

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 15 September 2016 at 5.00pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick.

In the Chair: Councillor P Brown

In Attendance:

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor N Bailie
Councillor R Burgess	Councillor P Byrne
Councillor M Carr	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor S Doran	Councillor C Enright
Councillor M Murnin	Councillor B Ó'Múiri
Councillor B Quinn	Councillor M Ruane
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor W Walker

Also in Attendance: Councillor J Trainor

Officials in Attendance:

Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive
Mr E Curtis, Director of Strategic Policy and Performance
Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active and Healthy Communities
Mr J McBride, Assistant Director, Transformation, Innovation & Performance
Ms H McKee, Assistant Director Community Planning
Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director, Corporate Services (Human Resources)
Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director, Corporate Services (Finance)
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Corporate Services (Legal & Administrative Services)
Mr E McManus, Capital Projects
Mr G Ringland, IT Manager
Mrs E McParland, Democratic Services Manager
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Officer
Mrs C Taylor, Democratic Services Officer

Also in Attendance:

Ms J Jackson, Acuity Business Solutions
Mr G Middleton, Acuity Business Solutions

SPR/187/2016

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

There were no apologies recorded.

SPR/188/2016 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chief Executive declared an interest in Item 19: Release of Charge – Lislea Community Association.

SPR/189/2016:- ACTION SHEET OF THE STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 AUGUST 2016

Read: Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources (SPR) Committee Meeting held on 11 August 2016 (circulated).

Mrs Carville advised a revised actions sheet had been compiled with the aim of improving accountability with regard to progress and completion of agreed actions. She said a column had been included which would be populated with a yes or no as to whether Committee agreed to have an action removed, if it had been satisfactorily completed.

Councillor Sharvin stated he would expect to have a target date attributed to actions in order that Members would be able to measure if officers had completed actions in a timely fashion.

Councillor Enright said he agreed with Councillor Sharvin and said if a target date was in place, it should be aimed for.

Councillor Clarke acknowledged that target dates would only be expected in respect of management actions as management had no control over actions to be taken by third parties.

Mrs Carville advised the action paragraph would contain much more detailed and up to date information in order to inform the Committee's decision as to whether an item should be removed from the action sheet. She stated estimated target dates could also be included within the summary.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor W Clarke, seconded by Councillor Walker to endorse the new action sheet format.

The Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee held on 11 August 2016, was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Bailie, seconded by Councillor Ruane.

SPR/190/2016:- MINUTES OF STRATEGIC PROJECTS WORKING GROUP – 30 AUGUST 2016

Read: Minutes of the Strategic Projects Working Group held on 30 August 2016 (circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Strategic Projects Working Group held on 30 August 2016 and recommendations were agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Murnin.**

It was agreed to take items 12 and 15 at this stage of the meeting.

SPR/191/2016 NEWRY STREET UNITE PROJECT, KILKEEL

Read: Correspondence received from Land & Property Services dated 20th July 2016 providing valuation advice relating to sale of land and waiver covenant at Hillside Drive, Kilkeel (copy circulated).

Mr Lipsett advised Newry Street Unite had secured £350,000 from the Big Lottery Space and Place project to provide a community facility and upgrade the Council's existing play park at Hillside Drive, Kilkeel.

Mr Lipsett stated that Newry Street Unite had written to the Council seeking approval to lease the site for the community centre development and a play area, and a request was also made asking the Council to lease the other piece of ground from the Housing Executive and sub-lease it to them also.

Mr Lipsett advised that the Housing Executive had submitted revised proposals that a payment of £14,500 for a 25 year lease be paid and a business case to be made for a community asset transfer which will allow the site to be leased at a nil premium.

Mr Lipsett recommended that the Committee agreed to the business case being pursued through the Department of Finance and Department of Communities and if unsuccessful, the matter be brought back to Committee.

Councillor Doran proposed to accept the officer's recommendation stating he had concerns the project would not be completed by April 2017.

