

January 21st, 2022

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 20th January 2022 at 6:00 pm** in **Microsoft Teams**.

Chairperson - Councillor O Hanlon

Deputy Chairperson - Councillor P Brown

Councillor P Byrne

Councillor H Gallagher

Councillor R Howell

Councillor O Magennis

Councillor D Murphy

Councillor B O'Muirí

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor M Rice

Councillor M Savage

Councillor G Sharvin

Councillor D Taylor

Councillor J Tinnelly


Councillor W Walker

Agenda

1.0 Introduction and Apologies

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from SPR Committee Meeting held on 16 December 2021

 [SPR-Action Sheet arising from 16 December 2021.pdf](#)

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For Consideration and/or Decision

4.0 Notice of Motion regarding Contactless Payment Solutions to tackle Homelessness

The following Notice of Motion, in the name of Councillor Brown, was referred from the monthly Council Meeting in November 2021

Notice of Motion:

‘Given the continued high homelessness rates in the District and the rise in cashless transactions, this council commits to installing a number of contactless payment stations in main urban areas across the District which can gather donations for homelessness charities based in the District to distribute to those most in need.’

 [Notice of Motion regarding Contactless Payment Solutions to tackle Homelessness.pdf](#)

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5.0 Programme Governance; OBC Public Consultation Working Group

 [SPR Jan 22 NCCR - OBC Public Consultation Working Group.pdf](#)

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6.0 Call for evidence on Remote Hearing Regulations

 [DFC call for evidence on remote hearings regulations.pdf](#)

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 [dfc-call-for-evidence-local-govt-remote-meetings.pdf](#)

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Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014



7.0 Proposed Leases of lands at Kilbroney Park, Greenbank Depot and Cloughreagh Community Centre for electricity substations

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 this information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

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|  <i>Proposed Leases of lands at Kilbroney Park Greenbank Depot and Cloughreagh Community Centre.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Leases to NIEN - Map 1 - SPR Report - 20 Jan 22.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Leases to NIEN - Map 2 - SPR Report 20 Jan 22.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Leases to NIEN - Map 3 - SPR Report 20 Jan 22.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |




8.0 Leases of Council lands under Sports and Community Leasing Policy

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 this information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

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|  <i>Leases of Council lands under Sports and Community.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Leasing of Council Land and Facilities - Expressions of Interest.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |

9.0 Licence of a portion of the Walled Garden, Slieve Gullion Forest Park

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 this information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

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|  <i>Licence of a portion of the Walled Garden Slieve Gullion.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Map of walled garden.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
|  <i>Proposed plan for Meditation Garden.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |

10.0 Conacre Arrangements in respect of Castlewellan Forest Park

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 this information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.


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|  <i>Conacre Arrangements in respect of Castlewellan Forest Park.pdf</i> | <i>Not included</i> |
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11.0 Request to purchase lands to the rear of 57 Violet Hill Avenue, Newry

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to an individual and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **Request to purchase lands to the rear of 57 Violet Hill Avenue Newry.pdf**

Not included

 **SPR report - Map - Disposal of land at Violet Hill Avenue.pdf**

Not included

12.0 Refuse Collection Workforce Review

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 this information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **Refuse Collection Workforce Review.pdf**


Not included

13.0 Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) Dissolution/Continuing Operation

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) Dissolution.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 1 DfC Letter Nov21 - reconsideration of decision.PDF**

Not included

 **Appendix 2 NILGA email.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 3 NILGA Letter to Minister Hargey - 21st July 2021.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 4 DfC letter to NILGA.pdf**

Not included

FOR NOTING Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

14.0 Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet - 13 December

2021

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 this information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **SFWG Action Sheet.2 13 12 2021.pdf**

Not included

15.0 D1 Expression of Interest – Cecil Street Newry

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), and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **D1 Expression of Interest Cecil Street Newry.pdf**

Not included

 **Appendix 1 - Map.pdf**

Not included

For Noting

16.0 Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 13 January 2022

 **Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Mtg - 13.01.2022open.pdf**

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17.0 Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period October - December 2021

 **Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report Quarterly Report for period October - December 2021.pdf**

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 **Appendix I - Quarterly Screening Report October - December 2021.pdf**

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18.0 Statutory reporting – DAERA Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 2020 – 2021

Link to Appendix 1 DAERA Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 1st April 2020-31st March 2021

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/4th%20Rural%20Needs%20Annual%20Monitoring%20Report%20%282020-2021%29.PDF>

 **Statutory reporting DAERA Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 2020 2021.pdf**

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ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – T H U R S D A Y 16 DECEMBER 2021

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|--------------|---|---|------------|----------|---|
| SPR/193/2021 | Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 11 November 2021. | It was agreed that the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 11 November 2021. | D Carville | Noted | Y |
| SPR/194/2021 | Notice of Motion, Revenue targets from renewables | Elected Members agreed to approve that Council continue to follow avenues for increasing revenue from renewables. The Sustainability and Climate Change forum will lead on all proposals and will report progress through the Active and Healthy Communities Committee. Once a funding stream has been agreed, the revenue can then be factored into Councils estimates process. Council officials will seek revenue sources and savings and come back to Strategy Policy and Resources committee meeting in April 2022, with more flesh on the above aspirational targets with a view to long term planning and action for consideration by Strategy Policy and Resources committee. | G Byrne | Approved | Y |
| SPR/195/2021 | Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment 2020-21. | It was agreed to approve the Performance Improvement Audit and Assessment Report 2020-21 (Appendix 2) | D Carville | Approved | Y |
| SPR/196/2021 | Draft Newry Mourne and Down District Retention And Disposal Schedule | It was agreed to consider and approve the draft Retention and Disposal Schedule. | E Cosgrove | Approved | Y |

