the Landscape Character Assessment it is therefore important that all existing LLPA's are assessed and that survey work is undertaken to consider other notable areas which may be worthy of future designation, while also assessing whether any existing LLPA's should be undesignated due to unsuitable development or a detrition in the landscape.

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 The Newry, Mourne & Down Plan Area contains a diverse range of valuable and vulnerable landscapes. It is therefore evident that following careful consideration of a number of key documents including the Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment (NILCA) 2000, the SPG on Wind Energy Development, the Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessments and the Biodiversity studies carried out for the District that the landscape is highly sensitive to change with a high proportion of the District lying within some form of landscape designation.

9.2 The quality of the Newry, Mourne & Down landscape is world renowned. Its exceptional quality provides an important contribution to our sense of place, history and cultural identity. As the District is both rich and diverse in archaeological and built heritage assets alongside a distinctive and beautiful landscape and therefore must be managed in a sustainable manner to preserve and improve the built and natural environment and halt the loss of biodiversity.

9.3 The planning system therefore plays an important role in conserving, protecting and enhancing this valued environment whilst ensuring it remains responsive and adaptive to the everyday needs of society. This theme therefore remains a key focus of the wider objective of furthering sustainable development which planning authorities and committees have to consider in the preparation of their LDPs.

9.4 Areas identified as being vulnerable to change within the District include

- All of the iconic Mournes AONB, with particular reference being made to the high Mournes, the entirety of the Ring of Gullion AONB and the southern portion of the Strangford and Lecale AONB.
- Strangford & Carlingford Loughs are considered particularly sensitive to all types of development given its wealth of nature heritage features all of which are identified within Paper 6: Environmental Assets.
- All European designated sites, including 3 SPA's, 11 SAC's and 4 Ramsar Sites as also identified within the Paper 6.

9.5 It is therefore apparent that the Local Development Plan process plays an important role for Council in identifying key features and assets of the countryside while balancing the needs of the rural areas and communities against protecting the environment. Additional or amended local policies may therefore be brought forward in the LDP to complement or amplify regional policies on matters specific to the local circumstances.

9.6 This will involve consultation with local communities and the general public. Consideration must therefore also be given to whether the Area of High Scenic Value (AoHSV) included within the Magheraknock Loughs Area should be extended further into the District as well as considering whether other areas of the District would both merit and benefit from being designated as an AoHSV.

9.7 These designations represent a further tier in the landscape classification hierarchy. The District has areas of visually pleasing patterns or combinations of prominent landscape elements which may be free from major intrusion and therefore are particularly sensitive to change and may therefore require additional levels of protection.

9.8 With regards to other landscape designations consideration must also be given to whether all existing LLPAs should remain in the new Plan while also identifying any further areas merit of inclusion.

9.9 Other subjects which should also to be considered as part of this process include whether specific areas within the District should be zoned specifically for turbine development which would help to eradicate the piecemeal development which is currently found in some sections of the District.

9.10 The opportunity now also exists to review the previous Coastal Policy Area which was included within the dBNMAP 2015 and whether this should be extended along the full length of the Districts distinct coastal landscape, while working with adjacent authorities to ensure where possible that a consistent approach is undertaken.

9.11 While the countryside of the District has traditionally contained a substantial number of individual houses and other buildings, significant concern has been expressed by many about development trends and the enhanced pressures being exerted on the countryside.

9.12 It should also be noted that the Landscape Assessment forms part of the Countryside Assessment and will be taken into account when formulating the LDP. It will also form part of the Sustainability Appraisal and should be used to inform the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Appendix 1 – Landscape Character Areas and Wind Energy Classification for Newry, Mourne & Down District

66. Armagh Drumlins

Only a small south easterly portion of this LCA lies within the plan area. The Armagh Drumlins cover an extensive area of rolling north - south orientated drumlins. They are overlooked by the Carrigatuke Hills to the south and fall towards the Loughgall Orchard Belt and fringes of Lough Neagh to the north. The area is drained by numerous small winding streams. Occasional loughs and sedgy mosses occupy the hollows between drumlins. The landform becomes progressively lower and the drumlins more pronounced to the north. Land use is dominated by improved pastures, which are separated by overgrown hedgerows and tree belts. Mature hedgerow ash trees are common.

There are a number of wooded historic estates, which are associated with stone walls and stands of mature trees. The largest estate in the area is at Mullaghbawn. There are numerous scattered dwellings and farms, connected by a network of winding, hedged roads. Large farm barns and ruined stone cottages are common features. There are open views across the landscape from higher points, whilst the landscapes between the hills are intimate and enclosed.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- New development can be integrated into the landscape if it is sited on the mid-slopes of drumlins, or close to the break of slope.
- Existing hedgerows should be retained or replaced in and around building sites to maintain a continuous landscape pattern and help integrate the edges of new development into the landscape.
- Scattered development in the countryside can be accommodated if located sympathetically between trees and hills and if constructed of traditional materials, either stone or white painted pebbledash, with grey roofs.
- There are opportunities for the restoration and reuse of traditional older buildings.

Wind Energy Development - High to medium sensitivity

This is a large LCA with a strong drumlin topography and a generally robust landscape pattern that should in theory contribute to a lower sensitivity. However wind energy development is strongly constrained by the relatively small scale and pronounced form of most drumlins. Archaeological settings on drumlin skylines are especially sensitive.

The foothills of Carrigatuke Hills in the south-west of the LCA may offer the best capacity for some form of wind energy development.

67. Armagh/Banbridge Hills

The southern tips of this LCA form part of the Newry, Mourne & Down Plan Area. The Armagh/Banbridge Hills character area traverses the border of Banbridge and Armagh Districts. The Upper Bann corridor runs north-south along this border from which hills rise eastwards towards Banbridge and westwards towards Markethill. The

landscape is characterised by rolling hills, ridges and shallow valleys. Most slopes have a relatively smooth profile but there are rocky outcrops on the slopes leading up to the summit of Knockiveagh to the south. This is a varied farmland landscape, with a diverse pattern of fields, woodlands and patches of scrub. There are areas of both arable and pasture land but pasture predominates overall. Arable land is generally concentrated on the broad, upper slopes of ridges. To the south, the fields become larger and more open in character as the landform flattens out at the base of the slopes. Here, there is extensive sheep grazing and stud farming. The broader valleys have flatter pastures subdivided by drainage ditches, with patches of moss and regenerating birch-alder woodland.

Substantial farmsteads and outbuildings are often prominent on the upper slopes. Many buildings are associated with shelter stands of mixed broadleaf trees but elsewhere there are typically few hedgerow trees. Many of the buildings are of stone. There are many groups of residential dwellings scattered along rural roads in this area, as well as larger farmhouses and estates.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Broadleaf woodland planting would help to reinforce the small-scale character of parts of the landscape and to contain recent and future built development.
- The use of local building materials, in particular local stone, will help to integrate new buildings into the landscape.
- Extensive woodland planting may be a suitable way to integrate new built development into the landscape.

Wind energy development - Medium sensitivity

The broad scale landform and landcover patterns of much of this LCA are of relatively low sensitivity to wind energy development. The landscapes convex form and undulations could offer some topographic screening while features of natural and cultural heritage interest are relatively infrequent on the higher lands. The settings of settlements, historic features and loughs are more sensitive.

The higher hills in the west and centre of the LCA, which lie outside the NM&D District may have the best capacity for some form of wind energy development.

68. Carrigatuke Hills

The southern half of this LCA forms part of the local plan area. The Carrigatuke Hills extend across southern Armagh from the Ring of Gullion to Keady. This is a large scale landscape of smooth rolling green hills and deep wooded valleys. The higher hills have a wild exposed character, with areas of blanket bog and heather moorland. The hills form a broad continuous upland area with few valleys. The rounded summits are separated by broad upland plateaux. Large conifer plantations create a series of straight edged blocks on the highest hills, where they stand out clearly against open moorland. On the lower rolling hills there are many small woodlands, mature trees and treebelts resulting in a landscape of well treed character.

Bushy hedgerows bound fields, giving a locally enclosed landscape and creating a strong field pattern which enhances the distinctive landform of rounded hills. Wooded streams and loughs are attractive features of the valleys which drain from the hills. These include the valleys of the Carnagh estate, Glen Anne and Ballymoye. Large houses, farms and buildings amongst rolling hills are linked by numerous winding roads, houses and farms, which are often at the end of long tracks. There are no small settlements and Newtownhamilton is the local market town. Archaeological features are associated with some of the hill-tops, such as Mullyash Mountain. There are extensive and breathtaking views from the hill-tops particularly Carrigatuke, over the surrounding lowlands.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- TV masts on the hill summits should be kept to a minimum.
- Large farm buildings require sympathetic siting so that they are sheltered by landform and existing vegetation. New native planting alongside developments would help integrate development into the landform. Non-native planting would not fit well into the landscape.
- The large scale rolling hills provide opportunities to shelter pockets of development. It would be out of character on tops of the higher hills and moorlands but the lower hills and valley sides are more typical locations.
- The restoration of old stone cottages and farms is preferable to the construction of new buildings.
- Traditional buildings are typically at the end of long access drives rather than on roadside locations. Stone or white painted pebbledash with grey slate roofs are the traditional building materials.
- The settings to historic monuments and open hilltops would benefit from protection against development.

Wind Energy Development – Medium sensitivity

The large scale landscape of the LCA, the extent of the upland area and the fact that there are relatively few short-range views mean that parts of this LCA are well suited to the accommodation of wind energy development.

The lower and more prominent slopes to the east of the area are more sensitive to wind energy development as is the south-east section of the LCA because of its proximity to the Ring of Gullion. Care should therefore be taken to avoid adverse impacts on the highly sensitive landscape settings of the parts of the uplands that lie close to Newry and the Ring of Gullion.

69. Newry Basin The Newry Basin is a large scale rolling drumlin landscape situated between the Ring of Gullion and the Mourne Mountains. The area is drained by tributaries of the Newry River which flow in attractive river valleys. The drumlins are orientated north-north-west to south-south-east. To the south east, the drumlins are displaced by broader ridges separated by narrow, flat-bottomed valleys with ribbon loughs and bogs such as Derryleckagh Lake and Greenan Lough. To the south of Newry, the Newry River flows in a dramatic, steep sided narrow valley. The Newry Basin is a very diverse area, with a rich heritage of historic landscapes and

archaeological sites. The rolling fields have a neat and artificially green appearance, although pastures become increasingly marginal with rocky knolls, bracken and gorse hedgerows towards the foothills of the Mourne Mountains. Elsewhere, well trimmed low hedges and tree belts separate fields, creating an intact and unified landscape pattern. Small woodlands, such as Derryleckagh Wood, are often found on valley sides.

There are occasional panoramic views of the Mourne Mountains from the tops of the drumlins. The landscape seems open and exposed on ridge-tops and enclosed and sheltered within the valleys. There are scattered individual bungalows and large farms throughout the area and the many new immaculate dwellings have a neat suburban feel. New bungalows and derelict stone cottages are often sited on drumlin tops, particularly towards Slieve Roosley. There is a network of small hedged and hedge banked winding roads connecting scattered dwellings. These and the major roads 'roller coaster' over the drumlins, creating a confusing and often disorientating landscape for the traveller. The town of Newry is at the head of the Newry River which leads to Carlingford Lough, the port of Warrenpoint and the small town of Rostrevor are located in sheltered bays along the coast. Narrow Water Castle is an important historic landmark at the entrance to the Newry River.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Ribbon and scattered rural development within the broader fringes of Newry is visually intrusive where it is sited on ridge-lines. Development should be concentrated in coherent groups located on lower slopes, close to existing buildings.
- Development is inappropriate in the broad tranquil valleys at Derryleckagh.
- Single dwellings in the countryside could be integrated more easily if located on lower slopes amongst native vegetation. Non-native species are inappropriate. It is important to keep views of the Mournes open. Restoration of old stone cottages would be beneficial.
- Large new elements would be visible but the rolling landform can easily accommodate carefully sited development, providing that it is associated with new planting which is designed to link with local field patterns.

Wind energy development - High to medium sensitivity

This diverse landscape contains a number of elements that are sensitive to wind energy development around the fringes of the area. South of Newry the LCA is located between Slieve Gullion and the Mourne Mountains which heightens its landscape and visual sensitivity.

The least sensitive parts of the LCA are the broad drumlin ridges to the north-east, the area around Burren and the rivers edge and industrial landscape south of Newry city centre.

70. Crossmaglen Drumlins and Loughs

Crossmaglen Drumlins and Loughs is a lowland landscape on the southern border which is confined to the north and east by the uplands of the Carrigatuke Hills and

predominantly upland grass, heather and moorland on the hilltops, with pasture on the lower land, bordered by stone walls and gorse hedgerows. Field boundaries form striking patterns on some hill sides, particularly in areas where there are long 'ladder farms'. Commercial forestry plantations occur in large blocks on the hillsides.

In the southern part of the area, these extend across the summits and diminish the apparent scale of the landform. The lower slopes are dotted with a mixture of stone small holdings and modern pebbledash bungalows. The majority of the new development is sited in an ad-hoc fashion, often at a distance from the roads. Forkill and Meigh are two of the main settlements within the area. The whole area has an enclosed, isolated character, with derelict stone walls on the upper slopes and abandoned stone farmsteads and barns. It has long been an important 'gateway' landscape at the border between the Republic and Northern Ireland. The area is extremely rich in archaeological and historical features, including a variety of cairns, castles and cashels. Radio masts and towers dominate the skylines.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- The uplands are very scenic and wild and over development would not be characteristic.
- The restoration of traditional dwellings should be encouraged.
- Development on ridges would be highly visible but the landform may accommodate some small scale development within low undulating areas.
- The proliferation of scattered piecemeal development throughout the inner basin of the Ring is already threatening the special scenic qualities of this distinctive landscape; further ad hoc development should be discouraged and the use of building materials carefully controlled.

Wind Energy Development – High

Sensitivity to wind energy development is very high due to the topography of the landscape, the dispersed settlement pattern and a high concentration of cultural and natural assets.

Slieve Gullion is located centrally within the LCA and turbines located within this vicinity could dominate the entire area. Care should therefore be taken to avoid adverse impacts on the extremely sensitive, open, exposed hills or upper slopes. It should also be noted that due to its close proximity to Carlingford Lough there may be seaward issues to consider in the future.

72. Slieve Roosley

Between Newry and the Mourne Mountains in the south of the country, the Slieve Roosley landscape comprises a group of open, exposed hills with a rugged profile. These rise to 364m at Slieve Roe and include the surrounding farmed footslopes, which are dissected by river valleys. The Rostrevor Glen and Kilbroney River together form a marked feature along the eastern boundary of the area, which is underlain by a complex geology of igneous and sedimentary rocks. The hills are used for sheep grazing and are characterised by rough, open, unfenced pastures of moorland grasses, gorse, bracken and sedges. The fringes comprise semi-improved

pastures of small fields enclosed by stone walls and gorse hedgerows, which progressively becomes rougher as the land rises. There are a few trees in the hedgerows on the footslopes and in the glens but no trees on the hilltops.

Scattered settlement is concentrated around the edges of the hills and along the glens, including the village of Mayobridge. There is a mixture of old cottages and farms, as well as some new buildings, which are predominantly small in scale. Narrow roads are unfenced on the hilltops and enclosed by stone walls at lower elevations. They connect settlements and wind across the hills providing long, open, panoramic views to the dramatic horizon of the Mourne Mountains and into the intricate patchwork of the valleys below. This is an attractive open landscape of windswept, wild hilltops and more intimate valleys and footslopes. The area is rich in archaeological remains such as raths, standing stones, graves and earthworks. On the upper slopes, the historic townland boundaries are prominent in areas enclosed during the potato famine, adding interest and diversity to the landscape.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Radio masts are the main threat to the open summits and should be kept to a minimum.
- The restoration of derelict stone cottages would help conserve traditional buildings within the area.
- New buildings would be least intrusive if they were constructed near to Mayobridge and built in traditional styles using local building materials.