Mr Lipsett advised the Housing Executive were working closely with Council to ensure the project happened as quickly as possible.

Councillor Quinn seconded the proposal stating if possible that, in order to fast track the application, letters be written in support of the project to all Departments.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Doran, seconded by Councillor Quinn to accept the officer's recommendation and to write letters of support to all Departments, if required to expedite the start date.

SPR/192/2016 FORMER KINDLE PRIMARY SCHOOL – BUSINESS CASE

Read: Outline Business Case for the purchase of the former Kindle Primary School in Ballykinlar Village with a recommendation to purchase the site from Department of Education in order to develop a community centre, subject to full economic appraisal and business case being carried out on the site. (copy circulated).

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor W Clarke to accept the officer's recommendation to purchase the site from Department of Education in order to develop a community centre, subject to full economic appraisal and business case being carried out on the site.

PRESENTATION

SPR/193/2016:- IT STRATEGY

Read: Report from Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, dated 15 September 2016, regarding IT Strategy. (copy circulated)

Mrs Carville advised the IT Strategy had now been completed and it had been agreed to bring it to the Committee. She stated what was being presented was only the strategy which may be altered going forward according to business need.

Mrs Carville stated she was asking for Members to agree the principles of the strategy and to agree, in principle, an estimated expenditure of £7.6m over a four year period. Approval was also sought for commencement of the year 1 activity.

The Chairperson welcomed Ms Jackson and Mr Middleton from Acuity Business Solutions to the Committee Meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Ms Jackson and Mr Middleton provided some background to the strategy stating there were 3 major drivers for change and change was required across 3 principle themes, namely to help achieve the corporate objectives, to ensure that IT services work better together to meet business requirements cost effectively and to ensure the IT

environment had the required stability and resilience to support the business and service users. (copy of presentation appended to these minutes)

Members asked the following questions:

- There was not enough information provided in the report with regard to how the £7.6m would be spent. How much were each of the projects going to cost?
- How would reliable platforms be measured?
- There were no Key Performance Indicators included, this would be expected in a strategy such as this.
- How many fixed term staff would be required?
- Was £7.6m a high end estimate?
- Council had multiple systems some of which were unfit for purpose, where these considered as part of this project?
- Would the systems being provided become out of date by the end of the four year period?

Ms Jackson, Mr Middleton, Mrs Carville and Mr Hannaway responded to the queries as follows:

- The document was a transformation programme of work rather than a list of items to be procured. A functioning modern IT System was needed to meet the objectives of the Councils Corporate Plan 2014-2019. This Strategy sets out what was needed to meet these objectives.
- There were 40 projects identified and, based on previous experience and the Council's requirements, an estimate of each project was made. A cost/benefit analysis would need to be completed on each project before any decision was made to progress the project.
- The detail of costs, and what would be provided, would be detailed in the next stage of the process.
- Reliability was a fundamental aspect to the project and would be the most important part of the work carried out.
- Key Performance Indicators would form part of the next level of the project rather than being contained within the strategy document.
- The projects would be resourced using the most cost effective way of delivering services.
- £7.6m would be a high end estimate, however there were questions still to be answered on what Council was likely to want and what it would see as priority issues.
- The next stage of the project would look at the detailed cost/benefit analysis of each of the 40 identified projects. Each individual project would only get a green light to progress if the business case stood up to scrutiny. Money needed to be built into the capital programme in order to improve the IT infrastructure.
- The system required would need to be resilient, however it would not just be one system that would be purchased. The idea would be to

approach suppliers telling them what was required and what the programme needed to do.

Following further discussion, Councillor W Clarke proposed that Council:

- agree the principles of the strategy;
- agree, in principle, an estimated expenditure of £7.6m over a four year period;
- approve commencement of the year 1 activity.

This was seconded by Councillor Bailie.

Councillor Carr stated Council had already invested heavily in IT infrastructure since the merger of the two legacy Councils. He stated the Committee had not had enough time to look at the documents and asked for a breakdown of what each project would cost.