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

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| SPR/197/2021 | Extension of lease with NIFRS – Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick | It was agreed that Elected Members approve the extension of NIFRS's current lease of office accommodation in Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick for the term of 2 years from 1/8/22 until 31/7/24 with an option of 3rd year following this, on the same terms but subject to review of the current rental by Council's Valuer. Rental valuation to be brought back to committee for approval. | A Robb | Approved | Y |
| SPR/198/2021 | Proposed renewal of a licence of Islands Castle Park, Newcastle to National Westminster bank for a mobile bank unit | It was agreed that Elected Members agreed to grant a Licence to National Westminster Bank to operate a mobile banking unit at Castle Park each Thursday from 10am until 12pm for a 2-year period from 27th February 2021 subject to a yearly Licence Fee to be determined by Council's valuer and payment of the cost of the valuation report. | F O'Connor | Approved | Y |
| SPR/199/2021 | Reprofiling of underspend Within Council's Irish Language Bursary Scheme | It was agreed that Elected Members approve to proceed to reprofile the underspend of £90k within the Irish Language Bursary Scheme 2021/22 to implement Projects 1-5 as set out within Section 1.3 of the officer's report. | R Mackin | Approved | Y |
| SPR/200/2021 | Castlewellan Forest Park | It was agreed that Elected Members approve the staff structure and associated costs for Castlewellan Forest Park as outlined in the officer's report. | A Patterson | Approved | Y |

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| SPR/201/2021 | Camlough Lake Recreational Hub – Outline Business Case. | <p>It was agreed that Elected Members approve the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve a budget allocation in Council's Capital Programme as per the preferred option recommended in the Business Case as outlined in Section 4.1 of the officer's report. 2. To approve the procurement and appointment of an Integrated Consultancy Team to progress the project. 3. Progress necessary land matters to facilitate delivering Option 1 4. Officers to investigate and seek appropriate external funding for the project. | A Patterson | Approved | Y |
| SPR/202/2021 | Surplus Assets | <p>It was agreed that Elected Members note the content of the report and attached Appendix A – Surplus Asset Overview and approve the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuse Disposal Site at Coreagh Quarry, Glenvale Road. Recommendation to accept retaining the Lagoons and Control Room at this time and make an adjustment from the previously agreed sales price as detailed in the officer's report to reflect the area retained. • 5 Ballynoe Road, Downpatrick (former site of Killough Road Community Centre). Recommendation to remove asset from the Disposal list to allow AHC to invite EOIs under the Sports and Community Facility Land | D Carville | Approved | Y |

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| | | <p>Leasing Policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lismore Park Playing Fields, Crossmaglen. Recommendation to remove asset from the Disposal list to allow AHC to invite EOIs under the Sports and Community Facility Land Leasing Policy. Lands at Mourne Esplanade, Kilkeel. Recommendation to accept offer dated 6th Oct 2021 detailed in the officer's report and proceed to sale agreed. The Clock Recreation Area Shrigley. Recommendation to proceed with the D1 process with the boundary unaltered and arrange for further discussions between Sir Hans Sloane Centre and the neighbouring land owner. Former Playing Fields at Derryleckagh, Newry. Recommendation to remove asset from the disposal list and proceed with the application from Newry Rugby Club to progress to Stage 2 of the community asset transfer. | | | |
| SPR/203/2021 | Terms and Conditions | <p>It was agreed that Elected Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> note the progress on the workplan as set out in appendix 1 of the officer's report. That members note that the JTUS issues a letter of dispute to their members on 17 November 2021, and That members support the continued release of employees supporting the programme of work, the costs of which are detailed at 4.1 of the officer's report. | C Mallon | Noted | Y |
| SPR/204/2021 | Redundancy Approval | <p>It was agreed that Elected Members approve the redundancy package for the affected employee on or before 6 April 2022 as detailed in the report.</p> | L Fitzsimons | Approved | Y |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>FOR NOTING</u></p> <p>This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014</p> | | | | | |

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| SPR/205/2021 | Newry Leisure Centre – Phase 1 & Phase 2 Retention & Final Accounts. | It was agreed that Elected Members note the release of the retention monies contractually due to the Contractor, as detailed in the officer's report. | C Boyd | Noted | Y |
| SPR/206/2021 | Treasury Management Mid-Year Report – 2021/22. | It was agreed that Elected Members note the contents of the report. | G Byrne | Noted | Y |
| SPR/207/2021 | Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet held on 25 November 2021. | It was agreed to note the Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet – 25 November 2021 | D Carville | Noted | Y |
| SPR/208/2021 | Voluntary Redundancy Call | It was agreed that Elected Members note the contents of the report. | M Ward | Noted | Y |
| <u>FOR NOTING</u> | | | | | |
| SPR/209/2021 | Belfast Region City Deal – Complimentary Fund | It was agreed that Elected Members note the contents of the report and that council write to DfC and the Department of Finance to ask for an update on the timeline and what can be delivered in the first four years. It was also agreed that the profile be brought to the NCCR programme board to be discussed which would allow the board to converse with the department to ensure work can be carried out on the ground. | C Mallon | Noted | Y |
| SPR/210/2021 | Belfast Region City Deal – Signing of the deal document | It was agreed that Elected Members note the contents of the report. | C Mallon | Noted | Y |
| SPR/211/2021 | Correspondence received - Private lanes and roads within Newry Mourne and Down District Council | It was agreed that Elected Members note the correspondence received. | D Carville/ A Robb | Noted | Y |

END

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| Report to: | Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 20 January 2022 |
| Subject: | Notice of Motion regarding Contactless Payment Solutions to tackle Homelessness |
| Reporting Officer (Including Job Title): | Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director of Finance (acting) |
| Contact Officer (Including Job Title): | Gerard Byrne – Assistant Director of Finance (acting) |

