

## **NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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### **Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 16 August 2018 at 5.00pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick.**

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In the Chair: Councillor M Savage

In Attendance: Councillor R Burgess Councillor P Byrne  
Councillor M Carr Councillor S Doran  
Councillor C Enright Councillor D Hyland  
Councillor O McMahon Councillor Ó Muirí  
Councillor J Rice Councillor M Ruane  
Councillor G Sharvin Councillor J Trainor  
Councillor W Walker

Also in Attendance: Councillor T Andrews Councillor C Casey  
Councillor G Craig Councillor G Hanna  
Councillor M Larkin Councillor D McAteer

Officials in Attendance: Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services  
Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities  
Mrs M Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism  
Mr A McKay, Chief Planning Officer  
Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director, Finance  
Mrs L Moore, Head of Legal Administration  
Mr P Preen, HR Policy & Projects Manager  
Mrs L Fitzsimons, HR Manager  
Mr F O'Connor, Legal Advisor  
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Officer

#### **SPR/094/2018 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillor McMurray and Chief Executive, Mr L Hannaway.

#### **SPR/095/2018 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **SPR/096/2018 ACTION SHEET OF THE STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 JUNE 2018**

Read: Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources (SPR)  
Committee Meeting held on 14 June 2018 **(Circulated)**

#### **SPR/236/2016 – Right of Way Proposal at Ballyedmond, Killowen, Rostrevor**

Mrs Carville advised as this item had been on the action sheet for a considerable length of time, officers intended to bring a report to the September SPR Committee on the matter.

Councillor Carr queried whether a planning application had been made on the pathway.

Mrs Carville advised she would have to revert to the Councillor on whether there was a planning application in the system.

**Agreed:**                    **On the proposal of Councillor Hyland, seconded by Councillor Burgess, it was agreed that the Action Sheet of 14 June 2018 be noted, and actions removed as marked.**

## **PLANNING**

### **SPR/97/2018                    PLANNING COMMITTEE SCHEME OF DELEGATION & OPERATING PROTOCOL**

Read:                    Report dated 16 August 2018, from Mr A McKay, Chief Planning Officer, regarding proposed changes to the Planning Committee Scheme of Delegation and Operating Protocol. **(Copy Circulated)**

Mrs Ward provided some background to the movement of responsibility for Planning Committee stating she had decided to review all minutes from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 in order to see how the Planning Committee had been operating. She stated the following:

- In 2015/16, 74 applications came to Committee with 61 decisions taken and 13 deferred. 60 applications approved the officer's recommendations with 1 being overturned.
- In 2016/17, 272 applications came to Committee, most probably due to holding 2 Committee Meetings a month, with 147 decisions taken and 113 deferred. 117 applications approved the officer's recommendations with 30 being overturned.
- In 2017/18, 199 applications came to Committee with 110 decisions taken and 85 deferred. 65 applications approved the officer's recommendation with 48 being overturned.
- There were 900 live applications currently in the system with 107 over 20 months old.
- There was a legacy backlog from DoE which was transferred to Council, however there was now the potential to create a legacy of backlog applications within the new Council.
- There were 154 applications waiting to go into the planning system, however the Committee can realistically only hear around 20 per month.

Mrs Ward recommended the new scheme of delegation and operating protocol in order to try to alleviate the backlog. She stated this would be observed for a period of time to see how it was operating and would be holding engagement sessions with applicants and agents on an ongoing basis.

Members discussed the issue at length stating that all Members of Council should have been involved in the workshops on such a fundamental change to the workings of the Planning Committee and it was proposed by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Burgess to defer the decision until the next Committee Meeting and to hold a workshop during that time with all Councillors.

Mrs Ward agreed to host a workshop and asked that if Members had issues they wanted raised at the workshop they should send them through to her in an email in order that they can be addressed.

**AGREED:**                    **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded**

by Councillor Burgess, to defer the decision on the revised scheme of delegation and operating protocol, and to hold a workshop to include all 41 Councillors before the next Committee Meeting. Members to submit any issues that wish to be raised at the workshop to the Director in advance.

#### **FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION**

##### **SPR/098/2018      CONFIRMATION OF DIVERSION OF ADDERS LOANIN PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY, BALLYWARD**

Read:            Report dated 16 August 2018, from Ms H Wilson, Land Management Officer, regarding Confirmation of Diversion of Adders Loanin Public Right of Way, Ballyward. **(Copy Circulated)**

**AGREED:**            **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Hyland, to confirm the assertion of the proposed diversion as unopposed.**

##### **SPR/099/2018      ALBERT BASIN WORKING GROUP - UPDATE**

Read:            Report dated 16 August 2018, from Mr C Mallon, Assistant Director of Estates and Project Management, regarding Albert Basin Working Group Update **(Copy circulated)**

Members queried whether an independent survey on the report that had already been carried out was being requested.

Mr Lipsett advised the independent report was being carried out on whether there was any need to have further reports carried out on the condition of the ground.