Wind Energy Development – High

The combination of an elevated landscape which includes intimate valleys and footslope landscapes gives rise to an area of high scenic quality.

The outer hills to south and north of Mayobridge may be better equipped to accommodate wind energy development. Particular care should be taken to avoid adverse impacts on the distinctive skyline of the upland ridges and views to and from the Mournes, Carlingford Lough and Carlingford Mountain.

Transboundary issues and seaward issues may arise if wind energy development were to occur within areas of County Louth or Carlingford Lough

73. Kilkeel Coast

The Kilkeel Coast extends from Killowen Point to Ballymartin. It comprises gently undulating, coastal lowland between 0 m and 30 m AOD. The land falls gently and flattens out towards the shallow, sandy coastline. The lowland is dissected by numerous rocky burns and by the larger Kilkeel River, White Water and Cassy Water. The rivers flow in deep, narrow channels strewn with rocks and boulders. They are not prominent in the wider landscape but are attractive local features. The steep gullies are often clothed with trees and scrubby vegetation. Medium sized fields are separated by open banks, hedgerows and a few trees, as well as distinctive, robust walls built from rounded granite boulders. The walls are often topped with hedges. There are small attractive areas of tall yellow reeds and marsh associated with the

ponds and wetlands near to the mouth of the White Water and an extensive salt marsh at Mill Bay.

There is a scattered mix of old cottages and more recent development along the A2 coastal road and numerous minor roads. Extensive ribbon development has blurred the fringes of Kilkeel and is a prominent element in this open landscape. Caravan sites are located along flat grassy headlands of the coastal fringe. Green Castle is a local landmark on Greencastle Point and is one of a number of sites of archaeological interest in the area. The flat landscapes just inland from the coast are pitted with sand and gravel quarries, many of which are disused. There are open, expansive views across the coast, Carlingford Lough and mudflats, into the farmland of the 'Kingdom of Mourne' and the Mourne Mountains. It is a peaceful landscape of calm lapping water, salty air and calling sea birds along muddy estuary sides.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Existing ribbon development already detracts from local landscape character. Further development should be clustered in small coherent groups of buildings to reduce further intrusion and should be associated with tree planting.
- A combination of planting and gently graded embankments may help to reduce the impact of existing works to the west of Kilkeel.
- Pressure from tourism and the continued expansion of caravan sites requires careful management to avoid detracting from the existing landscape character. Strategic shelterbelts and minor earth mounding may help screen existing and new developments.

Wind Energy Development – High to medium

A large portion of this LCA forms an important setting and foreground to views of the Mournes and Carlingford Lough and Mountain. Towards the south-east coast the influence of development and limited inland views tend to reduce landscape sensitivity. The open, exposed uninhabited coastal areas should also be protected.

74. Kingdom of Mourne

The Kingdom of Mourne comprises the rolling footslopes of the Mourne Mountains, including the outlying mountain of Knockree. The land falls to the coastal fringe to the south and is dissected by numerous parallel streams and rivers running broadly north-west to south-east towards the coast. A patchwork of medium sized square pastures is divided by highly distinctive and robust stone walls of glacial granite boulders. These rounded boulder walls without mortar dominate the landscape, creating a unique and unified landscape pattern. Vegetation is limited to occasional scattered trees, distinctive yellow gorse along field boundaries and patchy deciduous woodland in the valleys.

Large regular shaped coniferous plantations clothe the summit of Knockree and the valley slopes of Annalong River. There are numerous scattered individual houses and farms along a dense network of narrow roads, which are aligned perpendicular to the slopes and in parallel with the landform. Most roads run along spurs with occasional links across the valley streams via stone bridges. Buildings are a mixture

of old white painted stone cottages and farms and new pebbledash bungalows and houses. Most buildings are small in scale. There are long views to the coast and to the Mourne Mountains, the latter providing a backcloth to the intricate pattern of blocky stone walls and fields. This rural 'stone wall landscape', is known locally as the 'Kingdom of Mourne'.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Continued scattered housing and bungalow development throughout the area is leading to the erosion of its rural character. In particular, the impact of ornamental plants and garden 'furniture' often has a negative influence. The area has reached its capacity for such development and the restoration of any derelict stone buildings should be a priority over the construction of new buildings.
- Large scale or vertical development (including telegraph poles and telecommunication masts) would be particularly disruptive in this area, as would the use of any building material other than stone.

Wind Energy Development – High

This landscape is highly sensitive to physical and visual disruption due to the landscape being generally open with a distinctive pattern of small to medium field enclosures which appear visible from within the landscape and higher land.

Care should be taken to avoid adverse impacts on the sensitive visually prominent and open exposed upper slopes and shorelines. Transboundary and seaward issues may arise due to the proximity of County Louth and the coastline.

75. Mourne Mountains

The prominent pyramidal peaks of the Mourne Mountains form a stunning backdrop to views throughout south-eastern Northern Ireland. They comprise an area of distinct steep rocky summits rising to 850m at Slieve Donard. The underlying geology is granite which is reflected by the characteristic tors which cap the mountain tops. It is a landscape of exposed, thin grass cover, rock and scree slopes. There are no less than 12 high peaks grouped close together near the highest summit of Slieve Donard. The open mountain slopes are predominantly rough grass and heather, close-cropped by sheep. Stone walls snake up the lower slopes but higher up there are no field boundaries. Loughs, reservoirs and rocky mountain streams occupy the steep combs and glens, which dissect the mountain ridges. Areas of blanket bog on the narrow plateau between the peaks are punctuated by small rounded loughs, the sources of the many rivers and streams which radiate from the mountains. Broadleaved woodland extends up the glens from the surrounding lowlands, where there is also some commercial forestry. The Silent Valley, containing the Silent Valley Reservoir, is a popular tourist destination and the whole area is a mecca for walkers and climbers.

There is no settlement on the upper hillslopes and mountain tops and only sparse derelict stone cottages and barns on the lower hillside fringes. Very few roads penetrate the mountains, Spelga Pass being the only place where the landform allows the passage of a road. There are stunning, long distance, panoramic views to

the sea, across the unique stone wall landscape known as the 'Kingdom of Mourne' and across the lower land to the north. It is an open, exposed, wilderness mountain landscape and its distinctive character is reflected by its designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Eastern Mourne are also designated as an ASSI, as a result of their geological and physiographical features as well as heathland and upland flora. The Mourne Wall is of historic interest.

- Any development on skylines or within open treeless landscapes would be highly visible. Its accommodation within hollows sheltered by scrub and traditional stone walls should be encouraged.
- The restoration of traditional, small stone cottages and barns is preferable to the construction of new buildings; the use of local stone is essential. Large scale barns would be inappropriate in this upland landscape.
- The development of wind farms, radio masts, reservoirs and associated infrastructure should be discouraged in this highly sensitive landscape. Careful visual analysis would be required before construction.

Wind Energy Development – High

Within this character area there is a collection of distinctive mountain summits, widespread visibility and memorable skyline profiles. Care should therefore be taken to avoid adverse impacts on the visually prominent and open, exposed upper slopes, ridges or rocky crags. There were no operational wind farms in this LCA.

76. Ballyroney Basin

The Ballyroney Basin occupies a lowland waterlogged area of land enclosed by the Slieve Croob Summits to the north-east, the Mourne Mountains to the south-east and the Iveagh Slopes to the west. The area is underlain by a solid geology of intrusive igneous rocks, resulting in a flat and waterlogged landscape of extensive moss and loughs, which is interrupted by distinct drumlins. The moss supports rushes and sedges, heather, gorse and scrubby woodland consisting of regenerating birch and willow. Lackan Bog, to the east of Ballyroney, has been assigned ASSI status and represents one of the largest single blocks of lowland peatland left in County Down. Drumlins are farmed and pastures are enclosed by gappy hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.

Built development is clustered on drumlins and is linked by roads, which cross the waterlogged basin on high embankments. A number of settlements are sited on drumlins in riverside locations but built development is scattered evenly across higher land. The small white-rendered settlements create attractive features in the landscape. The striking town of Rathfriland sits on top of a prominent hill which rises out of the flat plain. It is a major landmark and acts as a radial focus for roads across the Basin. Views are typically short as they are interrupted by drumlins and the dense pockets of gorse and birch on the waterlogged land. However, the Mourne Mountains form a striking backdrop to the Basin as a whole. The River Bann passes through the basin but its course does not influence the landscape as it winds its way inconspicuously between drumlins and under stone bridges.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

New development will be most inconspicuous if it is concentrated around existing hamlets rather than spreading across the rural countryside, or as dense ribbon development along the roads.

Wind Energy Development – High to medium

The variation in topography over short distances and the small scale drumlins mean that the landscape could become overwhelmed by poorly sited wind energy development

To the south of this LCA there are regular views out of the landscape to the Mourne Mountains and this section therefore plays an important role in providing a key setting. Within the northern section there are fewer sensitive sites and the landscape is less significant in forming a setting to the Mourne Mountains, however the majority of this portion lies outside the Newry, Mourne & Down District. There are also a considerable number of cultural heritage features worthy of protection.

77. Iveagh Slopes

The Iveagh Slopes are the northern slopes of Knockiveagh. They support marginal pasture which is grazed by sheep and some cattle; scattered patches of gorse add texture to the landscape. The upper plateau is undulating, with areas of bog within the numerous shallow depressions. These hollows are often emphasised by the hedgerow pattern, which radiates from the centre of the depression. The upper slopes of Knockiveagh are littered with rocky outcrops. There is a distinctive elongated field pattern, with hedgerows running parallel to the slope contours. The landscape is relatively open, with scattered hedgerow trees, particularly on lower slopes. However, many of the narrow roads have a more sheltered character and are bounded by hedgerows with hedgerow trees. The settlement pattern is a regular scattering of farmsteads and their outbuildings; villages are rare, although small clusters have grown up at the main road junctions. The farms are often situated at the end of long, straight lanes which sets them back from the road. There are long views across Northern Ireland to the Sperrins and the Mournes when visibility is clear.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- The siting of built development at the end of long driveways, set back from the road, is appropriate to the character of the area.
- Siting new development on the lower slopes will ensure that the wild rocky character of the upland areas is conserved.
- The use of natural stone for built development and farm outbuildings is characteristic of this upland area.
- Small clusters of dwellings are sited at road junctions; ribbon development spreading out from these junctions is not typical of the area.

Wind Energy Development - Medium

A small southerly portion of this LCA is contained within the Newry, Mourne & Down District Council Area. Care should be taken to avoid adverse impacts on areas with

long distance views to the Mourne as well as protecting prominent and open exposed upper slopes.

83. Lower Slieve Croob Foothills

The Lower Slieve Croob Foothills form a smooth, rolling, rural area of high ground (reaching approximately 200m) to the west of the craggy, pointed Slieve Croob Summits. It comprises rolling ridges and gently incised glens which are mostly aligned in a SW-NE direction. Pasture is the predominant land use and the strong geometric field pattern is an important and prominent feature of the landscape. Farms are relatively large and most have numerous outbuildings. They are often well integrated by a unified style or colour scheme. Those on the floor of the glen are often associated with stands of beech trees. The brightly coloured roofs of farm buildings are attractive, contrasting with the landscape and relating the outbuildings to their farms. Farms are evenly distributed and there are no major settlements within the area.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Colours and finishes applied to farm outbuildings may create a sense of unity between buildings. Traditional colours such as reds are common in this area.
- Inappropriate building styles and ornamental gardens associated with new housing could be intrusive within the tranquil rural landscape of the glens.

Wind Energy Development – High to Medium

A small easterly section of this LCA is located within the Newry, Mourne & Down District. The open landscape offers wide visibility to the landscapes beyond, most notably the Mourne AONB increasing the sensitivity of the area. Particular care should be taken to avoid adverse impacts on areas with distinctive views to the surrounding Slieve Croob Summits.

84. Mourne Foothills

The Mourne Foothills landscape wraps around the northern fringes of the massive summits of Slieve Croob and the Mourne Mountains. The area includes the town of Castletwellan which lies between these two major upland areas at a height of 100 m above sea level. The characteristic rugged scenery, which includes some distinctive hill summits, rocky outcrops and patches of gorse, has been moulded from intrusive igneous rocks, primarily granites. A strong landscape pattern of geometric pastures is reinforced by sturdy stone walls and well maintained hedgerows, which are often boosted by gorse; stands of wind-blown pines add further texture to the landscape. Sheep grazing dominates, especially on upper slopes. The scattered whitewashed dwellings and farms and red painted outbuildings stand out clearly against the greens and browns of the landscape. The traditional buildings are small in scale and are well integrated within the upland landscape.

Settlements are distributed densely across the valley sides, linked by a network of small roads, which follow local ridge-lines and valleys. Large conifer plantations clothe the lower slopes of the Mourne in this area. They include the Castletwellan and Tollymore Forest Parks and the plantations on the slopes above Newcastle.

Quarries are present, both working and disused and archaeological remains are commonplace including cashels, raths, forts and the famous Legananny Dolmen. Elevated points, such as White Hill, give dramatic views over the surrounding lowland landscapes of the Newcastle Valleys and the Quoile Valley Lowlands.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Traditional stone cottages should act as a reference for modern styles of housing in this area; simple designs using local materials and incorporating vernacular features are most appropriate.
- Features such as stands of pine should be conserved; they may be used to shelter dwellings in exposed positions or as a means for integrating new development.

Wind Energy Development – High

The majority of this landscape is highly sensitive to wind energy development. It is a varied and rugged landscape of high scenic quality which performs an important role in providing an outstanding setting to other more elevated landscapes adjacent. Care should also be taken to avoid adverse impacts on areas with distinctive views to the surrounding Slieve Croob Summits.

The north-eastern part of the LCA may be the best suited area to accommodate some form of wind energy development.

85. Newcastle Valleys

The Newcastle Valleys is an area of rolling ridges of pasture which links the Mourne Foothills to the Tyrella Coastal Dunes. It includes the river courses of the Burren, Ballybannan and Moneycarragh Rivers as far as Dundrum Bay. This is a diverse landscape, with medium-sized pastures divided by broken stone walls and gorse hedgerows. Hedgerow trees and shelterbelts around farms add some tree cover and the mature linear woodlands along some parts of the river corridors provide a visual link to the more extensive wooded landscapes of the Tollymore Forest Park to the north.

Houses are scattered throughout the area; vernacular single storey white-finished cottages are prominent, although there has been a proliferation of the modern bungalows, especially on the low ground around Newcastle. Newcastle is sheltered by the looming silhouettes of Slieve Donard and Slievnacloy, which dwarf the surrounding landscape. The scattering of individual roadside houses in the vicinity of Newcastle tends to blur the edges between the larger settlement and the distinctive neighbouring villages of Maghera, Bryansford and Dundrum. The relatively dense road network has encouraged this pattern of piecemeal development. There are small conifer plantations and patches of linear woodland in the upper reaches of the valleys and numerous archaeological remains including raths, standing stones, chambered graves and souterrains.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Built development, which is located within the valleys and avoids prominent ridge-lines, will be most easily accommodated.
- The siting of new built development in a concentrated form, around existing settlements, will avoid continuous urban sprawl along the roads.
- The conservation of the 'green tongues' of linear woodland along the river valleys would protect the setting of the villages and the integrity of the wider landscape pattern since the woodlands provide valuable links to the more extensive Forest Parks to the north.
- Traditional cottages should be conserved where possible to retain the character of the area. New buildings may use traditional architectural forms and features to integrate them into this rural area.

Wind Energy Development – High

The mixture of ridges and valleys contained within this LCA on the margins of the Mourne make this area very vulnerable to change due to their complex and varied character together with a high concentration of archaeological sites. The north eastern part of the LCA is the most likely to be able to accommodate some form of wind energy while particular care should be taken to avoid adverse impacts pm areas with distinctive views to the Slieve Croob summits.