Mrs Carville agreed to circulate details of the costings of the projects listed within the strategy to all Members on the Committee which detailed the estimated £7.6m.

The Chairperson advised there had been a proposer and seconder to accept the officer's recommendation and asked if all were in agreement. Due to some abstentions, the matter was put to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR:	11
AGAINST:	1
ABSTENTIONS:	4

The proposal was **CARRIED**.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor W Clarke, seconded by Councillor Bailie that Council:

- agree the principles of the strategy;
- agree, in principle, an estimated expenditure of £7.6m over a four year period;
- approve commencement of the year 1 activity.

CORPORATE SERVICES – HUMAN RESOURCES

SPR/194/2016 ELECTED MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATION SCHEME - UPDATE

Read: Report from Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Human Resources), dated 15 September 2016, regarding the Accredited Training Success within the Council undertaken by Employees and Elected Members during the period of January 2015-date. (copy circulated).

Members spoke in support of the scheme and congratulated all Elected Members and employees who had been successful in securing qualifications through the scheme.

Councillor Ó'Múiri asked whether there was much uptake from Members and employees and if there were any courses that were unavailable through the scheme.

Mrs Miskelly advised the figures for uptake for the year 2016-17 were included within the report and stated that provided the requirements of the scheme were met and the money was available, then support would be provided.

Councillor W Clarke referred to employees only being reimbursed 50% of the course fees, while Elected Members received 100% of fees, and asked if this put employees at lower pay grades off from applying for the scheme.

Mrs Miskelly stated the two schemes were not like-for-like as employees received time off for study leave which Elected Members did not. She said there was no evidence of employees not taking up course places due to only being reimbursed 50% of fees.

Noted: The report on Elected Member and Employee Qualification Scheme was noted.

FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION

SPR/195/2016 STAFF CELEBRATION EVENT

Read: Report from Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, dated 15 September 2016, regarding a Staff Celebration Event to be held in the Down area on Friday 2 December 2016 at a maximum cost of £5,000 (copy circulated).

Members spoke in support of the officer's recommendation stating it was important to recognise the excellent work undertaken by Council employees during difficult times and it was a great opportunity to build staff morale.

Councillor Sharvin agreed that Council staff did an excellent job and should be rewarded. However he said there could be a perception among ratepayers that funding for voluntary and other organisations had been cut, and yet there was enough funding for a party for staff, which may create the wrong impression.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor W Clarke to approve a staff

celebration event to be held in the Down area on Friday 2 December 2016 at a maximum cost of £5000.

SPR/196/2016 LOCAL DEMOCRACY WEEK 2016

Read: Report from Mrs E McParland, Democratic Services Manager and Ms J McCabe, Social Inclusion & Diversity Projects Coordinator, dated 15 September 2016, Local Democracy Week, seeking approval to host a Question Time event for the local Youth Councils on Wednesday 12 October 2016. The report stated discussion would take place on two topics chosen by the Youth Councils namely Brexit and refugees. (copy circulated).

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Sharvin to accept the officer's recommendation to host a Question time event for local Youth Councils on Wednesday 12 October 2016.**

SPR/197/2016 SOLACE NI CONFERENCE – 3 NOVEMBER 2016

Read: Report from Ms K Bingham, Policy Officer, Solace NI dated 15 September 2016, regarding Solace NI Conference scheduled to take place on 3 November 2016 from 9.30am-4.30pm in the Hilton, Templepatrick. (copy circulated).