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

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| For decision | X | For noting only | |
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| 1.0 | Purpose and Background |
| 1.1 | <p>The following Notice of Motion, in the name of Councillor Brown, was referred from the monthly Council Meeting in November 2021</p> <p>Notice of Motion:</p> <p><i>'Given the continued high homelessness rates in the District and the rise in cashless transactions, this council commits to installing a number of contactless payment stations in main urban areas across the District which can gather donations for homelessness charities based in the District to distribute to those most in need.'</i></p> |
| 2.0 | Key issues |
| 2.1 | <p>Initial research work has been carried out by Officers to assess the viability and fairness of contactless payment solutions throughout the District. From an initial review there are several factors which need further consideration;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is an upfront purchase cost for each Device (typically ranging from £350 to £1,455 (for a standing podium device)). There is also a monthly service cost at approximately £17.50 per device. A supplier will typically also take a percentage (typically 2.5% of every transaction plus another 10p) of every transaction. 2. Council would also have to choose how many contactless payment stations there should be within the District and where these should be located. For maximum viability these would need to be in high footfall areas. Consideration would have to be given to how Council would secure these devices and protect them from vandalism etc. 3. Council would have to decide which homelessness charities to help. Under certain supplier models, only one Charity can benefit per device. As this would be a new Council function, the proposal would have to be assessed under section 75 legislation and be subject to Equality Screening. Equality of opportunity would not be delivered if only one Charity could benefit. |

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| 3.0 | Recommendations It is recommended that, should members wish to pursue this further, further work is required, namely: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officers to follow up on the cost, security and equality issues outlined at section 2.1 and also conduct further research of suppliers. 2. Officers will then bring proposals back to Members for consideration before the end of this financial year. |
| 4.0 | Resource implications |
| 4.1 | Resource implications include officers time in assessing the Notice of Motion. There would also be additional costs in purchasing contactless stations and their upkeep if Contactless Stations are situated within the District. |
| 5.0 | Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections) |
| 5.1 | <i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated that the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2 | <i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/> The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3 | <i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rationale:</i> |

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| 6.0 | Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply) |
| 6.1 | <p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 7.0 | Appendices |
| | None |
| 8.0 | Background Documents |
| | N/A |

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| Report to: | SPR Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 20 th January 2021 |
| Subject: | Programme Governance; OBC Public Consultation Working Group |
| Reporting Officer (Including Job Title): | Conor Mallon, Director Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism |
| Contact Officer (Including Job Title): | Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director |

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

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| For decision | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | For noting only | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.0 | Purpose and Background | | |
| 1.1 | <p>The Council Corporate Plan 2019-2023 sets out as one of the key actions the establishment of a new Civic Centre for Newry to help attain a number of strategic objectives.</p> <p>The Civic Centre project has evolved into a programme of City Centre Regeneration works including a Civic Hub, enhanced Theatre/ Conference facility, associated public realm, grade A office accommodation and emerging Traffic, Transportation and Car Parking strategy and latterly the 15acre Albert Basin Park project.</p> <p>This purpose of this report is to seek members approval for the revised programme governance arrangements, specifically the addition of the OBC Public Consultation Working Group and scheduling of the Programme Board meetings.</p> | | |
| 2.0 | Key issues | | |
| 2.1 | <p>Governance is the control framework within which programmes and projects are delivered so that they remain within corporate visibility and control.</p> <p>The Newry CCR programme governance arrangements have been updated on 5th January 2022 incorporating the proposed Terms of Reference for the OBC Public Consultation Working Group (annexe 1) to consider the OBC Consultation report by Otium Leisure Consultancy (2021) and advise how the Council should respond to the comments.</p> <p>This revised programme governance arrangements propose that Programme Board meetings are scheduled every second month. Intermediate meetings will be facilitated as required.</p> <p>Further to the NCCR Programme board meeting, consideration should be given to the inclusion of representatives from all the local church denominations on the OBC Public Consultation Working Group, this has been included as a recommendation within the report.</p> | | |
| 3.0 | Recommendations | | |

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| 3.1 | To approve the recommendation of the NCCR Programme board to revise the programme governance arrangements to include the addition of the OBC Public Consultation Working Group and scheduling Programme Board meetings two-monthly with ability to schedule intermittently. |
| 3.2 | Representatives from all the local church denominations are included as members of the OBC Public Consultation Working Group. |
| 4.0 | Resource implications |
| 4.1 | There are no anticipated revenue implications associated with this report at this stage. |
| 5.0 | Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections) |
| 5.1 | <p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.2 | <p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.3 | <p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> |
| 6.0 | Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply) |
| 6.1 | Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service |

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| | <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 7.0 | Appendices |
| | See annexe 1. |
| 8.0 | Background Documents |
| | Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Governance Arrangements revision dated 5 th January 2022. |

Annex 1

Extract - Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme
Governance Arrangements revision 9.0 dated 5th January 2022

OBC Public Consultation Working Group

| Role of Board Member | Title | Name |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| SF Representative | Councillor (Co-Chair) | Roisin Mulgrew |
| SDLP Representative | Councillor (Co-Chair) | Gary Stokes |
| Regional Development Lead | Department for Communities (Chair) | Damian Mullholland |
| Senior Responsible Owner (NCCR) | Dir. Enterprise, Regen. & Tourism | Conor Mallon |
| Senior Responsible Owner (ABP) | Dir. Active & Healthy Communities | Michael Lipsett |
| Project Sponsor | Assistant Director Estates & Projects | Caolain Boyd |
| Programme/ Project Manager | Project Director (SIB) | Adrian Grimshaw |
| Community Engagement | DEA Coordinator | Kerri Morrow |
| Communications | Communication Officer | Joanne Fleming |
| Community Representative | Confederation of Community Groups | Raymond Jackson |
| Enterprise Agency Representative | Newry & Mourne Co-operative & Enterprise Agency | Conor Patterson |
| Business Representative | Newry BID | Eamonn Connolly |
| Business Representative | Newry Chamber | Tony McKeown/ Julie Gibbons |
| Local Churches Representatives | TBC | TBC |

Table 10

Note that invitation to participate in the Working Group extended to Department for Infrastructure by NCCR SRO however invite declined due to resource limitations within DFI.