86. Tyrella Coastal Dunes

The Tyrella Coastal Dunes is a strip of coastline which lies behind Dundrum (Outer) Bay on the south Down coast, between St John's Point in the east and Newcastle in the west. The area is dominated by extensive sand dunes. Their hummocky forms are covered in windswept Marram grass backed by flat farmland which supports rough grazing. A long sandy beach and the extensive mudflats at Dundrum Inner Bay together create a flat expanse which contrasts dramatically with the looming peaks of the Mourne Mountains. The beach becomes progressively stonier towards Newcastle. The flat coastal strip also contrasts with the undulating land of the Quoile Valley Lowlands and Newcastle Valleys to the north and west. The main A2 road runs along the coast and is bordered by a ribbon of housing and development. Close to Newcastle, caravan sites and industrial development add to the variety of modern housing styles which back the dunes. The greens of the Royal County Down golf course provide a further contrast in landscape character on the fringes of Newcastle.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- The vernacular style (ie low, white-finished cottages) may be replicated in modern architecture. Small clustered settlements should be sought rather than infill along the coastal road which would lead to continuous ribbon development; views to the dunes and sea should be conserved by ensuring that undeveloped sections are maintained between settlements.
- Boundaries around housing are most appropriate if they respond to traditional styles and materials; stone walls, hedgerows or post and wire fencing with gorse are all suitable forms of boundary. Ranch style fencing, brick walls or ornamental planting are inappropriate in this open, coastal and windswept landscape.
- Caravan parks should be sheltered by landforms and use local plant species to provide screening and some integration in the landscape. They should be set well back from the dunes where their visual and landscape impact would be minimised.

Wind Energy Development – High

The Tyrella Coastal Dunes are highly sensitive to wind energy development primarily due to their open and exposed character and the important role they play in providing a setting to the Mourne Mountains. Any form of wind energy development is likely to interrupt important skylines and would therefore be intrusive into this sensitive landscape.

Due to the proximity of Carlingford Lough and the south Down coast there may be seaward issues to consider in the future.

87. Slieve Croob Summits

The Slieve Croob Summits are a series of rounded summits formed from intrusive igneous rocks within a surrounding lowland area of sedimentary rocks. They stand out as distinct massive rocky summits with thin grass cover and shattered rocky screes. The land rises to a height of 534m at Slieve Croob. The lower slopes are marginal pasture divided by broken stone walls and small stone cottages, many of which lie derelict. Stunted, wind-sculpted trees stand against these cottages or nestle in the more sheltered slopes of this exposed environment. The summits are an open, rugged landscape, with only a few conifer plantations. Drumkeeragh Forest, on the slopes of White Hill, is the largest. Few roads cross the landscape but viewpoints such as Windy Gap allow panoramic views over the surrounding lowlands, as well as across to the Mourne Mountains. The prominent ridge-lines are visible from miles around, particularly those formed by the Slieve Croob/Slievenisky complex and Slievegarran. Cashels, raths and standing stones are found on many of the slopes leading to the Slieve Croob summits. The most important is the Legananny Dolmen, an important chambered grave site

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- This upland landscape is extremely sensitive to built development; renovation of traditional stone cottages should take precedence over building new dwellings.

Wind Energy Development – High

The openness of this landscape together with its high visibility and its important role in providing a gateway and mid-distance views to the Mournes AONB make this LCA very sensitive to wind energy development.

The lower slopes on the north-eastern fringe of this LCA away from the higher ridgelines may be the most appropriate location for wind energy development. Care should be taken to avoid adverse impacts on the sensitive prominent ridgelines of Slieve Croob.

88. Craggy Dromara Uplands

An elevated drumlin landscape to the east of Dromara with a rugged, relatively wild character and a rough texture. The summits are separated by a rolling plateau of marginal farmland and the rounded drumlin landform is broken by numerous rocky outcrops and clumps of gorse. Pastures are of varied shapes and sizes and many are enclosed by low, broken stone walls. Overgrown hedgerows, clumps of gorse, rocky

outcrops and patches of marshy farmland give the landscape an untamed character, although these pockets of rough land are interspersed by rolling pastures. There are no woodlands, but stands of Scot's pine and groups of mature oak trees shelter some of the older farmsteads. Holly is characteristic of hedgerows. Derelict farmsteads are often juxtaposed with more recent bungalow development along principal roads, such as the B2 and the roads alongside Lough Aghery and Cluntagh Lough. Traditional white farmsteads with stone barns are prominent and are often sited close to dramatic rocky outcrops. A rath, sited on a local skyline to the north west of Dromara, is a special local landscape feature and forms part of the setting for the attractive historic mill buildings at Woodford.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Local roads are already reaching their capacity to accommodate linear ribbon development.
- The presence of existing trees of stature and the planting of native species may assist the integration of new buildings in the landscape.
- Conservation of existing stone walls and gateposts, using local stone for repairs and building new stone walls will help to retain local identity.
- Restoration of derelict buildings and their adjacent paddocks will conserve the traditional built styles of the area.

Wind Energy Development – High

The eastern section of this LCA is located within the Newry, Mourne & Down District Council area. The landscape forms a foreground to views of the Mourne and Slieve Croob summits. Wind energy development on the drumlins found to the east may not be appropriate due to the scale of the landscape not being sufficiently large enough to accommodate this type of development.

90. Ravarnet Valley

Only the southern portion falls within the plan area. The Ravarnet Valley landscape is found to the south of Lisburn, in the broad valley of the Ravarnet River and its tributaries. The lowland has an undulating landform, with numerous shallow drumlins and elongated, rounded hills. Many of the drumlins have a rather amorphous form and are separated by shallow hollows; the inter-drumlin hollows are often poorly drained, with patches of marsh and a hummocky, uneven terrain. The broader floodplains have a more remote, tranquil character and the relatively long views in these areas contrast with the enclosure of the surrounding drumlin landscapes. The neat patchwork of fields and hedgerows on the drumlins is less predictable in the floodplains and is sometimes interrupted by patches of dense carr woodland, rushes and gorse. There are some loughs on parts of the valley floor, particularly in areas where the valley floor has a slightly undulating landform. The group of loughs to the north of Magheraknock are particularly attractive. The area has a fairly homogeneous character, with a patchwork of farmland and hedgerows, interspersed with numerous small farmsteads.

The farms are always sited on the midslopes of the drumlins and are linked by winding, narrow roads which follow the higher ground. Recent development has

been concentrated along these roads and forms a broadly linear pattern. Hedgerow trees are scattered thinly throughout the landscape and have an important visual presence. Stands of mature trees are concentrated around farmsteads and patches of damp woodland thrive in waterlogged areas. A larger area of woodland persists at Larchfield estate, on the eastern slopes of Windmill Hill, although it is largely hidden behind the high stone walls which surround the estate.

Wind Energy Development – High to medium

The most easterly quarter of this LCA is included within the Newry, Mourne & Down District. The area around Ballynahinch may be the most appropriate for wind energy development where existing quarrying activity has influenced the character of the landscape, however care must be taken to minimise turbines being associated with pylons.

91. Quoile Valley Lowlands

The Quoile Valley Lowlands extend north-south down the centre of Down District, encompassing the courses of the Ballynahinch, Annacloy and Blackstaff Rivers. To the west, the land rises to the summits of Slieve Croob and to the east, the numerous islands of the Strangford Drumlins and Islands stretch into the sea lough. The height and density of the drumlins varies; the landform becomes progressively shallower towards the south but the drumlins on the fringes of Strangford Lough are relatively steep and have a pronounced egg-shaped form. Water courses wind around the drumlins and form small inland loughs or bogs in the inter-drumlin hollows. The loughs often have wooded margins and the bogs show varying degrees of vegetational succession, from open heather and rushes to gorse scrub and small trees. The prominent field pattern is emphasised by well maintained stone walls and hedgerows. Small to medium sized farms support mainly sheep and cattle grazing, although there are arable fields on the better drained drumlins.

Avenues of beech and stands of pine are characteristic features which stand out in the landscape, especially where they occur on the summits of the smooth hillocks. The influence of estates adds to the appearance of a fairly well wooded landscape. Large, white-finished farm houses and small traditional stone dwellings are both present, as well as scattered modern housing; they are connected by a dense network of roads and lanes. Red painted outbuildings are common and add character to the landscape. The drumlin landforms create distinctive landscape settings for the many clustered settlements, including Ballynahinch and Downpatrick. Small roads cross the numerous watercourses on stone bridges. Rathes, standing stones and mottes are prominent landscape features, creating a strong sense of landscape history.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Farm outbuildings may be landmarks within the landscape if they are painted appropriately; red finishes are characteristic of the area.
- Traditional stone cottages are particularly characteristic of the area; restoration of these is preferable to new built development.

Wind Energy Development – High

The small scale of the drumlins and topography, their distinctive profiles and the high concentration of natural and cultural landscape features heighten the areas sensitivity.

Due to the proximity of the south Down coast and Strangford Lough there may be seaward issues to consider. It should also be noted that although Carlingford Lough is located between 30-40km away from the LCA this relationship should be considered especially from higher ground to the south.

92. Ballyquintin and Lecale Coast

The Ballyquintin and Lecale Coast landscape character area is underlain by sedimentary rocks which have numerous Dolerite dykes aligned in a NE direction. It occupies the southern tip of the Ards Peninsula below Cloghy and the eastern section of Down District. This is a predominantly coastal landscape and its character is influenced by its extremely windswept position. The flat coastal topography becomes gently undulating towards Downpatrick where it meets the North Lecale Hills. Throughout the area, there are low drumlins with wide open inter-drumlin hollows, often with fen and wetland. The agricultural landscape has a deeply rural character, with extensive sheep grazing. Gorse, which has encroached into the hedgerows and grassland in exposed areas, adds texture to the landscape. The settlements tend to be small; Ardglass is the largest. Scattered dwellings are evenly distributed between the small hamlets and villages. Small vernacular cottages, which assume a simple one storey form, are plentiful. There is a disused airfield at Ringawaddy. Traditional small settlements may be seen throughout the area, notably the clachan of houses at Kearney which has been restored by the National Trust. The A2 runs the length of the coast, linking adjacent settlements. The area has a strong sense of history with numerous historical sites including standing stones, castles, chambered graves, crosses, churches, raths and holy wells. Landmarks such as forts, castles and windmills are highly visible in the open landscape and are often sited on hilltops.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- There are opportunities for the conversion and upgrading of the traditional buildings, which contribute to the distinctive character of the local landscape.
- The architectural style and finish of any new buildings and their siting is of utmost importance in such a sensitive rural landscape. Simple, white- rendered finishes are the most appropriate.

Wind Energy Development – High

A significant proportion of this landscape is valued for its scenic quality and openness of the area, wide ranging views and high concentration of natural and cultural sites of interest, many of which are located along the coast. Due to the open low lying and gentle topography wind energy development has the potential to interrupt important skylines.

Care should also be taken to avoid adverse impacts on the historic character of Killough and Ardglass.

It should also be noted that although Carlingford Lough is located between 30-40km away from the LCA this relationship should be considered

93. Portaferry and North Lecale

The North Lecale Hills extend from Downpatrick, along the southern edge of Strangford Lough, to Portaferry on the Ards Peninsula, where they create a 'gateway' at the mouth of Strangford Lough. The strong visual connection between Strangford and Portaferry is reinforced by the wooded estates on both shores and the physical link provided by the ferry between the two settlements. The hills form a highly visible undulating ridge of gorse covered hills which create a setting for Downpatrick at one end and settings for both Portaferry and Strangford at the other. The hills rise to over 100m at Castlemahon Mountain and at Slieve Patrick, where the landmark of St Patrick's shrine is visible from the surrounding low ground. The foothills support grazing and well structured farmland with well maintained stone walls and white-rendered buildings. Estates and shoreline parkland are an important influence in the landscape contributing stone walls, deciduous woodland and buildings of stature. The overall effect is that of a well managed landscape and the use of traditional colours such as red painted doors, windows, gates and outbuildings create a sense of continuity throughout.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Conversion of traditional vernacular dwellings is preferable to modern housing styles; new buildings which respond to the vernacular style (rural white-rendered buildings) are most appropriate.
- Small scale development of isolated rural dwellings or small clusters of buildings on lower slopes will be most easily accommodated; large scale built development is inappropriate.
- There is much potential for improved public access within the hills and some selective access to shoreline areas. Visitor pressure may be accommodated by providing parking facilities and signed footpaths through more robust areas; small, rough surfaced car parks and lay-bys, which avoid urban elements, are most suitable. These may be sheltered by gorse, stone walls and shelterbelts which are typical of the area.

Wind Energy Development – High

This landscape is of exceptionally high sensitivity to wind energy development due to its small scale and complexity, prominent skylines, important settings, and high visibility. There is also a very strong concentration of valued landscape characteristics and features, reflected in the areas AONB designation.

94. Strangford Drumlins and Islands

This waterside landscape of drumlins and loughs, islands and inlets, occupies the southern and western shores of Strangford Lough. The influence of glacial action has produced a complex, convoluted coastline with rocky islets or 'pladdies' which is a

haven for wildlife and provides a variety of experiences, including long sweeping views, colourful quays, isolated islands and tranquil inlets. The drumlins form a dense pattern and many of the hills are unusually high. Inland, drumlin farmland with a robust network of stone walls predominates. The hollows between the drumlins contain marshy pasture or loughs, which often have well wooded margins. The many small wooded estates make a significant contribution to the wooded character of the area. White-finished farm houses, some large and complex in form, stand out as features in the landscape. Farm outbuildings are often painted red and contrast attractively with the subdued colours of the landscape.

Towards the shores of Strangford Lough the pattern is reversed, with water dominating and the drowned drumlins rising out of the water as small round islands. Their isolated and tranquil character has made them favoured sites for churches, castles and chambered graves, as well as the restored monastic site on Mahee Island. Small settlements lie clustered around local quays and small vernacular white-finished cottages may still be seen in their original form. Sheep grazing dominates, particularly at the edge of the lough. Numerous small roads wind around and across the drumlins, linking small farms and coastal settlements. However, the main A22 cuts directly SE/SW across the landscape, traversing and cutting through drumlins, rather than winding around them. Stone walls and stands of pine and beech are familiar features which enhance the experience of the rolling farmland and water's edge.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Traditional cottages should be restored or converted before building new dwellings; new houses should be of a small scale, especially along the lough edge and should incorporate traditional features, materials and colours such as simple shapes and white-rendered finishes.
- The potential for views across the lough from high points should be maximised by providing viewing places and by ensuring built development is not intrusive.

Wind Energy Development – High

This landscape consists of small drumlin formations, valued landscape characteristics and features including Strangford Lough. Care should be taken to avoid impacting on the islands and shores of Strangford Lough and on the sensitive prominent drumlin skylines.

95. Ballygowan Drumlins

The Ballygowan Drumlins area is underlain by ancient Silurian rocks which have been covered by glacial deposits. The smooth, rolling drumlin landforms create a dynamic landscape pattern and the eye is constantly drawn to landmarks, such as prominent houses and hilltop features. Ground levels fall gradually towards Strangford Lough and in more low-lying areas, the drumlins exhibit a relatively waterlogged character (and with a more extensive network of watercourses than amongst the drumlins of the adjacent Castlereagh Plateau). This is an open, rolling farmland landscape of large pasture and arable fields divided by low, trimmed

hedgerows or wire fences. The occasional hedgerow tree stands out in silhouette against the sky.

Large farmhouses of complex architectural form, with extensions and outbuildings, are scattered across the farmland but the settlements of Ballygowan, Saintfield and Comber form clustered nuclei which are linked by fast main roads and a dense network of country roads which are aligned NE/SW. Loughs and damp woodland are found within lowland hollows between drumlins, providing an organic landscape element within a relatively regular landscape pattern. These marshy patches make a valuable contribution to the diversity of the landscape. To the south east of Dundonald, the Enler Valley has a particularly subtle, intimate landscape. The scenic, lush valley slopes provide a contrast to the wetlands and meadows of the valley floor, where the abandoned, overgrown railway embankments are a local landscape feature.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- Siting of new housing should take account of the existing density of development in the countryside. Dwellings which are positioned too close together will create disharmony but the careful use of materials and simple vernacular architectural features may be used to unify a group.
- Views from Scrabo Hill are an important issue when considering the siting of new development in the eastern part of the character area.
- Some shelter and potential screening for development is provided by the rolling landform; development on drumlin ridge-tops will usually be prominent.
- The subtle meadow landscape of the Enler valley is particularly vulnerable to the impact of large scale development; only small groups of buildings can be accommodated here, provided they are associated with informal groups of trees and provided development site boundaries are carefully integrated with surrounding field patterns.