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Enright to accept the officer's recommendation that Elected Members and officers who would like to attend the SOLACE NI conference should download the registration form and forward completed form to events@solace.org.uk.**

SPR/198/2016 CONSIDERATION OF FINAL SUBMISSION OF EUROPEAN FUNDING UNDER LIBERATE

Mr Curtis advised the issue of European Funding under Liberate was raised at a previous meeting with officers being tasked to look at the Horizon 2020. Following investigations, it had been agreed that the Albert Basin in Newry would be a suitable project for this funding and he was asking for approval to join Liberate, at no cost to Council, with the possibility of securing up to £500,000 support for the project.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Andrews to accept the officer's recommendation to join Liberate, at no cost to Council.**

SPR/199/2016 ABANDONED BOAT IN DUNDRUM INNER BAY

Read: Report from Mr P Green, Legal Advisor dated 15 September 2016, regarding an abandoned boat in Dundrum Inner Bay. The report outlined a salvage expert had advised Council it would cost approximately £6,000 to assess the implications arising from removing the boat and that a third party had recently approached Council to enquire into the possibility of removing the boat for salvage at no cost to Council. (copy circulated).

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Murnin to enter into negotiations with a third party to remove the boat at Dundrum Inner Bay at no cost to the Council and a report be brought back to Committee on the course of action considered to be best value for money.**

SPR/200/2016 REPORT ON BREXIT

Read: Report from Ms S Burns, Programmes Manager dated 15 September 2016, regarding Brexit recommending the following:

- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council request all Councils along the border corridor to participate in the appointment of a consultant via East Border Region Company to carry out a scoping exercise on the economic and social impact of Brexit.
- Council representatives to lobby Brussels at a meeting on 10th October 2016 with the AFCO Committee. East Border Region to cover the cost of their Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and one official attending the meeting. The Council would have to meet the cost of delegates it wished to send in addition to those from the East Board Region.
- Write to the Republic of Ireland Government to seek that they expedite the SWELL funding application and other relevant cross-border initiatives.
- Organise a conference for Councils to manage Brexit for the future. (copy circulated).

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councilor Andrews to accept the officer's recommendation to:**

- **Newry, Mourne and Down District Council request all Councils along the border corridor to participate in the appointment of a consultant via East Border Region Company to carry out a scoping exercise on the economic and social impact of Brexit.**
- **Council representatives to lobby Brussels at a meeting on 10th October 2016 with the AFCO Committee. East Border Region to cover the cost of their Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and one official attending the meeting.**

The Council would have to meet the cost of any delegates it wished to send in addition to those from the East Board Region.

- Write to the Republic of Ireland Government to seek that they expedite the SWELL funding application and other relevant cross-border initiatives.
- Organise a conference for Councils to manage Brexit for the future.

GRANT AIDED PROGRAMMES

SPR/201/2016 MINUTES OF INAUGURAL PEACE IV PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Read: Minutes from Inaugural Peace IV Partnership Meeting held on Thursday 8th September 2016 in the Boardroom, Monaghan Row, Newry (copy circulated).

Read: Report from Ms S Burns, Programmes Manager and Ms J McCabe, Social Inclusion & Diversity Projects Coordinator dated 15 September 2016, regarding the inaugural Peace IV Partnership Meeting minutes. (copy circulated).

AGREED: The minutes were agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Enright.

ESTATE

SPR/202/2016 PROPOSED LEASE OF JACK MACKIN PARK GAELIC PITCH AT ROONEYS MEADOW, NEWRY TO ST JOHN BOSCO GAC

Read: Report from Mrs C McKenna, Administration, dated 15 September 2016, regarding proposed lease of Jack Mackin Park gaelic pitch at Rooney's Meadow, Newry to St John Bosco GAC at a peppercorn rental subject to DOE approval. The report recommended that Council proceed with the lease, subject to Housing Executive approval. (copy circulated).

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Murnin to accept the officer's recommendation to proceed with the lease, subject to Housing Executive approval.

The Chief Executive, having declared an interest in the next item, left the meeting at this stage – 7.05pm

SPR/203/2016 RELEASE OF CHARGE – LISLEA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Read: Report from Mr P Green, Legal Advisor and Mrs C McKenna, Administration, dated 15 September 2016, regarding recommendation to release the charge dated 5 December 2000 on land in Folio AR 22313L Co Armagh in relation to a contribution from the Legacy Council to Lislea Community Association as the payback period has expired and the covenants of the charge were complied with during that period. (copy circulated).