OBC Public Consultation Working Group - Responsibilities

The Working Group has responsibility to the Programme Board to consider the OBC Consultation report (by Otium Leisure Consultancy 2021) in detail and advise how the Council should respond to the comments.

- Consider the recommendations within OBC consultation report and present proposed actions to the NCCR Programme Board.
- Identify key stakeholders/ stakeholder groups.
- Engage with and Communicate the project/ programme vision, aims & objectives and wider Council policy and priorities to identified stakeholders.
- Propose timeframe and identify resources required to implement proposed actions.
- Identify any risks arising for evaluation and management through the risk register(s).
- Identify any issues for management through the issue log(s).
- Implement approvals received from Council.

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 20 th January 2022 |
| Subject: | Call for evidence on Remote Hearing Regulations |
| Reporting Officer (Including Job Title): | Fearghal O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration |
| Contact Officer (Including Job Title): | Marie Ward, Chief Executive |

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

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| For decision | x | For noting only | |
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| 1.0 | Purpose and Background |
| 1.1 | <p>The Department for Communities has issued a call for evidence on the use of the remote hearing regulations by local Councils in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>There was no express provision for remote meetings for district councils in Northern Ireland pre-pandemic. The Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (NI) 2020 which came into operation on 1st May 2020 following the introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020, made provision for councils in Northern Ireland to hold meetings before 7 May 2021 remotely (such as through digital conferencing software or telephone conference) so that they could protect their members and comply with public health guidance.</p> <p>Subsequently, the Local Government (Meetings and Performance) Act 2021, which came into force on 27 August 2021, extended those regulations until the date that section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 is due to expire (currently 24 March 2022). As district councils in Northern Ireland have now had extensive experience of conducting remote meetings over the past year, this call for evidence is an opportunity to understand these experiences and inform a decision about whether to make these arrangements permanent. Any permanent change would require subordinate legislation that would be subject to the agreement of the Northern Ireland Assembly and would apply only to Northern Ireland.</p> |
| 2.0 | Key issues |
| 2.1 | <p>This call for evidence seeks views on the use of the current arrangements which made provision for district councils in Northern Ireland to hold meetings remotely or in a hybrid format during the coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>A draft response to the call for evidence is appended to the report and Elected members will wish to consider the questions and the views of this Council to be submitted in response.</p> |

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| 3.0 | Recommendations |
| 3.1 | That Elected Members consider the documentation received from the Department for Communities and approve a response on behalf of Newry Mourne and Down District Council to the call for evidence on the use of the remote hearing regulations by local Councils in Northern Ireland. |
| 4.0 | Resource implications |
| 4.1 | None. |
| 5.0 | Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections) |
| 5.1 | <p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.2 | <p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.3 | <p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> |

| | |
|------------|--|
| 6.0 | Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply) |
| 6.1 | <p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 7.0 | Appendices |
| | DFC call for evidence documentation |
| 8.0 | Background Documents |
| | None |



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Call for Evidence Northern Ireland District Councils - Remote/Hybrid Meetings

December 2021

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Introduction

This call for evidence seeks views on the use of the current arrangements which made provision for district councils in Northern Ireland to hold meetings remotely or in a hybrid format during the coronavirus pandemic.

This call for evidence refers to the [Local Government \(Coronavirus\) \(Flexibility of District Council Meetings\) Regulations \(NI\) 2020](#), made under [section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020](#). These regulations came into operation on 1 May 2020 and

applied to meetings taking place before 7 May 2021. Subsequently, the [Local Government \(Meetings and Performance\) Act \(NI\) 2021](#) [extended these regulations until March 2022](#).

If any changes to legislation are made as a result of this call for evidence, they would apply to Northern Ireland only.

Impact assessment: If any policy changes are made following this call for evidence they will be subject to appropriate assessment. No impact assessment has been conducted at this time.

How to respond

Comments should be sent by 5pm 15 February 2022 to:

You can email your responses to:

lgpdconsultations@communities-ni.gov.uk
or download and post to:

Local Government Remote Meetings
Consultation
Department for Communities,
Local Government & Housing Regulation
Division,
Level 4,
Causeway Exchange,
1-7 Bedford Street,
Town Parks,
Belfast,
BT2 7EG

When you reply it would be very useful if you could confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation.

If you are replying on behalf of an organisation please include:

- your name
- your position in the organisation (if applicable)
- the name of your organisation
- an address (including postcode)
- an email address

Response to Call for Evidence:

We will consider the responses received and publish an outcome report on the Departmental website.

In line with good practice and sustainable development, this document has been published electronically.

Accessibility:

A range of alternative formats are available upon request from this Department.

Please email the Department at:
lgpdconsultations@communities-ni.gov.uk

Or write to:

Local Government Remote Meetings
Consultation,
Department for Communities,
Local Government & Housing Regulation
Division,
Level 4,
Causeway Exchange,
1-7 Bedford Street,
Town Parks,
Belfast,
BT2 7EG.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Call for Evidence Responses

For this Call for evidence, we may publish all responses except for those where the respondent indicates that they are an individual acting in a private capacity (e.g. a member of the public). All responses from organisations and individuals responding in a professional capacity may be published. We will remove names, email addresses and telephone numbers from these responses; but apart from this we will publish them in full.