Wind Energy Development – High to medium

The southern half of this LCA is located within the District. Wind energy development is constrained due to the open character of the landscape with minimal drumlin formations.

96. Castlereagh Plateau – High to medium

Only southern tip of this LCA forms part of the plan area. This landscape character area occupies much of Castlereagh District and extends into adjacent areas to the west and south. It is underlain by Silurian sedimentary rocks but its geomorphology has been strongly influenced by glaciation which has created a compact rolling landform of small hummocks and narrow valleys. Its fertile soils create rich pasture which is the predominant land use of the area. Small fields are partitioned by hedges which rise and fall across the landscape, emphasising its contours. The hedges, although often unmanaged and gappy, imbue the landscape with a prominent structure and texture, occasionally enhanced by hedgerow trees. Although large

woods are scarce, hedgerow trees and small copses create the impression of a well wooded landscape, especially within low-lying hollows and valleys. Occasional areas of marsh also help to break up the impression of uniform pasture.

Due to its proximity to Belfast, the area is well settled. The edges of towns and villages are ill-defined because of the sprawl of new housing and peripheral cottages. Numerous modern houses and bungalows, often in prominent locations and emphasised by white walls and manicured gardens, are scattered across the open countryside. The traditional grey stone farm buildings are heavily outnumbered by this rural housing. The area is dissected by a network of roads and small lanes. Transmission lines are also prominent and detract from the rural character of the area. The landscape possesses an intriguing mix of scales, sometimes offering long distance views to the sea or the mountainous backdrop of Slieve Croob across a rhythmic rolling landform, and sometimes presenting a more intimate, small scale experience due to the enclosure by hills, hedges and trees.

Principles for Accommodating New Development

- The establishment of compact, contained communities rather than disparate, isolated properties will improve the relationship between new buildings and their landscape context and will encourage a more co-ordinated approach.
- The use of native planting on the boundaries of developments and of a limited range of building materials - for garden fences and walls, as well as for the buildings themselves, will improve the unity and integration of buildings within the countryside.

Wind Energy Development – High to medium

A small southerly portion is included within the Newry, Mourne & Down District.

Key constraints to wind energy development in this location are the presence of small scale landscape features and views towards Strangford Lough and Slieve Croob within a landform that shows variation in terms of scale and enclosure.

Appendix 2: Criteria for Assessing Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development

Criterion	Comments
Scale	A large scale landscape, where the turbines may be in proportion with the landscape, is likely to be of lower sensitivity to wind energy development than a small scale landscape, where the turbines may appear to dominate the landscape and where features such as field patterns, individual trees and buildings may be compared with and highlight the size of the turbines.
Landform	Landform that is smooth, regular and convex, or flat and uniform, is likely to be less sensitive to wind energy development than dramatic or rugged landform. This is because the former types of landform tend to be less prominent and less distinctive in character. Convex landform may in addition provide partial screening for turbine structures.
Enclosure	A sense of enclosure provided by topography or vegetation – especially in areas with large scale topography or woodlands – may increase the ability of the landscape to provide screening for the lower parts of turbine structures and for associated access and infrastructure and hence indicate lower landscape sensitivity. However note that woodlands and forestry should be a long term feature if their screening effects are to be relied upon.
Complexity of landcover and features	Simple, uncluttered landscapes with sweeping lines and extensive areas of consistent ground cover are likely to offer greater potential for wind energy development than areas with more complex, irregular or intimate landscape patterns (for example ancient, irregular field systems) which tend to be more sensitive.
Man-made influence	A high degree of man-made influence on the landscape may mean that it is less sensitive to change due to wind energy development. Turbines are likely to be less conspicuous in brownfield or industrial landscapes already affected by built structures such as masts, pylons or chimneys, provided there are no visual conflicts where the structures are seen in close proximity. Commercial forestry may also introduce a temporary man-made influence to upland landscapes that would otherwise seem natural and wild.
Skylines and settings	Landscapes that do not form a distinctive backdrop or context tend to be less sensitive to wind energy development than those with strong visual features and focal points such as hilltop monuments, church spires or designed landscape features, which may form important skylines, landmarks or settings for settlements.
Visibility and views	Landscapes that are visually contained or have limited inward and outward views may be less sensitive to wind energy development than areas with extensive inward and outward views. Extensive

	close or middle range views from scenic routes, well-known vistas or tourist viewpoints may increase a landscape's sensitivity to wind energy development, as may close proximity to settlement.
Landscape quality (condition)	Areas where the condition and integrity of landscape patterns, elements and features are relatively good may be more sensitive to wind energy development than areas where condition is poor. In areas where landscape condition is good the fabric and character of the landscape are likely to be more highly valued and also more vulnerable to change.
Scenic quality	Scenic quality, that is visual appeal due to important views, visual interest and variety, contrasting landscape patterns, or dramatic topography, may increase landscape sensitivity to wind energy development. Land of high scenic quality occurs within designated landscapes (World Heritage Site, proposed National Park, AONBs) but also elsewhere; the approaches to and settings of areas of high scenic quality may also be sensitive.
Wildness and tranquillity	The presence of a relatively wild and/or tranquil character (due to remoteness, freedom from disturbance and factors such as openness and perceived naturalness) tends to make the landscape more sensitive to wind farm development. The introduction of wind turbines may alter perceptions of wildness and tranquillity, introducing movement, sound and light effects and possibly bringing a more industrial character to the affected landscapes.
Natural and cultural heritage features	The presence of natural and cultural heritage features such as interesting and valued habitats, wildlife, archaeological, historical or built features that enhance the landscape experience may increase sensitivity to wind farms, particularly where these features may be directly affected by construction works and/or access tracks; or where or enjoyment of these features may be diminished.
Cultural associations	Specific cultural (ie historical, folklore, literary or artistic) associations relating to the landscape may result in increased sensitivity to wind energy development if the character or perceptions of the landscape concerned are likely to be significantly altered.
Amenity and recreation	Areas offering access to high quality landscapes, memorable places, special experiences and to a range of opportunities for open-air recreation may be more sensitive to wind energy development due to potential effects on accessibility and/or on the quality of the recreational experience that will be obtained.

Appendix 3 – NMD Regional Seascape Character Areas

Strangford Lough - Seascape 16

Strangford Lough is a nearly land locked and sheltered marine inlet with a highly indented coastline that contains a highly distinctive and visually stunning composition of numerous whale-backed islands produced from the drowning of countless drumlins by the sea. The drumlins are found mainly on the west coast with most of those on the east coast having been removed by marine erosion forming small islands and numerous rocky reefs known as 'pladdies'. Strangford Lough is of particular importance for its marine flora and fauna and is Northern Ireland's only Marine Conservation Zone. The intimacy experienced along the seclusion of the western shore contrasts with the larger scale and more open appearance of the northern and eastern shores. The area has a long history of settlement with religion, industry and pleasure reflected in a large number of historical features associated with the Lough.

Key Characteristics

- A large, sheltered and complex sea lough with a sinuous shoreline.
- A visually stunning composition and varied views of the many drumlin islands, pladdies and inlets.
- Long fast-running tidal narrows, with whirlpools and eddies.
- An exceptional diversity of marine life.
- Extensive areas of mudflats and saltmarsh.
- Dense concentration of cultural sites, reflecting the use of the Lough for settlement, religion, industry and pleasure for many centuries.
- Stone bridges and causeways cross water and link islands.
- Dense network of winding roads scattered with traditional white-painted cottages.
- Nearly entirely land locked and enclosed by soft rounded hills and wooded estates.

Lecale Coast – Seascape 17

(includes Ballyquinton and Lecale)

The *Lecale Coast* SCA extends along the east facing coast from Ballyquinton Point down to St. Johns Point and includes a relatively extensive circalittoral zone that extends several kilometres out to sea. There are long distance views across the *Irish Sea (South Down)* SCA towards the Isle of Man, backed by the more distant coast of north-west England. Inland, gently undulating farmland enclosed by stone walls provides a low lying backdrop with a localised visual influence on the setting of the seascape. The Mourne Mountains are also visible in the backdrop from some areas of open coast towards the southern part of the SCA.

With a horizontal emphasis, the SCA is a low-lying, exposed and windswept coastline with extensive views out to sea. The coastline is predominantly formed of intricate rocks with sections of low-lying soft cliffs, punctured by two small secluded inlets of Killough Bay and Ardglass Harbour which supports an important commercial fishing centre. There are many shipwrecks submerged in shallow water and a scattering of

archaeological remains along the coast. There are sheltered fishing harbours at Killough and Ardglass and the open coast road is separated from the sea by a narrow section of open farmland with patches of gorse and stone walls.

Key Characteristics

- An intricate and low lying rocky coast punctured by two small secluded inlets of Killough Bay and Ardglass Harbour.
- An open, exposed and windswept appearance with a strong horizontal emphasis.
- The open coastal road and Lecale Way coast path provide panoramic views across open sea with distant views towards the Isle of Man with the coast of north-west England beyond.
- High energy waves crashing against the rocky shore.
- Water of up to 50 m deep with infralittoral fine sands, circalittoral fine sands, mixed sediments and sandy muds with a large number of shipwrecks scattered across the sea bed.
- Sheltered historic fishing harbours at Killough Bay and Ardglass.
- Occasional drumlins and sections of low lying cliffs.
- At low tide, the patterns and textures of mud flats and rocky outcrops add to visual interest.
- Guns Island lies just offshore at Ballyhornan and its cliffs support a small colony of breeding seabirds.
- Gently undulating farmland along the coastal edge with patches of gorse, scrub and stone walls.

Dundrum Bay – Seascape 18

(Includes Ballyquintin and Lecale Coast, Tyrella Coastal Dunes, The Mourne Mountains)

Dundrum Bay SCA, incorporating Dundrum Inner Bay, extends from St John's Point down to Ballagh Bridge where the Mourne Mountains meet the coast, and includes the shallow waters in the sweeping bay. The Mourne Mountains provide a stunning backdrop to the SCA and the imposing summit of Slieve Donard (850 m) is prominent in views from across the entire seascape. There are distant views across the Irish Sea towards the Isle of Man and the north-west coast of England beyond. Views along the wider coastline are curtailed by intervening landform.

Dundrum Bay is the largest natural bay in Northern Ireland and its sweeping formation provides a contained and sheltered setting for the busy coastal resort of Newcastle, which hosts a range of popular visitor attractions. A huge swath of sandy beach, popular for recreation, is backed by the extensive Murlough dunes. The dune system, dating back 6000 years, has an unusually intact and extensive transition including sand dunes, yellow and grey dunes, dune grassland, heath and scrub. Intertidal mudflats in Inner Dundrum Bay and sublittoral sands in Dundrum Bay are important for wintering birds. Dundrum derives its name from its Norman Castle, in Irish *Dún Droma*, meaning "fort of the ridge" which is located just outside the SCA

boundary. The imposing outline of the Mourne Mountains is integral to the contained and instantly recognisable setting of the bay, particularly when viewed from the sea.

Key Characteristics

- A broad sweeping bay with extensive sandy beaches, backed by the imposing and dramatic outline of the Mourne Mountains.
- The huge sweep of sandy beach from Newcastle to Tyrella is backed by the Murlough dunes which comprise a series of important dune systems.
- Extensive submerged sand banks.
- Intertidal mudflats in Inner Dundrum Bay and sublittoral sands in Dundrum Bay are important for wintering birds.
- Beyond the shelter of the inner bay, the coastline has an open and relatively exposed, windswept appearance.
- Distant views across the Irish Sea towards the Isle of Man.
- A section of low-lying rocky shore west of St John's Point.
- Shallow waters over infralittoral fine sands with mixed sediments and occasional rocks close to the shore.
- A concentration of archaeological sites reflecting long history of settlement, with many industrial sites associated with coastal trade and industry.

Mourne Coast – Seascape 19

(The Kingdom of Mourne, The Kikeel Coast)

The *Mourne Coast* SCA extends from St John's point, across the outer reaches of Dundrum Bay to Ballagh Bridge, and along the coast to Cranfield Point. It also includes a relatively extensive area of shallow sea in the circalittoral zone. The Mourne Mountains provide a stunning backdrop to the SCA and the imposing summit of Slieve Donard (850 m) is prominent in views from across the entire seascape. There are distant views across the *Irish Sea* SCA towards the Isle of Man and the north-west coast of England beyond and further south, the Cooley Mountains located above the southern side of Carlingford Lough. Inland, the gently undulating coastal plain forms a localised setting to the seascape.

With an imposing and dramatic backdrop of the Mourne Mountains, the SCA has a prevailing open, exposed and windswept appearance with panoramic views of the extensive Irish Sea. The low-lying coast bulges out into the sea and is exposed to the east and south-east to high energy waves. A series of rock platforms alternate with sand beaches with greywacke rock outcrops and gravel beaches further north. Maritime cliffs and slopes and coastal vegetated shingles occur at the northern end of the SCA. Kilkeel is an important commercial fishing centre and there are a large number of shipwrecks scattered across the sea bed.

Key Characteristics

- The coast bulges out into the Irish Sea and is exposed to the east and south-east to waves crashing against rocky platforms.
- An open, exposed and windswept appearance with panoramic views of the Irish Sea.

- A gently undulating, coastal lowland with much of the coast composed of low to moderate sized cliffs, many formed of boulder clay.
- Maritime cliffs and slopes and coastal vegetated shingles occur at the northern end of the SCA.
- From Cranfield Point to Ballymartin, a series of rock platforms alternate with sand beaches.
- From Ballymartin to Green Harbour, there are greywacke rock outcrops and gravel beaches.
- Igneous dyke swarms abound along the northernmost stretch of coast, with 130 dykes occurring between Ballymartin and Newcastle.
- Circalittoral fine sands, infralittoral mixed and coarse sediments and rocks with significant populations of scallop.

Carlingford Lough – Seascape 20

(Kilkeel Coast, Mourne Mountains, Newry Basin)

The *Carlingford Lough* SCA follows the road near to Lough shore from Cranfield Point at the Lough mouth, to the edge of Warrenpoint, and along the southern coast (within the Republic of Ireland) to the outermost headland. To the north, the Mourne Mountains and to the south, the Cooley Mountains combine to form a dramatic backdrop and a partly wooded sense of enclosure to the Lough. Contained by headlands at the Lough mouth, there are long distance views across the Irish Sea.

Carlingford Lough is a shallow and relatively broad sea lough sheltered from the rough waters of the Irish Sea, and is particularly noted for its glacial fjord or sea inlet form. The surrounding summits of the stunning Mourne and Cooley Mountains, with large areas of wooded slopes, are integral features to its contained setting. It is a particularly dynamic and busy seascape with a diversity of land and sea uses and busy shipping lanes leading out to sea. The Newry River and the Newry Canal link the Lough to the nearby city of Newry. There is an extensive shellfish culture and the Lough is also a very popular visitor attraction, offering a wide range of recreational activities. There are extensive mudflats and areas of saltmarsh supporting large numbers of wintering water birds.

Key Characteristics

A relatively shallow and broad glacial fjord sheltered from the rough waters of the Irish Sea.

- Contained by the wooded slopes of the Mourne Mountains to the north of the Lough, and Carlingford Mountain and Black Mountain to the south.
- A predominantly dynamic and busy seascape with a diversity of land and sea uses, - including an extensive shellfish culture.
- A deep, marked shipping channel is busy with passing ferries and container ships.
- Greenore and Warrenpoint are significant commercial freight ports.
- Extensive mudflats with saltmarsh occur in Mill Bay, supporting large numbers of wintering water birds.
- Undeveloped headlands provide pockets of remoteness and tranquillity.