**AGREED:**            **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Hyland, it was agreed to approve the procurement of a specialist to review the current 2006 Contamination Report and the procurement of the Topographic and 3D Drone Survey.**

**Councillors Craig and Hanna left the meeting at this stage – 5.59pm**

##### **SPR/100/2018      ALBERT BASIN WORKING GROUP REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

Read:            Report dated 16 August 2018, from Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active and Healthy Communities, regarding Albert Basin Working Group Reporting Arrangements. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Byrne proposed that the Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group should report to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at this stage, with the option to amend in the future to report to Active and Healthy Communities once it is past concept stage. This was seconded by Councillor Hyland.

Councillor Ruane proposed to keep the reporting line as was at present with the

possibility of reinvestigating as the project progressed. This was seconded by Councillor Doran.

The Chairperson put Councillor Byrne's proposal to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR: 8  
AGAINST: 5  
ABSTENTIONS: 1

The proposal was carried.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Hyland, it was agreed to change the reporting arrangements to the following:

- The Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group reporting directly to the SPR Committee, with the option to report to AHC Committee in the future, when the project was further defined.

Councillors Casey, Larkin and McAteer left the meeting at this stage – 6.10pm

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the next matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Part 3 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

**SPR/101/2018: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

**Read:** Report dated 16 August 2018 from Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director of Finance, regarding Management Accounts to 30 June 2018 (**copy circulated**)

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor McMahon, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** When the Committee came out of closed session, it was agreed to note the Management Accounts to 30 June 2018.

**SPR/102/2018**      **ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Read:                      Report dated 16 August 2018 from Ms H Wilson, Land Management Officer, regarding Access to the Countryside Policy and Procedures (**copy circulated**)

Agreed:                      **On the proposal of Councillor McMahon, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed:                      **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Byrne, to note the contents of the officer's report and approve the adoption of the Access to the Countryside Policy and Procedures appended to the Report, with a review six months from the adoption of the Policy.**

**SPR/103/2018**      **POLICY RE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Read:                      Report dated 16 August 2018 from Mrs L Moore, Head of Legal Administration, regarding Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures (**copy circulated**)

Agreed:                      **On the proposal of Councillor McMahon, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed:                      **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Doran, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to note the contents of the officer's report and approve the adoption of the Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures appended to the Report, with a review one year from the adoption of the Policy.**

**SPR/104/2018**      **UPDATED WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

Read:                      Report dated 16 August 2018 from Mr G Byrne, Audit Services Manager, regarding Updated Whistleblowing Policy (**copy circulated**)

Agreed:                      **On the proposal of Councillor McMahon, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed:                      **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to note the contents of the officer's report and approve the updated Whistleblowing Policy appended to the Report.**

**SPR/105/2018**      **REPORT REGARDING NORTHERN IRELAND PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN**

Read:                      Report dated 16 August 2018 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Corporate Services (Administration), regarding Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman Report (**copy circulated**)

Agreed:                      **On the proposal of Councillor McMahon, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed:                      **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Ruane, to note the contents of the officer's report and approve the recommendation in para 3.1 authorising a consolatory payment in the sum outlined in the report, as recommended by the NI Public Services Ombudsman.**

**SPR/106/2018**      **RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL UNDER RPA STAFF SEVERANCE SCHEME FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Read:                      Report dated 16 August 2018 from Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director Human Resources, regarding Recommendation for Approval under RPA Staff Severance Scheme for Local Government (**copy circulated at meeting**)

Agreed:                      **On the proposal of Councillor McMahon, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed:                      **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to accept the officer's recommendation at para 3.1 under RPA Staff Severance Scheme for Local Government.**

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

**SPR/107/2018**      **UPDATE ON TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

Read:                      Report dated 16 August 2018 from Mrs B Phillips, Finance regarding Update on Treasury Management (**copy circulated**)

Agreed:                      **On the proposal of Councillor McMahon, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed:                      **It was agreed to note the contents of the officer's report containing an update on Treasury Management.**

**SPR/108/2018      ACTION SHEET FROM STRATEGIC PROJECTS WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON 26 JUNE 2018**

**Read:**                      Action Sheet arising from Strategic Projects Working Group Meeting held on 26 June 2018 **(copy circulated)**

**Agreed:**                      **On the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Doran, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

**Noted:**                      **It was agreed to note the actions of Strategic Projects working group meeting of 26 June 2018.**

**SPR/109/2018      ACTION SHEET FROM ALBERT BASIN TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2018**

**Read:**                      Action Sheet arising from Efficiencies Working Group Meeting held on 6 June 2018 **(copy circulated)**

**Agreed:**                      **On the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Doran, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

**Noted:**                      **It was agreed to note the actions of Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group meeting of 6 June 2018.**

**FOR NOTING**

**SPR/110/2018      DRAFT MINUTES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING HELD ON 19 JUNE 2018**

**Read:**                      Draft Minutes arising from Community Planning Partnership Board Meeting held on 19 June 2018 **(copy circulated)**

**Noted:**                      **It was agreed to note the draft minutes of the Community Planning Partnership Board Meeting held on 19 June 2018.**

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.35pm

For consideration at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 3 September 2018.

**Signed:**                      **Councillor Michael Savage**  
**Chairperson**

**Signed:**                      **Dorinnia Carville**  
**Director of Corporate Services**