Responses to this Call for Evidence may be subject to requests under the Freedom

of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). All disclosures will be in line with this legislation. If you feel that information that you provide should be treated as private or confidential, please explain why so that we can take this into account.

All personal data will be processed in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018/UK General Data Protection Regulations.

The Department for Communities privacy notice, which gives details of your rights in respect of the handling of your personal data, can be found at: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/dfc-privacy-notice>.

Purpose of this Call for Evidence

The Department for Communities would like to gather evidence about the use of the current arrangements for district councils in Northern Ireland to meet remotely or in hybrid format, as set out in the [Local Government \(Coronavirus\) \(Flexibility of District Council Meetings\) Regulations \(NI\) 2020](#).

The powers in section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 were brought in specifically to make express provision for local authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to deal with the challenges of holding physical meetings during the coronavirus pandemic. They have helped district councils to redeploy resources to deal with the pandemic and ensure that essential business continues whilst protecting the health and safety of their members, officers and the public.

We are aware that experience of remote meetings has been varied, and that while the experience of managing and participating in remote meetings has grown considerably during the period since the remote meetings regulations came into operation, there have been examples of the difficulties this format has posed for some authorities.

We have received representations from the local government sector making the case for permanent provision for remote meetings to be explored. The Department for Communities would like to hear from interested parties

about the pros and cons of making such arrangements permanent in Northern Ireland and the use of the arrangements to date.

We are particularly interested to receive any quantitative data that can be included to substantiate the responses you make.

Throughout this call for evidence the phrases ‘remote meetings’ and ‘remote meetings arrangements’ will be used interchangeably to refer to the provisions for councils to meet remotely or in hybrid format, as set out in the Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (NI) 2020.

These regulations make provision for district councils to hold meetings remotely, for example through typical digital conference software (e.g. Zoom, Skype, Teams) or telephone conference calls. However, they do not require them to be held remotely or even in a single format. This means, for example, that district councils can hold ‘hybrid’ meetings (where some members attend virtually and other members attend in person) and they are also still able to hold fully ‘in-person’ physical meetings.

You can therefore assume that any reference to ‘remote meetings’ or ‘remote meetings arrangements’ also refers to hybrid meetings. The term ‘member’ will be used to refer to any elected council members covered by the regulations above.

Background

There was no express provision for remote meetings for district councils in Northern Ireland pre-pandemic. The Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (NI) 2020 which came into operation following the introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020, made provision for councils in Northern Ireland to hold meetings before 7 May 2021 remotely (such as through digital conferencing software or telephone conference) so that they could protect their members and comply with public health guidance. Subsequently, the Local Government (Meetings and Performance) Act 2021, which

came into force on 27 August 2021, extended those regulations until the date that section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 is due to expire (currently 24 March 2022).

As district councils in Northern Ireland have now had extensive experience of conducting remote meetings over the past year, this call for evidence is an opportunity to understand these experiences and inform a decision about whether to make these arrangements permanent. Any permanent change would require subordinate legislation that would be subject to the agreement of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Questions

The Department for Communities would like to gather evidence about the use of the arrangements that make provision for district councils to meet remotely or in hybrid format during the coronavirus pandemic.

Q1. Generally speaking, how well do you consider the current remote meetings arrangements work?

- ☐ Very Well
- ☒ Well
- ☐ Neither well nor poorly
- ☐ Poorly
- ☐ Very Poorly
- ☐ Unsure

While the powers in section 78 of the Coronavirus Act were brought in specifically to help district councils in Northern Ireland (and local authorities in England and Wales) deal with the challenges of holding meetings during the coronavirus pandemic, the Department would also like to hear from interested parties about the pros and cons of making permanent provision, in whole or in part, for district councils in Northern Ireland.

Q2. Generally speaking, do you think district councils in Northern Ireland should have the ability to hold at least some meetings remotely on a permanent basis?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Beyond having provision to avoid face-to-face meetings during the coronavirus pandemic, we are aware of feedback from councils about additional benefits of being able to hold remote meetings including, but not limited to, the environmental and cost benefits of reduced travel, increased participation from local residents, and the potential to attract more diverse council members. We are keen to obtain representative views on the benefits of remote meetings and would particularly welcome any quantitative evidence to support these views.

Q3. What do you think are some of the benefits of the remote meetings arrangements? Please select all that apply.

- ☒ More accessible for council members
- ☒ Reduction in travel time for councillors
- ☐ Meetings more easily accessed by local residents
- ☐ Greater transparency for council meetings
- ☐ Documents (e.g. minutes, agendas, supporting papers) are more accessible to local residents and others online
- ☐ Easier to chair meetings in an orderly fashion
- ☐ A virtual format promotes greater equality in speaking time during meetings
- ☐ I do not think there are any benefits to remote meetings
- ☒ Other (please specify)

Reduction in travelling time for Council officers

One area which may have been impacted through the holding of remote meetings is the cost savings they have achieved, particularly regarding a reduction in travel expenses and accommodation costs. We would be interested to receive any quantitative data about the cost savings that have been achieved, including any estimates of the comparative cost of running a remote meeting versus a face-to-face meeting.

Q4. (For district councils only) Have you seen a reduction in costs since implementing remote meetings in your council?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Reference has also been made to the difficulty that some members have had with the remote meeting format, particularly in relation to the difficulties in managing misconduct, the challenges of working with unfamiliar software and technological issues caused by a poor internet connection. We are keen to obtain representative views on the disadvantages of remote meetings and would particularly welcome any quantitative evidence to support these views.