- Several marinas, sailing clubs, jetties and slipways provide an important resource for water-based recreation.
- A long history of settlement, defence and maritime industry.

Newry Estuary – Seascape 21

(includes Newry Basin)

The *Newry Estuary* SCA is centred on the lower reaches of the Newry River before it empties into the expanse of Carlingford Lough. It extends up river from the narrow mouth at Warrenport, as far north as the embankment at the south end of the Greenbank Industrial Estate, where the character becomes more riverine in nature. It also includes the Newry Canal that follows the path of the river on its western side. The steep wooded valley sides along much of its length are particularly important to its contained setting. Port and industrial development at Warrenport and Newry also contribute to its setting. Medium range views out to Carlingford Lough are contained by development at the narrow mouth of the river.

With a long association of maritime trade, the SCA is centred on the narrow lower reaches of the Newry River set within a dramatic, steep-sided narrow valley. Running alongside the river, the Newry Canal links the Lough to the nearby city of Newry. The gently meandering river is flanked by a series of historic navigational features with channel markers along its length. Newry Canal, with its impressive archaeological features including pump houses, quays, locks and lock houses, contribute to a strong sense of place. The seclusion of the wooded valley sides contrast with areas of busy large-scale land use of port infrastructure, industrial and commercial development.

Key Characteristics

- A very gently meandering tidal river enclosed by dramatic, wooded valley sides.
- Channel markers and navigational features, including the two lighthouses which replicate round towers on either side of the river, are distinctive features.
- A long history of settlement, defence and maritime industry with a number of important Scheduled Monuments.
- Newry Canal and associated impressive industrial archaeological features including pump houses, quays, locks and lock houses.
- The historic Narrow Water Keep is a striking landmark feature on the bank of the Newry.
- Prominent large-scale land use of port infrastructure, industrial and commercial development.
- Deep mudbanks along the river are important feeding areas for wintering wildfowl and waders.

Irish Sea South Down - Seascape 21

(does not include any Landscape Character Areas)

The *Irish Sea (South Down)* SCA is located off the south-east coast and adjoins the outer marine extents of several SCAs located along the coast. Formed above the deep circalittoral zone, sea depth extends to approximately 200 m along the outer northern boundary, becoming progressively shallower to the south and towards the coast where depth is up to approximately 50 m. Habitats are predominantly deep circalittoral mud with smaller areas of deep circalittoral sand, faunal communities on circalittoral rock, with deep circalittoral coarse and mixed sediments to the north of the SCA. At this distance, features along the low-lying coastline would be hardly discernible although the dramatic outline of the Mourne Mountains and the Cooley

Mountains form a distinctive skyline. To the east, there are distant views the Rhins of Galloway, the Isle of Man and the north-west coast of England beyond. The SCA is notable for its important prawn grounds.

Key Characteristics

- A relatively deep sea bed with low energy waves and strong currents.
- Commercial shipping lanes with passing container ships, passenger ferries and cruise ships.
- Important prawn grounds and fisheries.
- Sea fishing and sailing across the SCA.
- The dramatic outline of the Mourne Mountains and the Cooley Mountains form important visual features.
- Compared to the *North Channel* SCA, the SCA has a greater sense of exposure to open sea.
- Habitats are predominantly deep circalittoral mud with smaller areas of deep circalittoral sand, faunal communities on circalittoral rock with deep circalittoral coarse and mixed sediments to the north of the SCA.
- Several ship wrecks scattered across the sea bed.



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

173

Chief Executive of each District Council
Finance Officer of each District Council
Other Interested Parties

Local Government Policy Division
Level 4
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
BELFAST
BT2 7EG
Phone: 028 9082 3346
email: Anthony.carleton@communities-ni.gov.uk

Our ref: CO1-16-18342

Circular LG 03/2017

15th February 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

**CONSOLIDATED COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES CIRCULAR – UPDATED
FEBRUARY 2017**

This Local Government Circular provides a consolidated record of all councillor allowances and supersedes Local Government Circular 14/2016 in respect of the rates payable from 1 April 2017.

This consolidated circular is required to determine and reflect an increase in Dependants' Carers' Allowance and motor cycle rates applicable from 1 April 2017.

All determinations are made by the Department under section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012.

1. Basic Allowance - valid from 1 April 2017

Basic Allowance	Maximum £14,485 per annum [≠]
------------------------	--

[≠] (The basic allowance includes an element for incidental and consumable costs incurred by councillors in their official capacity. In 2015/16 this element was £1,000 and each year this amount is uplifted in line with the increase applied to the basic allowance, therefore from 1 April 2017 this element within the basic allowance is £1,020)

2. Dependants' Carers' Allowances – valid from 1 April 2017

The following table states the maximum rates for dependants' carers' allowance.

Dependants' Carers' Allowance	Hourly Rate	Maximum monthly amount
Standard	£7.50 [^]	£390
Specialist	£15.00	£780

[^](Based on national living wage for age 25+)

3. Travel Allowances – valid from 1 April 2017

The following table states the maximum rates for travel allowances.

Type of Vehicle	Rate per Mile
A pedal cycle	20.0p
A motor cycle (all engine capacities)	24.0p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 450cc but not exceeding 999cc	46.9p *13.7p
A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 999cc but not exceeding 1,199cc	52.2p *14.4p

A motor car of cylinder capacity exceeding 1,199cc	65.0p *16.4p
An electric car	45.0p **25.0p
Passenger rate (per passenger)	5.0p

* For mileage above 8,500 miles

**For mileage above 10,000 miles

4. Special Responsibility Allowance – valid from 1 April 2017

The following table states the maximum rate of Special Responsibility Allowance that a council may pay. The maximum rate is based on the size of the council population. Each council's population figures are updated each year by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and it is the duty of each council to operate within the total maximum rate appropriate to its population band. For ease the maximum any councillor can receive, within each band, is also provided.

Population of council	Maximum Special Responsibility Allowance £	Maximum (1/5 th) for individual councillor £
Less than 120,000	51,005	10,201
120,000 to 199,000	71,407	14,281
200,000 +	110,171	22,034

5. Subsistence Allowances – valid from 1 April 2015

The following table states the maximum rates for subsistence; however, where councils believe it is necessary there is flexibility for councils to increase these rates by applying a suitable measure of price inflation.

PERIOD/MEAL	RATES £	
	British Isles	London
Accommodation allowance - An absence involving an overnight stay, away from the normal place of residence. This rate does not include any meal allowance.	100.70	122.45
Breakfast allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period before 11 am)	11.50	
Lunch allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 12 noon and 2pm)	13.50	
Tea allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period including the period between 3pm and 6pm)	4.70	
Evening meal allowance - (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or, where approved by the council, a lesser period ending after 7pm)	20.95	

If you have any queries on the content of this circular please contact Jeff Glass on 028 9082 3375 or Lizanne Kennedy on 028 9082 3378 or by email jeff.glass@communities-ni.gov.uk or lizanne.kennedy@communities-ni.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully



ANTHONY CARLETON
Director
Local Government Policy Division

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2017
Subject:	Draft Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Ursula Mhic an tSaoir, Irish Language Development Officer

Decisions required:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to give consideration to agreement to the following:

- Draft Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019

1.0 Purpose and Background:

- 1.1 An Audit of Irish Language provision in the Newry, Mourne and Down District area, adopted by Council in June 2016, identified a strong vibrant Irish Language Community living, working and socialising in the Council area. To maximise the social, economic and physical regeneration potential of this community, the Audit made sixteen recommendations which have informed the development of the Council's Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019.
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019 which will be delivered by the Council's Irish Language Unit, in partnership and collaboration with key stakeholders, sets out how the Council:
- will use the Irish language in the operation of its functions;
 - will facilitate the use of the Irish language when communicating with the public and relevant stakeholders; and
 - will promote and encourage the development of the Irish language across the Council area.
- 1.2 The Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019 was considered at the Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group on 23 February 2017.

2.0 Key issues:

- 2.1 As noted in section 1.2, the Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019 was considered at the Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group on 23 February 2017.
- Members highlighted it was essential that appropriate and adequate resources were in place to ensure delivery upon the actions outlined in the Irish Language Strategy. Concern was expressed that, given the size of the new Council area, the proposed physical and financial resources to deliver upon the strategy reflected those which were in place within the legacy Newry and Mourne District Council.
- Members also recommended the following for consideration:
- The Strategy be amended to reflect that the Irish Language Community is a welcoming community. This has been included within the Introduction section of the Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019.
 - To consider establishing and including a financial assistance funding stream for the Irish Language sector within the Strategy. Given Council has not allocated this funding within

	the 2017-2018 financial year, should Council be minded to establish said funding stream for 2018-2019 this will require a robust business case. Accordingly, it is proposed this is required to be discussed further at the next meeting of the Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group. To consider membership of the Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group being extended to include members of the Down and Oriel Forum (Fóram an Dúin agus Oirialla). At this stage, it is not proposed to extend membership of the working group. It should be noted Council's Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group is an internal working group and should Council be minded to extend membership this will require a change to the current Terms of Reference; and, the Down and Oriel Forum (Fóram an Dúin agus Oirialla) facilitated by Council's Irish Language Officers and the Gaelic League (Conradh na Gaeilge), has not as yet agreed a Terms of Reference or been formally constituted. In addition, actions to extend membership of the working group must be undertaken taking account of Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity to access such opportunities.
3.0	Recommendations:
3.1	To give consideration and agreement to the: Draft Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	As noted within 2.1, at a meeting of the Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group on 23 February 2017, members expressed concern that, given the size of the new Council area, the proposed physical and financial resources to deliver upon the strategy reflected those which were in place within the legacy Newry and Mourne District Council. Council acknowledges it is essential that appropriate and adequate resources are in place to ensure delivery upon the Council's Bilingualism Policy and actions outlined in the Irish Language Strategy. The Irish Language Unit has three Officers and an allocated budget, and no further additional financial or resources implications are anticipated at this stage. While it is envisaged the proposed strategy will be delivered within the current resources, physical and financial resources issues will be kept under review as the Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019 is implemented.
5.0	Equality and good relations implications:
5.1	The Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019 would be designated as a positive action which builds upon the Council's Bilingualism Policy, and the audit of Irish Language provision in the Newry, Mourne and Down District area, adopted by Council in June 2016. No adverse equality and good relations implications are anticipated, and it is acknowledged any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the Strategy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for disadvantaged people.
6.0	Appendices
	Draft Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019

Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin

Straitéis na Gaeilge 2017/19

Eanáir 2017

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Irish Language Strategy 2017-2019

January 2017



Introduction

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council recognises the Irish language as an integral part of the heritage, identity and cultural life of the District. The Council remains committed to the objectives set out in our Bilingualism Policy and have put in place the necessary structures to ensure that the Irish language and its welcoming community has a sustainable future in the Council area.

An Audit of Irish Language provision in the Newry, Mourne and Down District area, adopted by Council in June 2016, identified a strong vibrant Irish Language Community living, working and socialising in the Council area. To maximise the social, economic and physical regeneration potential of this community, the Audit made sixteen recommendations which should inform the development of the Council's Irish Language Strategy.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Irish Language Strategy (2017-2019) which will be delivered by the Council's Irish Language Unit, in partnership and collaboration with key stakeholders, sets out how the Council:

- ❖ will use the Irish language in the operation of its functions;
- ❖ will facilitate the use of the Irish language when communicating with the public and relevant stakeholders; and
- ❖ will promote and encourage the development of the Irish language across the Council area.

The Strategic Framework

The overarching vision for the 2017-19 Irish Language Strategy is:

To create a supportive environment for the use and regeneration of the Irish language in public, personal, economic and community life.

The mission of the 2017-19 Irish Language Strategy is to:

To lead and serve the evidenced needs of existing and emerging Irish language communities within the District promoting the development of a prosperous, healthy and sustainable Irish language community across the District.

The underpinning values of the 2017-19 Irish Language Strategy mirror those of the NMDDC Corporate Plan (2015-19):

- ❖ **Citizen Focused:** Actively encouraging citizen and community engagement, as well as listening and responding to the evidenced needs of the Irish language community within the Council area.
- ❖ **Accountable:** Making decisions relevant to the Irish language based on an objective assessment of need and operate in a transparent way in addition to openly reporting on our performance;
- ❖ **Collaborative:** Actively encouraging and pursuing working in partnership and at all levels to deliver for the Irish language community within the District;
- ❖ **Sustainable:** Recognising the positive social, economic and environmental impacts of the Irish language community; and
- ❖ **Fair:** We will proactively target actions to reduce situations when groups or individuals, who choose to use Irish as their primary language, are marginalised in our community.

Aims and Objectives

The four strategic aims and objectives of the Irish Language Strategy (2017-19) which are linked directly to the Corporate Plan (2015-19), the Bilingualism Policy and the Irish Language Audit (2016) are as follows:

Strategic Aim 1	Ensure accessible affordable effective support and delivery
Strategic Objective 1	Ensure the necessary skills, systems and tools are in place to support, deliver and continually improve Irish Language services

Strategic Aim 2	Promote a strong leading and influencing role
Strategic Objective 2	<i>Council expertise, skills and relationships are utilised to enable the local Irish language community and voluntary sector (ILCVS) to be positioned and prepared for the future.</i>
Strategic Aim 3	Ensure resourcing, sustainability and change readiness
Strategic Objective 3	<i>Local Irish Language groups, facilities and resources are working to their full potential to be resilient to change</i>
Strategic Aim 4	Promote building and developing sustainable Irish language capacity
Strategic Objective 4	<i>The local Irish Language community and voluntary sector (ILVCS) has developed the organisational capacity to respond to evidenced local need</i>

The Delivery Framework

The following Action Plan provides detail in respect of:

- ❖ **Strategic Aims and Objectives:** This section associates the proposed actions with one of the four Strategic Aims and the corresponding strategic objective.
- ❖ **The Timescale:** when the action will be delivered.
- ❖ **Outcomes:** what will change as a result of the proposed action
- ❖ **Outputs:** the detail of the anticipated scale of the action
- ❖ **Stakeholders:** identifies who the relevant stakeholders are in relation to a given action.
- ❖ **Performance Measures:** demonstrating how effectively the strategy is achieving its anticipated outcomes.
- ❖ **Strategic Linkage:** How the action contributes to the success of identified key strategies synergy with the Council's Corporate Plan, Bilingualism Policy and Irish language audit recommendations.

The overall changes brought about through the delivery of the Action Plans will be:

- ❖ Increased Irish language community development capacity.
- ❖ Greater social cohesion
- ❖ Increased civic engagement and participation
- ❖ Increased effective partnership working
- ❖ Improved sustainability and viability of the Irish language community sector
- ❖ Increased connectivity between Irish language Communities and a range of Statutory and Voluntary partners
- ❖ Early identification of local solutions for emerging needs

To ensure actions and associated budget remain relevant and appropriate the Irish Language Strategy will be reviewed annually.