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Bailie to accept the officer's recommendation to release the charge for Lislea Community Association.

CAPITAL

SPR/204/2016 CAPITAL PROJECTS - UPDATE

Read: Report from Mr E McManus, Capital Projects, dated 15 September 2016, regarding progress in relation to Capital Projects. (copy circulated).

Noted: The report regarding the update in relation to the progress of Capital Projects was noted.

SPR/205/2016 NEWRY LEISURE CENTRE – PHASE II – ADDITIONAL COSTS FOR ACCOMMODATION

Read: Report from Mr E McManus, Capital Projects dated 15 September 2016 regarding additional cost to Council to provide office accommodation for Leisure Services and Sports Department staff within Phase 2 of Newry Leisure Centre at an estimated cost of £70,000 (copy circulated).

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Murnin to accept the officer's recommendation to provide office accommodation for Leisure Services and Sports Department staff within Phase 2 of Newry Leisure Centre at an estimated cost of £70,000.

It was agreed to take items 20 and 21 together.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SPR/207/2016 BALLYNAHINCH COMMUNITY CENTRE

**SPR/208/2016 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION YOUTH CAPITAL FUND:
BALLYNAHINCH COMMUNITY HUB**

Mr Curtis advised he had held a meeting with Department of Education who advised they had a Youth Capital Fund that Council was not aware of.

Mr Curtis was seeking approval to set up a small team to complete an application by 30th September 2016 as there is a significant amount of money available through that scheme. He advised there was a possibility to include as part of Peace IV funding application.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Murnin, seconded by Councillor Walker to accept the officer's recommendation.

**SPR/209/2016 DELEGATION VISIT TO BRUSSELS EAST BORDER REGION
COMMITTEE – 9 OCTOBER 2016**

Mr Curtis advised that as outlined in the report on Brexit (SPR/200/2016), East Border Region were going to Brussels to lobby the European Parliament on 9th-10th October 2016. He recommended that in addition to the East Border Region delegates, Council appoint one official plus the Chairperson of Council and Chairperson of the SPR Committee attend.

Councillor Enright proposed that Council send the Chief Executive, Chairperson of Council and Chairperson of SPR Committee. This was seconded by Councillor Ruane.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Ruane that Council send the Chief Executive, Chairperson of Council and Chairperson of SPR Committee.

**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: On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on this matter which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act

(Northern Ireland) 2014 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

Read: Report from Mr K Scullion, Assistant Director, Facilities Management and Maintenance and Mrs C McKenna, Administration, dated 15 September 2016, regarding Council land at Daisy Hill, Newry – Former Dwelling site (copy circulated).

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

Agreed: When the Committee came out of closed session, the Chairperson advised that it had been agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor W Clarke to accept the officer's recommendations as follows:

- Council declare the land as surplus
- Request Land & Property Services to provide a current market valuation and a recommendation on the most appropriate way to dispose of the land
- The 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.

SPR/211/2016: ADDITIONAL ITEM

The Chairperson advised that Councillor Enright had requested an additional item to be heard under any other business.

Councillors expressed concern about items not on the Agenda being raised and said this was not usual practice.

The Chairperson said he would consider Members raising items additional to the Agenda, if advised to him prior to the Meeting.

Councillor Enright stated his item was in relation to Sellafield Power Plant.

The Chairperson stated this item was listed on the agenda for the Active and Healthy Communities Committee and Councillor Trainor had submitted a Notice of Motion for the October Council Meeting so the matter would be heard at these Meetings.

The meeting concluded at 7.26pm.

For consideration at the Council Meeting to be held on 3 October 2016.

Signed: **Councillor Patrick Brown**
 Chairperson

Signed: **Eddy Curtis**
 Director of Strategic Policy and Performance