Q5. What do you think are some of the disadvantages of the remote meetings arrangements, and do you have any suggestions for how they could be mitigated/overcome? Please select all that apply.

- ☒ It is harder for members to talk to one another informally
- ☒ Meetings are less accessible for council members or local residents who have a poor-quality internet connection
- ☒ Meetings are less accessible for council members or local residents who are unfamiliar with video conferencing/technology
- ☐ There is less opportunity for local residents to speak or ask questions
- ☐ Some find it more difficult to read documents online than in a physical format
- ☒ Debate is restricted by the remote format
- ☐ It is more difficult to provide effective opposition or scrutiny in a remote format
- ☒ It is more difficult to chair meetings in an orderly fashion
- ☒ Virtual meetings can be more easily dominated by individual speakers
- ☐ It might enable democratically elected members to live and perform their duties

outside their local area on a permanent basis, therefore detaching them from the communities they serve

- ☐ I do not think there are any disadvantages to remote meetings
- ☐ Other (please specify)

1. Explanation and interpretation of documentation/maps

The Department for Communities considers that there are also many advantages of holding meetings face-to-face. For example, physical meetings provide numerous opportunities for councillors to speak with one another informally and build alliances, as well as to encounter local residents face-to-face and listen to their concerns in person.

Additionally, some members have referenced the vast improvement in the quality of debate when there is a lively atmosphere and they are able to make full use of their oratory skills to persuade and influence others. Some may consider remote meetings stifling and that physical meetings are essential to effective democracy and scrutiny.

Q6. What do you think are some of the main advantages of holding face-to-face meetings, as opposed to remote meetings?

1. Control and quality of debate;
2. Greater clarity ref interpretation of reports and maps/ sharing of information;

If provision for remote meetings were made permanent, it might be preferable for the Department to constrain the meetings or circumstances in which remote meetings can be held to ensure that effective democracy and scrutiny can still take place.

There are some occasions, for example, where a remote meeting format may be seen as more appropriate, such as for smaller sub-committees, meetings convened at short notice, or for meetings where attendees are drawn from a large geographical area i.e. for some joint committees and for rural councils. On the other hand, there are occasions where a remote meeting format may be viewed as less appropriate, for example larger meetings involving Full Council or a council's Annual Meeting.

Q7. If permanent arrangements were to be made for district councils in Northern Ireland, for which meetings do you think they should have the option to hold remote meetings?

- ☒ For all meetings
- ☐ For most meetings with a few exceptions (please specify)

- ☐ Only for some meetings (please specify)

- ☐ I think councils should be able to decide for themselves which meetings they should have the option to hold remotely
- ☐ I do not think councils in Northern Ireland should have the option to hold remote meetings for any meetings
- ☐ Unsure

Q8. If permanent arrangements were to be made for district councils in Northern Ireland, in which circumstances do you think councils should have the option to hold remote meetings?

- ☐ In any circumstances
- ☐ Only in extenuating circumstances where a meeting cannot be held face-to-face or some members would be unable to attend (e.g. severe weather events, coronavirus restrictions)
- ☒ I think councils in Northern Ireland should be able to decide for themselves which circumstances they should have the option to meet remotely
- ☐ I do not think councils in Northern Ireland should have the option to hold remote meetings under any circumstances
- ☒ Other (please specify)

Councils should have the option of remote but should not forgo the need to meet in the chamber as required.

☐ Unsure

While district councils in Northern Ireland have risen magnificently to the challenge of ensuring vital council business continues by conducting meetings remotely during these unprecedented times, there may be concerns

that, if the arrangements were to made permanent, a situation could arise where remote meetings arrangements were used by a majority party to avoid effective scrutiny or abuse the power in some other way.

Q9. Would you have any concerns if district councils in Northern Ireland were given the power to decide for themselves which meetings, and in what circumstances, they have the option to hold remote meetings?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ Unsure

Q10. If yes, do you have any suggestions for how your concerns could be mitigated/overcome?

In deciding whether and how remote meetings arrangements may be made permanent for district councils in Northern Ireland, the Department for Communities needs to ensure that it complies with the statutory equality duties to have due regard to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. In particular, the Department would need to avoid unlawfully discriminating (either

directly or indirectly) against individuals across the nine equality categories, and also consider whether the arrangements advance greater equality of opportunity and good relations.

The potential benefits that remote meetings could have for members or potential members with disabilities or young families has been stated. However, there are also those for whom remote meetings could pose additional difficulties, for example those with hearing or visual impairments or those more likely to struggle with the technology.

We are keen to consider views on these aspects of remote meetings and would particularly welcome any quantitative evidence to support views provided.

Q11. In your view, would making express provision for district councils in Northern Ireland to meet remotely particularly benefit or disadvantage any individuals with across the nine equality categories? e.g. those with disabilities or caring responsibilities?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Available in alternative formats.

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NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting
held on Thursday 13th January 2022, 10.30am
Hybrid: Council Chamber, Newry & MS Teams**

In Attendance:

Programme Board Members

**Councillor Roisin Mulgrew - Chair
Councillor Gary Stokes
Councillor David Taylor
Councillor Pete Byrne
Councillor Charlie Casey
Councillor Gavin Malone
Councillor William Walker**

NMDDC Officials

**Marie Ward, Chief Executive
Conor Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism
Michael Lipsett, Director of Active, Healthy Communities
Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director
Anthony McKay, Chief Planner
Jonathan McGilly, Assistant Director, Enterprise Employment & Regeneration
Andy Patterson, Assistant Director, Tourism Culture and Events
Paul Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure & Sport
Caolain Boyd, Assistant Director, Estates & Capital Projects
Tracie McLoughlin, PA**

External Members

Damian Mulholland, Dept for Communities

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Cllr Stokes for his previous term as Chair of the Programme Board.