Action 1				
Strategic Aim 1		Ensure accessible affordable effective support and delivery		
Strategic Objective 1		Ensure the necessary skills, systems and tools are in place to support, deliver and continually improve Irish Language services.		
Strategic Actions	Time Scale	Key Outputs	Outcomes	Stakeholders
1. Improved communication: Ensuring effective communication, and monitoring access to information and services.	Ongoing	Provision of core Irish language Services of Irish Language Unit	Irish Language Unit promoting the Irish language across Council services	Irish Language Unit
	April 2017	Development of a two year strategic plan	Bilingualism Policy mainstreamed within Council functions	Corporate Policy section
2. Strategic direction: Mainstreaming bilingualism corporately across all Council functions.	June 2017	Develop a framework for monitoring compliance based on Policy and Procedure commitments	Enhanced employee skills and knowledge base	All Council Directorates
	Ongoing	Six-monthly monitoring reports for consideration by the Irish Language Strategy Working Group	A consistent approach to the promotion of the Irish language across Council's services	Communications team
3. Continual professional development: Developing organizational capacity to deliver services through the medium of the Irish language.	Annually	Annual report on Council compliance with the Bilingualism Policy	A consistent standard of service provision, in line with the Corporate Brand guidelines	Local ILCVS
	April 2017 -	Irish language capacity building / training for employees and Elected Members:		Irish language regional bodies
4. Ensuring a value for money service: Suitably qualified officers providing developmental support and guidance both within the Council and throughout the wider Irish Language community.	March 2019	- training on the Bilingualism Policy; - HR to establish an Irish Language Professional Development pathway for employees and Elected Members; - On-going developmental support to Council departments on implementation of Council's Bilingualism Policy and associated Procedures		Elected Members
	October 2017	Objective justification principles with regard to Irish language skills applied as part of all Recruitment and Selection processes		Irish Language Strategy Working Group
5. Effective monitoring and evaluation: Indicating how Council is progressively realising its Bilingualism Policy.		Performance Measures		HR Department
		Adoption of an Irish Language Strategy 2017-19 Monitoring reports completed Irish Language Skills training course offered as a professional learning and development opportunity Minimum of 2 workshops per annum re Bilingualism Policy and associated Procedures Number of bilingual staff employed by Council		Elected members
				Senior Management Team

Synergy with the Corporate Plan	<i>Transformed and modernised Council providing accessible as well as value for money services</i> <i>A modern and fit for purpose Council</i>
Synergy with the Bilingualism Policy	To foster and promote the use of Irish in the internal administration of Council, in its dealings with other public bodies and also with bodies that provide services to the public in the District. Enable everyone who receives or uses Council services, or contributes to the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Irish or English, according to personal choice.
Synergy with Audit Recommendations	Recommendation One: The existing commitment to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as evidenced by the Bilingualism Policy should continue and be developed. Recommendation thirteen: A three year Irish Language Strategy is developed and appropriately resourced to ensure the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and the development of the Irish language community throughout the District. Recommendation fourteen: Consideration should be given to the Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with the Human Resources team in the Council to develop an Irish Language developmental opportunity for staff who wish to contribute to the Council's Bilingualism Policy commitments. Recommendation fifteen: The existing Irish Language development posts within the Council should be resourced accordingly to enable the provision of a quality developmental support service to both internal and external stakeholders. Recommendation sixteen: Consideration should be given to the commissioning of a full Social Return on Investment analysis in respect of language development in the area to capture the economic benefit of the Council's investment in the promotion of the Irish Language.

Action2				
Strategic Aim 2		Promote a strong leading and Influencing role		
Strategic Objective 2		Council expertise, skills and relationships are utilised to enable the local Irish language community and voluntary sector (ILCVS) to be positioned and prepared for the future.		
Strategic Actions	Time Scale	Key Outputs	Outcomes	Stakeholders
6. Supporting Sustainability: Identifying and communicating funding opportunities. 7. Equitable partnership working: Encouraging the development of relationships and collaborative action between Council and relevantly skilled ILCVS, recognising the sector as catalyst in the economic, social and physical regeneration of the Council area. 8. Effective engagement: Facilitating engagement / dialogue opportunities between the ILCVS and relevant stakeholders with direct responsibility for supporting the growing Irish language Community. 9. Increasing capacity: Supporting capacity building in the local Irish language community.	April 2017	Promote and facilitate the establishment of Fóram an Dúin agus Oirialla (Down and Oriel Forum) within the Irish Language community sector in the Council area	Increased sense of community and place	Irish Language Unit
	Ongoing	Promote internal financial assistance opportunities	Promotion of a culture of constructive community engagement with the Irish language community throughout all Council departments	ILVCS Council Officers
	Ongoing	Identify and promote external funding opportunities for Irish Language groups		Peace IV Partnership
	Ongoing	Internal promotion of opportunities for community engagement with the Irish Language community	ILCVS accessing services and networking opportunities across the new Council area and beyond	Community Planning Team Local Press/media outlets
		Performance Measures	Robust partnerships and collaborative working practices	Irish Language regional bodies Foras na Gaeilge
		Number of Forum meetings	Increased community engagement on critical issues	
		Number of people in attendance		
		Number of ILVCS in attendance		
		Number of regional groups engaging with the process		

Synergy with the Corporate Plan	<i>Empowers and improves the capacity of our communities</i>
Synergy with the Bilingualism Policy	Recognise that enabling the public to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice and customer care and not a concession. Seek to remove, where possible, restrictions which would discourage or work against the maintenance or development of the language. Enable everyone who receives or uses Council services, or contributes to the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Irish or English, according to personal choice.
Synergy with Audit Recommendations	Recommendation two: As part of its brief, Foras na Gaeilge currently runs an Irish Language Officers Scheme 2013-2016 designed to promote and develop the Irish Language in the public sector. If this scheme is extended it may present the Council with an opportunity to add to its staffing complement within the Irish Language Unit without the need for an additional fiscal commitment from the Council. In addition given the Council's location, consideration should be given to developing a European funding application to explore best practice and shared learning in relation to communities whose first language is a minority language. Recommendation nine: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit providing a framework for the development of Irish Language community led networks which would bring together groups interested in developing and sustaining a community development approach to supporting existing and emerging Irish Language communities in the Council area Recommendation eleven: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working with the relevant stakeholders to develop a strategic approach to maximising the potential availability of external funding to collectives able to demonstrate a collaborative multi-agency partnerships approach to the promotion and delivery of cultural and heritage events.

Action 3				
Strategic Aim 3		Ensure resourcing, sustainability and change readiness		
Strategic Objective 3		Local Irish Language groups, facilities and resources are working to their full potential to be resilient to change		
Strategic Actions	Time Scale	Key Outputs	Outcomes	Stakeholders
10. Celebrating diversity: This will encourage a sense of pride and respect for the vibrant Irish language cultural heritage within the Council area. 11. Changing perceptions Promoting Irish as a living language that can increase the social, economic and developmental opportunities available to citizens. 12. Dissemination of good practice: Supporting the development of mechanisms to ensure the sharing of information which will help stakeholders maximize the impact of their work. 13. Language planning: Encouraging the ILCVS to work together to develop local language plans which will inform and maximize language development across the Council area.	April 2017	Establish effective engagement with post primary schools	Increased sustainability of Irish Language community organisations	Irish Language Unit
	Annually	Promotion of Irish Language Careers Convention held annually in Belfast and organised by Forbairt Feirste	ILCVS delivering needs based services to their local community	Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta Forbairt Feirste
	Ongoing - March 2019	Language planning facilitated by Irish Language Unit and Irish Language regional bodies with Irish Language Community and voluntary groups (ILCVS)	ILCVS taking a more active role to further promote and develop local community resources	Post Primary Schools ILCVS
	Sept 2018	Development of an online resource for sharing information	A connected and inclusive community ILCVS accessing services and providing and taking part in networking opportunities across the Council area and beyond	Council's IT Department Communication Section Irish Language regional bodies
		Performance Measures		
		Number of post primary schools engaged		
		Establishment of an online resource Irish Language information		
		Numbers of participants		
		Numbers of groups in attendance		
		Number of language planning workshops		

Synergy with the Corporate Plan	<i>Transformed and modernised the Council, providing accessible as well as value for money services.</i>
Synergy with the Bilingualism Policy	Enable everyone who receives or uses Council services, or contributes to the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Irish or English, according to personal choice. Recognise that enabling the public to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice and customer care and not a concession. Seek to remove, where possible, restrictions which would discourage or work against the maintenance or development of the language.
Synergy with Audit Recommendations	Recommendation five: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to explore how best the Council can continue to develop its existing support for the provision of Council wide competitions and schools programmes designed to explore the significance of culture, language and social history in developing civic pride and a sense of place in the Council area. Recommendation six: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to encourage attendance at the annual Irish Language Careers convention held by Forbairt Feirste for post-primary pupils studying Irish to deepen their understanding of the range and breadth of job and career opportunities available through the medium of Irish. Recommendation seven: Consideration should be given to the Council ensuring that the Irish Language Unit has access to the necessary technical support to provide a framework for dissemination of information around the logistics (e.g. time, location, level, and cost) of classes available in the area. Recommendation eight: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit liaising with the Education Authority to ensure that they are aware of all the existing and emerging youth services in the area. This will ensure effective signposting to support the development and growth of quality Irish youth service provision in the Council area. Recommendation twelve: Consideration should be given to developing the role of the Council as an enabler to support, connect and encourage existing groups. Voluntary and statutory organisations should be facilitated to work collaboratively to maximise the impact of their collective human, fiscal and intellectual resources.

Action 4				
Strategic Aim 4	Promote building and developing sustainable Irish language capacity			
Strategic Objective 4	The local Irish Language community and voluntary sector (ILCVS) has developed the organisational capacity to respond to evidenced local need.			
Strategic Actions	Time Scale	Key Outputs	Outcomes	Stakeholders
14. Addressing weak Irish language community infrastructure: Supporting groups in areas where there is a developing Irish language community. 15. Thematic Networking: Encouraging and facilitating the development of thematic networks which will create a resilient, progressive and inclusive Irish Language sector resulting in increased connectivity between groups with similar interests and a strong sense of place with the new Council area. 16. Volunteer Development: This will promote and recognise the importance of volunteering in language immersion and revival. It will identify and promote mechanisms designed to support the skills development of the current volunteers and to inspire new volunteers to get involved in local language development.	February 2018	Mapping the Irish Language Community Infrastructure	Increased sustainability of Irish language community organisations	Irish Language Unit ILCVS
	March 2018	Development of thematic networks through Fóram an Dúin agus Oiriaila (Down and Oriel Forum) established within the Irish Language Community	Reduced dependency on grant funding	Community Planning Team Council's IT Department
	April 2018	Promotion of volunteering within the Irish Language community	ILCVS are empowered to deliver needs based services to their local community	Fóram an Dúin agus Oiriaila (Down and Oriel Forum)
		Performance Measures		Conradh na Gaeilge
		Integration of Irish language Infrastructure map for Irish language community development	ILCVS taking a more active role to further promote and develop local community resources.	Glór na nGael
		Number of meetings of thematic network	A connected and inclusive community	Foras na Gaeilge,
		Number of groups in attendance	ILCVS accessing services and providing and taking part in networking opportunities across the Council area and beyond	
		Number of workshops		
		Promotion of volunteers engaged in delivering Irish Language services in Council area		
		Number of attendees at the sector specific volunteer development workshop		

Synergy with the Corporate Plan	<i>Led the regeneration of our urban and rural communities.</i> <i>Empowered and improved the capacity of our communities.</i>
Synergy with the Bilingualism Policy	Enable everyone who receives or uses Council services, or contributes to the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Irish or English, according to personal choice. Recognise that enabling the public to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice and customer care and not a concession.
Synergy with Audit Recommendations	Recommendation three: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to use the information provided by the audit to target limited resources based on the community background and language capacity of the different wards. This approach will provide a framework in which the effectiveness of interventions can be more easily measured. Recommendation four: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to enable local communities to develop their capacity to explore their Early years language provision. Recommendation ten: Consideration should be given to the Council's Irish Language Unit working with the GAA's county Irish Language committees to best support their volunteer network of language and cultural officers to maximise the impact of their language support within the Council area.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2017
Subject:	Updated Terms of Reference – Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Ursula Mhic an tSaoir, Irish Language Development Officer

Decisions required:	
Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to give consideration to agreement to the following:	
Updated Terms of Reference – Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group	
1.0	Purpose and Background:
1.1	The Terms of Reference for the Irish Language Cross Party Working Group was tabled for consideration at its meeting on 27 September 2016.
1.2	At the meeting it was agreed that it be amended to read as follows, “The meetings will be arranged on a quarterly basis or as required. This will be reviewed when the Irish Language Strategy 2016-2019 has been developed.”
1.3	In addition, the Officers section of the Terms of Reference has been updated to reflect Officer roles and Departmental restructuring within Council.
2.0	Key issues:
2.1	No further issues have been identified with regard to the proposed amendments.
3.0	Recommendations:
3.1	To note the Updated Terms of Reference – Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Additional meeting have potential to have increased financial and/or resource implications e.g. refreshments, mileage costs, interpreter, employee time etc.
5.0	Equality and good relations implications:
5.1	There is nothing to suggest the amendment to the Terms of Reference will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity and good relations.
6.0	Appendices
	Updated Terms of Reference – Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group

GRÚPA OIBRE TRASPÁIRTÍ UM STRAITÉIS NA GAEILGE – TÉARMAÍ TAGARHA THE IRISH LANGUAGE STRATEGY CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE

191

GRÚPA OIBRE TRASPÁIRTÍ UM STRAITÉIS NA GAEILGE

Téarmaí Tagartha

Scóip:

Is pléghrúpa éascaithe é an grúpa oibre traspháirtí um Straitéis na Gaeilge. Beidh feidhm ag an ghrúpa seo i gclóradh agus i bplé chur i bhfeidhm Straitéis na Gaeilge, d'fhonn comhthuiscint, comhaontú agus bearta a bhaint amach chun chur chun cinn an Pholasáí Dhátheangachais a éascú.

Ballraíocht:

Bheadh an bhallraíocht comhdhéanta de:

- Cathaoirleach na Comhairle
- LeasChathaoirleach na Comhairle
- Beirt Chomhairleoirí ainmnithe ag Sinn Féin
- Beirt Chomhairleoirí ainmnithe ag Páirtí Sóisialta agus Daonlathach an Lucht Oibre
- Comhairleoir amháin ainmnithe ag an Pháirtí Aontachtach Daonlathach
- Comhairleoir amháin ainmnithe ag an Pháirtí Aontachtach Uladh
- Ionadaí amháin ainmnithe ag na páirtithe beaga eile/na comhaltaí neamhspleácha

An Cathaoirleach

Beidh Cathaoirleach na Comhairle i gceannas ag na cruinnithe. Nuair nach mbíonn Cathaoirleach na Comhairle ag na cruinnithe rachadh an LeasChathaoirleach sa chathaoir. Nuair nach mbíonn an bheirt sin i láthair, roghnófar an Chathaoirleach ó mheasc iad siúd a bheas i láthair.

Cruinnithe:

Ní bheas aon chumhacht cinnteoireachta ag an ghrúpa oibre seo, ní féidir leis ach moltaí a dhéanamh. Cuirfear moltaí ag éirí as na cruinnithe seo faoi bhráid Choiste Pleanála Straitéisí agus Acmhainní lena bhreathnú.

Níl sé riachtanach córam a bhaint amach agus leanfaidh na cruinnithe ar aghaidh beag beann ar thinreamh ag na cruinnithe. Socrófar na cruinnithe gach ráithe nó nuair is gá. Déanfar athbhreithniú ar an leasú seo nuair a forbrófar Straitéis na Gaeilge 2017-19.

Úsáidfear an Ghaeilge agus an Béarla ag na cruinnithe seo agus cuirfear an córas aistriúcháin comhuaineach ar fáil dóibh siúd gan an Ghaeilge.

Gairfidh an LeasStiúrthóir Pleanála Corparáide agus Polasaí na cruinnithe.

Oifigigh:

An Príomhfheidhmeannach, Stiúrthóir Seirbhísí Chorporáideacha, LeasStiúrthóir Pleanála Corparáide agus Polasaí, Oifigeach Forbartha Gaeilge agus Ceannasaí Polasaí Chorporáidigh.

An Preas:

Níl cead ag an phreas freastáil ar na cruinnithe seo.

An Pobal:

Níl sé ar oscailt don phobal

GRÚPA OIBRE TRASPÁIRTÍ UM STRAITÉIS NA GAEILGE – TÉARMAÍ TAGARTHA THE IRISH LANGUAGE STRATEGY CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE

192

Terms of Reference

Scope:

The Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group will primarily be a facilitated discussion space. It will play a role in considering and discussing the implementation of the Irish Language Strategy with a view of reaching a common understanding, agreement and actions which will facilitate the promotion of the Bilingualism Policy.