There were no apologies to record.

NCCR/97 Minutes of the Albert Basin Park Project Board Meeting held on Tuesday 30th November 2021

Cllr P Byrne asked whether the previous £150K allocation was sufficient to cover the OBC (Outline Business Case) costs and timeline for completion of same.

Mr M Lipsett advised Officers were confident the £150k allocation will cover the OBC

costs, but in the event of shortfall a request will be taken to Strategy Policy & Resources Committee (SPR) for consideration.

M Lipsett advised the timeline indicated for completion of the OBC is February 2022.

Members agreed to Note the minutes as circulated.

NCCR/98 Minutes of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Project Board Meeting (NMD & BRCD+ projects) held on Tuesday 30th November 2021

Cllr Byrne asked for status update in relation to the staff survey, and requested it be made a priority.

A Grimshaw advised the survey had been drafted but required finalising, and that he would focus on completion and release.

Agreed:

- a) **Members agreed to Note the minutes as circulated.**
- b) **Mr Grimshaw to finalise staff survey and schedule date for issue.**

NCCR/99 Albert Basin Park Project Funding – Next Steps

Mr Lipsett outlined the background and key issues, noting Officers anticipated the OBC will be completed during February for tabling to the Programme Board and thereafter to SPR.

Mr D Mulholland advised the £16m had been included in the draft Department for Communities (DfC) budget for 2022 to 2025, that funding drawdown would be subject to Casework Committee approval and he therefore anticipated bulk of spend would occur in the latter two years 2023 - 2025.

Cllr Casey referenced previous Consultant presentations and their assessment of total costs of the park and questioned source of additional funding requirements.

Cllr Byrne asked:

1. Mindful of Cllr Casey question will updated costs be included in the OBC?
2. Can DfC confirm funding was based financial years?
3. Is there scope to draw down funds in advance of Full Business Case approval?
4. Is the 6 month timeline for Consultant Team procurement a typical timeframe for capital projects such as this?

Mr Mulholland confirmed in response to Cllr Byrne's questions;

- Q2. that DfC draft budget was financial years, i.e. April through March,
- Q3. the possibility of draw down following OBC approval.

In response to Cllr Casey and Cllr Byrne's questions, Mr Lipsett advised;

- Q1. the OBC consultants/ economists will consider options in terms of phasing and available funding, and will identify additional funding requirements alongside potential funding streams. Mr Lipsett advised likely requirement for Council match funding,
- Q4. that 6 months is a typical timescale, for the appointment process of a consultant team for capital projects of this value.

Mr C Boyd advised officers were considering Consultant procurement options, noting procurement would commence once the OBC was approved. Mr C Boyd advised Council would work with DfC and Construction Procurement Delivery (CPD) when recommending the preferred Consultant procurement route.

Cllr Byrne enquired about the DfC funding approval process. In response Mr Mulholland advised the draft OBC will be reviewed by DfC economists and queries raised. Once satisfied the economists will recommend the OBC to a Casework Committee. Casework approval will lead to Departmental and Dept of Finance (DoF) submissions.

Cllr Taylor welcomed the £16m funding and raised the requirement of securing planning approval before funds are accessed, noting the complexity of the planning process and time this could take. He asked for clarification from Mr Mulholland if the £16m would need to be fully spent within the 22–25 period? Cllr Taylor said Council need to be clear on the complexity of the project when communicating to the public.

Cllr Stokes said he also recognised need to spend within the timeframe. He asked if there was merit in Council appointing a dedicated resource to take this project forward.

Mrs M Ward agreed the £16m funding announcement was very positive, and that it followed a lot of hard work from officers with BRCD funding being a key enabler. Mrs M Ward agreed realistic delivery timescale were needed, that various challenges need to be overcome and that Council needs space to perform the necessary work.

Mrs M Ward said Council will continue to communicate the challenges that need to be overcome in delivering the project, and also advised the senior management team were reviewing resources and will bring a paper through SPR in due course.

Mr Mulholland addressed Cllr Taylor's queries and confirmed the £16m funding would need to be spent by 31st March 2025, however he considered the project would be undertaken in phases, with Council committing to delivery of benefits in longer term.

Cllr Byrne said he assumed the matter of resourcing would be considered following the consultant team procurement, and considered 6 months would be time enough to consider these. Cllr Byrne also considered the Programme Board had the appropriate specialist officers and Councillors to take the project forward and sought assurances there would be no change to the Programme Board composition.

Mrs Ward advised she anticipated the Resources Paper to be presented sooner and confirmed there are no plans to change the Programme Board composition.

Members agreed to 'Note' the indicative timeline outlined by Council's Consultants and Capital projects Team as set out in the report and appendix.

NCCR/100 Albert Basin Park Project – Stakeholder Forum

Mr Lipsett advised a request had been received to join the Albert Basin Park Project Stakeholder Forum. Mr Lipsett noted the Forum membership had grown large and given the Albert Basin Park Project governance has since evolved under the new NCCR Governance Structures a review of the Albert Basin Park Stakeholder Forum is proposed.

Cllr Taylor approved the proposed review and also asked that Officers acknowledge the request noting a review is to be undertaken.

Cllr Byrne seconded the proposed review and considered any membership requests need to demonstrate representation of a network.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor C Casey, seconded by Councillor P Byrne it was agreed:

- a) Officers carry out a review of the Albert Basin Park Project Stakeholder Forum and prepare a paper for consideration at the next Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting.**
- b) Officers acknowledging request to become a member of the Albert Basin Park Project Stakeholder Forum and advise a review is being carried out.**

NCCR/101 Programme Governance: OBC Public Consultation Working Group

Mr Grimshaw advised the purpose of the Report is for Members to consider and approve the revised governance arrangements specifically the inclusion of the OBC Public Consultation Working Group and scheduling of the Programme Board Meetings.