Membership:

Membership shall be composed of:

- Council Chairperson
- Council Deputy Chairperson
- Two Councillors nominated from Sinn Féin
- Two Councillors nominated from SDLP
- One Councillor nominated from DUP
- One Councillor nominated from UUP
- One representative nominated from the smaller parties/independents

Chairperson:

Council Chairperson will chair meetings.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson will chair the meeting. If both are not present, the meeting will select a Chair from those present.

Meetings:

The Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group does not have decision making powers, it makes recommendations only. Recommendations arising will be tabled at the Council's Strategic Planning and Resources Committee for consideration.

It does not operate to any quorum and meetings proceed regardless of numbers in attendance.

The meetings will be arranged on a quarterly basis or as required. This will be reviewed when the Irish Language Strategy 2017 - 2019 has been developed.

Meetings will be conducted in a Bilingual format utilising the Simultaneous Translation system.

Meetings will be convened by the Assistant Director of Corporate Planning and Policy.

Officers:

Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Assistant Director of Corporate Planning and Policy, Irish Language Development Officer and Head of Corporate Policy.

Press:

Not open to the press.

Public:

Not open to the public.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2017
Subject:	Requests regarding Planting of a Tree, and to locate a Park Bench
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy

Decisions required:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to give consideration and agreement to the recommendations contained in section 3 relating to the following requests 1) To plant a tree in Kilbroney Park in memory of an individual's deceased husband 2) To place a memorial bench along the sea front in Newcastle in memory of an individual's deceased mother.

1.0 Purpose and Background:

1.1 Council has received the following requests:

1. To plant a tree in Kilbroney Park in memory of an individual's deceased husband.
2. To place a memorial bench along the sea front in Newcastle in memory of an individual's deceased mother.

1.2 Requests of this nature fall under the scope of the Council's Policy on Naming Facilities and the Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to (re)naming of facilities.

The guidelines outline the assessment of applications will be undertaken by an internal working group comprising the Director of Strategic Planning and Performance or their representative and two other officers of Council.

The assessment of applications follows a three stage process:

- Stage 1 basic eligibility check is an initial assessment that the nature of the request meets the basic criteria outlined in section 2.1 of the Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to the (re)naming of facilities
- Stage 2 is the assessment conducted by the internal working group
- Stage 3 is the decision-making process with a recommendation of the internal working group tabled for consideration at Council's Strategy, Planning and Resources Committee, and the decision communicated to the applicant

A review procedure will be implemented in the event that an applicant wishes to appeal against Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's decision to reject a request.

2.0 Key issues:

2.1 In terms of basic eligibility for consideration, section 2.1 of the Council's Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to the (re)naming of facilities states the following:

Requests must relate to Council owned property only, with respect to one of the following:

- Naming of facilities, buildings and rooms.
- Naming of new facilities.
- Requests to re-name facilities, buildings and rooms.
- Requests regarding memorials, planting of trees and plaques.

2.2	An initial assessment established that both requests met the required Stage 1 eligibility criteria and proceeded to Stage 2 of the assessment process. The internal working group considering the requests consisted of Eddy Curtis, Director, Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy and Michelle Boyle, Tourism Development Officer.
2.3	In undertaking the assessment, the internal working group considered the following: • In both cases i.e. planting of a tree and placement of a park bench, the request relates to memorialising a deceased person at a specific location. • It was agreed by the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group on 26 January 2016, that the scope of the policy will not extend to facilitating requests to memorialise a deceased person (or family).
2.4	Having considered the requests it is the recommendation of the internal working group that, given these are requests relating to memorialising a deceased person, both requests be refused.
3.0	Recommendations:
3.1	1. Nature of request: To plant a tree in Kilbroney Park in memory of an individual's deceased husband. Recommendation: To refuse with regret. 2. Nature of request: To place a memorial bench along the sea front in Newcastle in memory of an individual's deceased mother. Recommendation: To refuse with regret.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	No financial or resource implications are anticipated.
5.0	Equality and good relations implications:
5.1	No equality and good relations implications are anticipated.
6.0	Appendices

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2017
Subject:	Updated Policy on Naming Facilities and Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to (re)naming of facilities
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy

Decisions required:	
Members are asked to note the contents of the report and to give consideration to agreement to the following:	
- Updated Policy on Naming Council facilities - Updated Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to (re)naming of facilities	
1.0	Purpose and Background:
1.1	Due to Departmental restructuring, and changed Officer roles and responsibilities, the Policy on Naming Council facilities, and Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to (re)naming of facilities is required to be updated. These changes do not have an impact upon the intended aim and scope of the Policy, and current process outlined within the Guidelines and associated procedure.
2.0	Key issues:
2.1	No further issues have been identified with regard to the proposed amendments.
3.0	Recommendations:
3.1	To agree to the following: - Updated Policy on Naming Council facilities - Updated Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to (re)naming of facilities
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	No additional resource implications are anticipated.
5.0	Equality and good relations implications:
5.1	There is nothing to suggest the amendments to policy and guidelines will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity and good relations.
6.0	Appendices
	- Updated Policy on Naming Council facilities - Updated Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to (re)naming of facilities

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Policy on Naming Council facilities

196

1. Title

Policy on Naming Council facilities,

2. Statement

Council approves this policy and any associated procedure in relation to naming of facilities and how to manage requests regarding re-naming.

3. Aim

Assigning a name can be a powerful and permanent identity for a public space and facility, and Council must demonstrate strong civic leadership as a public authority when naming Council facilities. The aim of this policy is to provide the framework for a consistent approach to decision-making in relation to this.

4. Scope

- 4.1. The policy will apply to:
 - Council owned property only.
 - Naming of facilities, buildings and rooms.
 - Naming of new facilities.
 - Requests to re-name facilities, buildings and rooms.
 - Requests regarding memorials, planting of trees and plaques.
- 4.2. Council will consider naming of facilities:
 - To recognise a specific unique geographic location.
- 4.3. The principles of the process are as follows:
 - Specific criteria
 - Application form
 - Assessment
 - Consultation (if required)
 - Decision-making
 - Appeal mechanism

5. Related Policies

External policy context:

There are a number of relevant policy frameworks in place in Northern Ireland which relate to, and inform, the issue of (re)naming facilities including:

- Together: Building a United Community strategy, key priority - Our Shared Community Shared Aim: to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.
- Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland advice on Good Relations in Local Councils.
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland Guidance on Promoting a good and harmonious working environment.

Internal policy context:

Within Council there are relevant policy strands which relate to or inform the issue of (re)naming facilities including:

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Policy on Naming Council facilities

197

- Equality Scheme re: Section 75 of the NI Act 1998
- Good Relations Action Plan (Section 75 (2))
- Naming, Postal numbering and Erection of Nameplates Policy and Procedures. This policy and associated procedures outline guidance on new development names, new names for existing roads and dual language street signage.

6. Policy Owner(s)

Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Liam Hannaway, Chief Executive

7. Contact details in regard of this policy are:

Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy

8. Policy Authorisation

Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee considered on 15 March 2016.

Monthly Council authorised on 4 April 2016.

9. Policy Effective Date

12 April 2016

10. Policy Review Date

The policy will be reviewed in line with the Council's agreed policy review cycle i.e. every 4 years (as per Council's Equality Scheme commitment 4.31).

11. Implementation

The associated implementation will be guided as per the scope of the policy outlined in section 4.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

The policy has been equality screened and it is recommended it not be subject to an equality impact assessment (with no mitigating measures required).

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to (re)naming of facilities

198

Guidelines and procedure

The following procedures and guidelines have been established to ensure a consistent approach is applied to the (re)naming of facilities.

1. Initial requests for (re)naming of Council facilities

All requests for the naming or renaming of a Council facility must be made in writing to the Director of Corporate Services.

The relevant application form must be completed and accompany all requests.

2. Criteria

2.1 Requests must relate to Council owned property only, with respect to one of the following:

- Naming of facilities, buildings and rooms.
- Naming of new facilities.
- Requests to re-name facilities, buildings and rooms.
- Requests regarding memorials, planting of trees and plaques.

2.2 Where the request relates to a specific unique location:

- The name should provide a sense of place, reflecting the geographic location, community, neighbourhood or street where the Council facility is located.
- The name should reflect the historical significance of the area or reflect unique characteristics of the site.

2.3 Names should not be considered which:

- Cause confusion duplication or names sound similar to existing named facilities / locations.
- Have the potential to cause offence to some within the meaning and scopes of the provision of the Council's Equality Scheme and Good Relations policies and the Together Building a United Community strategy.
- Are party-political in intention or use.

2.4 Additional considerations:

- Existing names will not be changed without consideration of the existing name, the cost and impact of changing existing signs, rebuilding community recognition and updating records (i.e. letterhead, databases, and promotional materials).
- Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- All signs shall comply with the Council's Corporate branding guidelines in relation to signage. Specialised naming signage should not be permitted.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Guidelines and associated procedure in relation to (re)naming of facilities

199

3. Assessment procedure

The assessment of applications will be undertaken by an internal working group comprising the Director of Corporate Services or their representative and two other officers of Council.

3.1 Stage 1 – Basic Eligibility Check

- Initial request is submitted to the Director of Corporate Services.
- An initial assessment is carried out to determine request meets the basic eligibility criteria outlined in section 2.1.
- Requests which meet basic eligibility criteria detailed in section 2.1 will proceed to Stage 2 of the assessment process.
- Requests which do not meet the basic eligibility criteria will not proceed to Stage 2 assessment.
- Applicants whose requests do not meet the basic eligibility will be informed in writing of Council's decision outlining the reason.

3.2 Stage 2 – Full appraisal and assessment

- Assessment conducted by internal working group.

3.3 Stage 3 – Decision-making

- Recommendation of internal working group tabled for consideration at Council's Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee.
- Decision of Council communicated to applicant (review process offered to unsuccessful applicants).

3.4 Review Process

Following the decision to reject an application, applicants will be informed in writing stating the reasons for the decision.

The Review procedure will be implemented in the event that an applicant wishes to appeal against Newry, Mourne and Down Council's decision to reject an application to name a facility.

The procedure will be administered by a Review Panel which will be independent of the Council's internal working group.

The purpose of the Review Procedure is to ensure that the decisions taken, and procedures followed, by the Council for individual applications are applied fairly and consistently. The Review will provide an independent process through which an applicant will have an opportunity to demonstrate to the Review Panel that either;

- the outcome was unreasonable; or
- that the proper procedures were not followed.

Appeals on any other ground will not be considered.

Report to:	SPR Committee
Subject:	BREXIT Update
Date:	Monday 13 th March 2017
Reporting Officer:	Liam Hannaway, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director, Enterprise Employment & Regeneration

Decisions Required

To note Council engagement on the impact of Brexit and consider Recommendations outlined at Section 3 of this Report

1.0 Purpose and Background

1.1

As part of consideration of Brexit and its implications. NMDDC is leading on a piece of work on behalf of the Border Councils North and South along the Border Corridor. Council, through its service level agreement with Ulster University has commissioned research to carry out an initial analysis of the risks and opportunities which may be posed by Brexit to the area. The work to date has indicated the key challenges that face border areas both North and South and the key sectors in border Regions that are likely to face the greatest challenges.

1.2

Newry Mourne and Down District Council has been represented at the All-Island dialogue at invitation of the Taoiseach. The Chief Executive was invited to attend the event on the 24th February at which session he advised the other delegates of the concerns of businesses and residents of the District.

2.0 Key Issues

The work to date has highlighted a number of significant issues for the Border region economy in general but it has also highlighted significant challenges for specific sectors of the economy as a result of Brexit which may vary depending on the final Brexit package that is agreed as negotiations develop. Sectors identified with the highest exposure to risk are dairy processing, meat processing, seafood and agri-food sector in general, family, building materials and engineering.

It is essential that members from all the Councils begin to share this information and begin to consider how Local Authorities in the Border Corridor Region engage with the private sector and build into future programmes, interventions and support to assist business plan and prepare for Brexit. This will be a continual developing scenario as Brexit negotiations proceed and the nature of Brexit becomes clearer. Research is to date highlighting key areas of concern and waiting until we have a clearer picture on Brexit deal could be time wasted.

3.0 Recommendations

1. NMDDC along with EBR continue to lead on this work
2. NMDDC work in partnership with all the Local Authorities along the Border

	Corridor North and South to develop a clearer understanding on Brexit and its implications for key sectors and an agreed action plan on how to address these issues. This will not preclude any Council from progressing specific initiatives for their area if they are not common to the entire region (ie fishing – key sector in our area but not for all the Councils on the Border Corridor) 3. The Group of Councils along the Border Corridor (covering each of the 3 Border networks ie EBR, ICBAN & NW) will organize a seminar for elected members & Chambers of Commerce, etc to learn more of the detail from the research and discuss possible actions. This will involve Governments on both sides of the Border.
4.0	Resource Implications Minimal cost around facility hire & catering – maximum £1,000 each to be covered by partner Councils.
5.0	Equality and Good Relations implications Fully Considered
6.0	Appendices Not Applicable

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2017
Subject:	Culloville Development Association – Supplemental Contribution Agreement
Reporting Officer:	Alison Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Contact Officer:	Carmel McKenna, Administration

Decision required:	
As per recommendation 3.1.	
1.0	Purpose and Background:
1.1	The Legacy Council granted a contribution of £85,501.00 to Culloville Development Association for the development of a Community Centre. A second Charge in favour of the Council was registered at the Registry of Deeds.
1.2	A Supplemental Contribution Agreement was entered into in the sum of £25,304.44 to assist with car park works, culvert repairs and fees. This Agreement was signed & sealed in September 2015.
1.3	The Community Centre has been developed.
2.0	Key issues:
2.1	The Council's Solicitor has advised that the Supplemental Contribution Agreement contains a Charging Clause (3.3). This Charge in favour of the Council has not been registered against the property (which following first registration is now contained within Folio AR 122450 Co Armagh).
2.2	The Solicitors for Culloville Development Association have indicated that a further registered Charge would require consent by GAA headquarters.
2.3	There is an existing first Charge on the Folio in favour of DARD.
2.4	The securing of the Charge in favour of Council is to protect its position and provide security for the obligations of Culloville Development Association under the Contribution Agreement.
3.0	Recommendations:
3.1	Approval to complete the necessary legal formalities to secure a Charge relating to the Supplemental Contribution Agreement, subject to Culloville Development Association obtaining GAA approval.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Limited – legal fees and Officer time.
5.0	Equality and good relations implications:
5.1	None identified.
6.0	Appendices
	Appendix I: Supplemental Contribution Agreement.

DATED THIS DAY OF 2015

BETWEEN

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

- AND -

CULLOVILLE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

SUPPLEMENTAL CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

£25,304.44

McShanes Solicitors
34 Hill Street
NEWRY
Co. Down, BT34 1AR

THIS INDENTURE made this 1st day of September Two Thousand and Fifteen and made between **NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL** of Monaghan Row, Newry, in the County of Down (hereinafter called "the Council") of the one part and **CULLOVILLE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION** (a company limited by guarantee) having its registered office at Corismoo Road, Culloville, Co. Down, BT35 9JF (hereinafter called "the Company") of the other part.

1. WHEREAS

1.1 The Council previously entered into a Contribution Agreement dated the 1st day of December 2014 with the Company under which a Grant was made to the Company in the sum of Eighty-Five Thousand, Five Hundred and One Pounds (£85,01.00) to assist towards the provision of a Community Centre in Culloville (which sum is hereinafter referred to as "the Grant").

1.2 The Council has now agreed to make an additional Grant to the Company in the sum of Twenty Five Thousand, Three Hundred and Four Pounds and Forty-four Pence (£25,304.44) to assist towards the cost of the following matters:-

(i)	Car Park work	£2,211.43
(ii)	Fees to V B Evans (QS)	£4,100.00
(iii)	Culvert Repairs	£1,632.50
(iv)	Building Control Fees	£3,886.25
(v)	Water Connection Fees	£ 681.26
(vi)	Fees to Clayton Knox (Architects)	<u>£12,793.00</u>
	TOTAL	£25,304.44

The above sums have already been expended by the Council on behalf of the Company

2. NOW THIS INDENTURE WITNESSETH that in pursuance of said Agreement and in consideration of the Additional Grant to be made to the Company by the Council and in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions the Company hereby covenants with the Council for a period of 8 years and 3 months from the date hereof and in the manner following:-

- 2.1 To expend the Additional Grant for the purposes of the Project as defined in the Company's application and for no other purpose whatsoever.
- 2.2 To insure both the Community Centre building and its contents against public liability and all such other risks as the Council from time to time may direct. The said insurance policy or policies to be effected with a reputable insurance company chosen by the Company, but subject to the approval of the Council, and to a value of not less than £10 million for each and every claim.
- 2.3 The Company undertakes to the Council to promptly claim all sums which are or may be payable under the insurance policies and to expend all sums received in rebuilding the property and repairing any damage to it or replacing any fixtures, fittings and equipment and should the monies received from the insurance company in this regard be inadequate for that purpose to fund the deficit or shortfall from other resources of the Company so that the building is fully reinstated and any fixtures, fittings and equipment replaced.
- 2.4 To duly pay punctually all premiums and money necessary for effecting and keeping up the said policies of insurance and on demand to produce to the Council the policy or policies of insurance and the receipts for any premiums payable in respect thereof.
- 2.5 Not to enter into any agreement for the sale of the property during the term of this Agreement without having first obtained the permission, in writing, of the Council and having reached with the Council a firm agreement regarding repayment of the said Grant or part thereof (if so required) if such eventuality were to occur during the said term.
- 2.6 To acknowledge the Council's contribution to this project by the erection of a plaque or similar fixture on the premises of Culloville Community Centre, the said plaque or similar fixture to be erected within 3 months of the completion of the project.
- 2.7 To acknowledge the Council's contribution in all publicity, public relation statements, press announcements and all similar media

publication and to recognise the right of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to publicise its contribution

2.8 The Company shall provide to the Council a copy of its balance sheet and profit and loss account within 3 months of its annual general meeting.

2.9 That if all or any of the Covenants or conditions herein contained should not be duly performed or observed then and in such case the Company shall, if required by the Council, repay or cause to be repaid to the Council a portion of the Grant in accordance with the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of years and months left to run} \times \text{£25,304.44}}{8.25}$$

8.25

= amount to be repaid (if so required)

2.13 To discharge the Council's legal costs in the sum of £750.00 plus VAT plus Outlay (total £915.00) upon execution of this Agreement and prior to drawdown of any unpaid portion of the Grant or Additional Grant.

3. **AND IN FURTHER PURSUANCE** of said Agreement in consideration of the covenants by the Company hereinbefore contained the Council hereby Covenants with the Company as follows:-

3.1 To pay the Grant to the Company during the year ended 31st March 2015 that the Company will have given evidence to the Council of expenditure in excess of this amount prior to the application for payment **AND FURTHER PROVIDED** that at the times of such request for payment the Company shall up to then have observed and performed all their covenants hereinbefore contained and in the case of development work or provisions of fixtures and fittings shall have produced to the Council a certificate from their Architect or similar competent person as to the value of such work carried out or in the case of equipment or other movable items a receipt for the purchase price thereof.

- 3.2 That provided all the Company's Covenants hereinbefore contained shall have been observed and performed at the end of the said period of this Agreement the Council shall not request repayment of any portion of the Grant and shall waive all the Company's Covenants and conditions at the end of the said period.
- 3.3 As security for the obligations of the Company to repay the grant (or any part thereof) if demanded the Company as **BENEFICIAL OWNERS**, hereby demises by way of mortgage unto the Council the premises set forth in the Schedule hereto subject to the proviso for redemption herein contained to hold the same unto the Council for 8 years and three months from the date hereof **PROVIDED** that if the Company shall duly pay to the Council all monies payable under this agreement (or part thereof) and shall observe and perform all the covenants on the part of the Company contained in this agreement then the Council shall discharge this security by receipt to be attached hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties hereto have executed this Deed on the date first of WRITTEN

SIGNED as authorised persons on behalf of
CULLOVILLE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

In the presence of:-

Ryan Elliott
Solcater
Newry

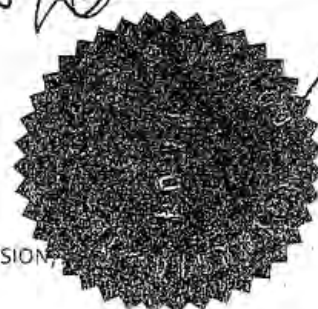
Present when the Common Seal of
NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT
COUNCIL was affixed hereto

Gerald Cullen

Shirley A. Ross

Naomi Baulch

Ken [Signature]



SCHEDULE

ALL THAT AND THOSE the lands contained within Folio AR 122450 County Armagh.

()

()

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 th March 2017
Subject:	NMDDC Credit Card Policy
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Gerard Byrne, Audit Services Manager

Decisions required:	
Members are asked to approve the new policy in relation to Credit Card usage within the Council.	
1.0	Purpose and Background:
1.1	The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for the use of Credit Cards including appropriate use and reporting of expenditure. The policy aims to ensure that the operational and administrative costs and the risks associated with credit card use are minimised, while providing cardholders with a convenient method of purchasing good and services on behalf of NMDDC.
2.0	Key issues:
2.1	• There will be 4 authorised Credit Cards owners in NMDDC each with a different limit. • Each Authorised Owner will have to sign an acceptance and undertaking form. • All Credit Cards purchases will have to be supported by a Credit Card Transaction Record. • Each month a Credit Card Payment Authorisation form will be completed by the Authorised User and this will be compared with the Credit Card statement and will be scrutinised by Finance. • Audit Services Manager will complete an annual review of Credit Card spend and will report findings to SMT and Audit Committee.
3.0	Recommendations:
3.1	To approve the NMDDC Credit Card Policy.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	None anticipated at present.
5.0	Equality and good relations implications:
5.1	None
6.0	Appendices
	Appendix I: NMDDC Credit Card Policy

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Credit Card Policy



Effective Date April 2017

Version 1.0



Policy Control

Policy Title	Credit Card Policy
Departmental Ownership	Corporate Services
Document Owner	Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Officer Responsible	Gerard Byrne, Audit Services Manager
Date of Approval	SP&R – Council -
Date of Last update	March 2017
Updated by	Gerard Byrne, Audit Services Manager
Date of next Review	March 2021
Location where document is held and referenced	Shared Drive and NMDDC Website

Contents

	Content	Page Number
1	Statement	3
2	Aims of the Policy	3
3	Scope of the Policy	3
4	Related Policies	3
5	Terms and Conditions of Use of Credit Cards	3
6	Authorised Users	5
7	Role of the Authorised User	5
8	Role of the Finance Function	6
9	Policy Review Date	7
10	Equality Screening	7
Appendix 1	NMDDC Credit Card Agreement - Acceptance and Undertaking	8
Appendix 2	Credit Card Transaction Record	9
Appendix 3	Credit Card Payment Authorisation Form	10



1. Statement

The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability in the delivery of its services. The Council approves this policy to ensure that Credit Card use is appropriate.

2. Aims of this Policy

This policy aims to establish rules for the use and responsibilities of corporate Credit Cards by ensuring that operational and administrative costs and the risks associated with credit card use are minimised while providing cardholders with a convenient method of purchasing good and services on behalf of Newry Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC). The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for the use of Credit Cards including appropriate use and reporting of expenditure.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all persons using credit cards including:

- Employees issued with a card in their name;
- Employees using a card held by another employee card holder.

4. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Council Documents:

- Anti-Fraud policy and the Fraud Response plan;
- Purchasing Policy;
- Travel and Subsistence Policy; and
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

5. Terms and Conditions of Use of Credit Cards

Credit Card usage in the day to day business of the NMDDC is intended to facilitate transactions only in limited circumstances, chiefly to provide an easier means of booking and paying for travel and accommodation in connection with official business outside Northern Ireland, where it has not been possible to pre-book these by conventional means.

The use of credit cards is not a preferred purchasing method and is limited to purchasing of goods and services that cannot be purchased efficiently and cost effectively by other means.

The card may be used for:

- Accommodation bookings/payment;
- Payment of travel costs (air, train, taxi etc.) where it has not been possible to prebook prior to departure;



- Payment for meals and hospitality subject to the amounts being in accordance with the relevant codes and any other directions currently in force; and
- The purchase of goods which can either be obtained on-line or where the on-line price represents value for money and where credit card is the only available method of payment. Prior approval by the Director of Corporate Services is required in these circumstances.

The card must not be used for:

- Withdrawing cash or obtaining foreign currency (a normal imprest can be obtained if necessary);
- The purchase of goods (other than those outlined above); and
- Any type of personal expenditure - even if the intention is to repay such expenditure.

The requirements of the Purchasing Policy also apply to purchases using credit cards. Multiple Credit Card transactions (at the same time or over extended periods) must not be used to avoid the need to obtain quotations that would otherwise be required under the Purchasing Policy.

Credit card usage will be subject to management checks to ensure compliance with current policies for claiming travel and subsistence and to guard against fraud. The card must be kept in a safe place at all times. The Authorised User will be responsible for custody of the card, and, to guard against possible fraud, should not lose sight of it during a transaction. Loss of a card must be reported immediately to the Credit Card issuer (Danske Bank) and also to the Assistant Director of Finance.

The Authorised User will be responsible each month for completing the normal Credit Card Payment Authorisation (**Appendix 3**) form and ensuring that items charged to the credit card have been solely and necessarily incurred in the conduct of official business; for providing details of each occasion of use; and for submitting receipts or vouchers for all expenditure. Any expenditure for which supporting receipts/vouchers are not presented will become the liability of the user.

Before using the credit card, the Authorised User must sign the Acceptance and Undertaking document (**Appendix 1**). A copy should be retained for personal reference and the original held by the Assistant Director of Finance.

Breaches of this policy, or any related procedures, may result in the cancellations of this credit card and/or a range of administrative actions which depending on the nature and extent of the breach may be subject to the Councils Disciplinary Policy and/or civil/criminal proceedings. Cancellation of Credit Cards will be brought to the attention of Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings.

Unauthorised expenditure or expenditure of a private nature that is proved to be inappropriate will be recovered from deductions in an officer's salary.

The Audit Services Manager will provide a report, at least annually, on the control, use, viability and adherence to authorised policy and procedures to the Audit Committee and SMT.



6. Authorised Users

To ensure good financial management and sound corporate governance only four credit cards will be used by NMDDC. The Credit Card owners and their limits are as follows:

Job Title	Credit Card Limit	Purpose of the Credit Card
Chief Executive	£5,000	Miscellaneous activities associated with the Chief Executives role.
Director of Corporate Services	£5,000	Nonstandard IT equipment purchases or other nonstandard payments in accordance with Section 5.
Assistant Director of Finance	£5,000	All NMDDC travel costs, including meals.
Head of Procurement	£3,000	For purchasing items when the normal procurement method is not viable.

The Credit Card can only be used by the Authorised Users after they have signed the Acceptance and Undertaking agreeing to abide by the Terms and Conditions of Use as detailed in **Appendix 1**. The card will be terminated immediately if the authorised holder ceases to have responsibilities that require it.

An up to date record of Authorised Users including date of issue/termination, card limit etc. will be maintained and held by the Assistant Director of Finance. The Authorised Users should familiarise themselves with the regulations for Travel and Subsistence and must ensure that the Credit Card is not used for transactions which are not appropriate.

7. Role of the Authorised User

Payment Authorisation Forms

As stated in the Acceptance and Undertaking it is the responsibility of the Authorised User to complete the Credit Card Transaction Record (CCTR) (**Appendix 2**) form for each item of expenditure on the Credit Card and to have this expenditure approved retrospectively by the Assistant Director of Finance via the Credit Card Payment Authorisation (CCPA) (**Appendix 3**) form. Any disputes regarding the Credit Card statements must be noted and relevant documents regarding the outcome of the dispute must be kept for audit purposes.

Payment and Updating Accounts

- Each month a statement will be received from the Credit Card issuer detailing charges.
- This must be checked immediately upon receipt and associated with the CCPA form and copies of the relevant receipts or vouchers.



- c. Where a receipt is not available, the Authorised User will be asked to provide verification of the transaction. A receipt should follow as soon as possible.
- d. The Authorised User must ensure that any items appearing on the statement also appear on their normal CCPA form.
- e. Any item appearing on the statement which is not recognised and would not have been authorised for payment by the Authorised User should be investigated immediately with the Credit Card Company by the appropriate Authorised User.
- f. The CCPA form must then be signed by the Authorised User.
- g. A original CCPA form and original Credit Card statement must then be passed to the Finance Assistant for checking and verification no more than 5 days from the date of receipt of the statement. The Assistant Director of Finance will then approve the CCPA and will retain the vouchers in a secure location and forward the CCPA and credit card statement to Accounts Payable for payment via debit card within 5 days of receipt of the documentation.
- h. Should a dispute arise the CCPA form and Credit Card statement must still be signed and sent to Accounts Payable to facilitate the transfer of funds.
- i. The balance on the statement must be cleared each month by the specified date to ensure that no interest charges are incurred.
- j. In exceptional circumstances when a receipt was unable to be obtained, the NMDDC Chief Executive will authorise that the expenditure was incurred on business related activity.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised User, to pursue any disputed items with the Credit Card issuer/vendor. As stated in the 'Acceptance and Undertaking' any expenditure for which supporting receipts/vouchers are not presented will become the liability of the Authorised User.

8. Role of the Finance Function

To guard against fraud it is essential that finance maintain strict financial control of credit card usage and implement procedures to ensure that a full reconciliation of all transactions is completed each month.

Immediately upon receipt of the CCPA forms and the Credit Card statements, an independent officer must check and verify that the expenditure incurred complies with the terms and conditions for usage and also with the relevant codes and any other directions for payment of travel and/or subsistence in operation.

If, during the check, any discrepancies are found they should be referred back to the NMDDC Authorised User via the officer who authorised the payment. Payment should not, however, be delayed. To ensure no interest charges are incurred, payment of the balance on the credit card statement should not be delayed pending outcome of the investigation of any discrepancy.



If finance believes that a suspected fraud has occurred they should contact the Audit Services Manager as soon as possible.

9. Policy Review Date

The policy will be reviewed in line with the Council's agreed policy review cycle i.e. every 4 years (as per Council's Equality Scheme commitment 4.31), or sooner to ensure it remains reflective of legislative developments."

Staff wishing to receive clarification on this policy and/or suggest improvements should contact the Audit Services Manager.

10. Equality Screening

Having screened the Credit Card Policy the decision is that it should not be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) with no mitigating measures required. A copy of the equality screening is available from the Head of Corporate Policy.

Version 1.0



NMDDC Credit Card Agreement

Acceptance and Undertaking

I have read and understood the Newry Mourne and Down District Council Credit Card policy, and agree to abide by its Terms and Conditions of use.

I understand that I am personally liable for any expenditure charged to the card that does not comply with the above Terms and Conditions.

I undertake to repay any such sums to Newry Mourne and Down District Council immediately.

Signed: _____
Authorised Credit Card User

Date: _____

Name: _____



Domhantraie Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

218

Appendix 2

Credit Card Transaction Record

Transaction Date	
Name of person raising the transaction	
Credit Card being used (name)	
Transaction of Behalf of Department /Officer	
Minute approval reference if applicable	
Reason for Purchase	
Why was purchase made via Credit Card	
Supplier Name	
Transaction Amount (state Currency - £,€, \$)	
VAT Amount	
Total Amount	
Cost Code	
Authorisation Signature	

Any further comments or justification for use of credit card



Credit Card Payment Authorisation Form

Dates from __/__/__ to __/__/__

Item No.	Date	Nature of Transaction	Supplier	Value	Sterling Value	Date item appear on statement	Disputed item (✓/×)
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							

All Expenditure listed relates to expenditure incurred in the course of business and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the use of the card

Signature of Credit Card User Date.....

All expenditure listed is necessary for the business use of the organisation and is in accordance with the conditions of use of the card

Signature of Finance Officer Date

Signature of AD of Finance Date