Cllr Byrne acknowledged the effort required to prepare for and conduct Boards and Working Groups and was keen that programme time and resources be used in the most effective way. He also asked if Boards could be convened for critical approvals should they be needed?

Cllr Stokes asked if the ASM Audit recommendations are to be taken forward by this Programme Board or the Audit Committee?

In response to Cllr Byrne's query, Mr Mallon noted Programme Boards can still be scheduled in the interim period should a matter arise that requires consideration. Cllr Byrne advised he was content on that basis.

In response to Cllr Stokes query, Mr Mallon advised the Programme Board are responsible for acting on some of the recommendations within the ASM Report but the Audit Committee monitors progress.

Mrs D Carville confirmed Audit Committee have a role in monitoring the recommendations from the ASM Report and advised a report would be taken to the April Audit Committee and thereafter to the Programme Board. Cllr Stokes confirmed he is content with that approach.

Cllr Mulgrew and Cllr Byrne suggested that a communication is issued regarding the updated governance arrangements.

Mr Mallon suggested that the key message from the meeting would be the formation of the Public Consultation Working Group.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor P Byrne, seconded by Councillor C Casey it was agreed:

- a) To approve the revised programme governance arrangements, including;**
 - 1. Terms of Reference for the OBC Public Consultation Working Group, and;**
 - 2. scheduling Programme Board meetings two-monthly with ability to schedule intermittently.**
- b) Communication to be issued regarding the creation of the OBC Public Consultation Working Group.**
- c) Update Report on status of ASM Recommendations to be brought to the April 2022 Audit Committee meeting, thereafter to the next meeting of the Programme Board.**

NCCR/102: Theatre/Conference Pre Planning Application Public Consultation

Mr Grimshaw advised purpose of the report is to advise Members of the final date for the final pre-planning application consultation. He advised given the current pandemic restrictions, the consultation process would be carried out remotely and will be publicised in advance through local media outlets and on social media channels.

Cllr Byrne recalled the previous events in the Sean Hollywood Arts Centre, and enquired how participation will be best managed given stakeholder and media interest?

Mr Grimshaw said two public consultation sessions were anticipated during early February, and these would comprise a presentation of design proposals and opportunity for feedback.

Cllr Byrne asked how the Q&A section would work, will there be an allocated time slot?

Mr Grimshaw confirmed time will be allocated for feedback at both sessions and advised the pandemic had forced the industry to move consultations remotely, and he would work with the team on consultation logistics.

Members agreed to Note the contents of the Report

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Report to: | Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 20 January 2022 |
| Subject: | Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period October - December 2021 |
| Reporting Officer: | Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy |
| Contact Officers: | Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer |

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------|
| For decision | For noting only | X |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------|

| | |
|------------|---|
| 1.0 | Purpose and Background |
| 1.1 | <p>In line with Council's Section 75 statutory duties and commitments within our approved Equality Scheme, policy screening reports are published quarterly.</p> <p>The Quarterly Report for the period October - December 2021, including screening reports, is available on Council's website www.newrymouredown.org. This information has also been forwarded to all equality consultees.</p> |
| 2.0 | Key issues |
| 2.1 | <p>As per the Council's approved Equality Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies Council proposes to adopt must be equality screened, prior to implementation, to assess the likely impact of the policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations. • Council must publish quarterly reports on equality screening which are available on Council's website and forwarded to equality scheme consultees. |
| 3.0 | Recommendations |
| 3.1 | To note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period October - December 2021. |
| 4.0 | Resource implications |
| 4.1 | No financial or resources implications are anticipated. |
| 5.0 | Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections) |

| | |
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| 5.1 | <p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.2 | <p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.3 | <p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> |
| 6.0 | <p>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</p> |
| 6.1 | <p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 7.0 | <p>Appendices</p> |
| | <p>Appendix I: Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period October - December 2021.</p> |

| | |
|-----|--|
| | |
| 8.0 | Background Documents |
| | Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Equality Scheme. |

**Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Section 75 Policy Screening Report
Quarterly Report October – December 2021**

| Policy | Details of policy | Screening Outcome |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| Warrenpoint Front Shore Public Realm Scheme | <p>The purpose of this Scheme is to provide urban environmental improvements, which will comprise of the installation of new paving and kerbing on the footways. New decorative street lighting, street furniture, tree planting and the under-grounding of overhead services are also proposed as part of the scheme.</p> <p>Its aim is to provide this physical regeneration investment into a very scenic and well used part of Warrenpoint's Front Shore.</p> <p>This proposed project will have a direct impact upon people with disability, visual impairment, people with mobility issues, older people, families and carers and young people.</p> <p>The current streetscape has not had investment in over 20 years and is very hazardous in regards, uneven pavement surfaces, lack of tactiles at crossings and poor lighting throughout. Upgrading these obvious issues, will directly benefit some of the core Section 75 groups, especially regarding mobility.</p> | No EQIA considered necessary |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Report to: | Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 20 January 2022 |
| Subject: | Statutory reporting – DAERA Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 2020 – 2021 |
| Reporting Officer: | Regina Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy |
| Contact Officers: | Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer |

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

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|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| For decision | <input type="checkbox"/> | For noting only | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
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| 1.0 | Purpose and Background |
| 1.1 | <p>The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (the Act) became operational for government departments and district councils on 1 June 2017 and for the remaining public authorities listed on the schedule to the Act on 1 June 2018.</p> <p>In order to fulfil its statutory duty under the Act, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) must publish a Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report detailing the information compiled by public authorities on how they have exercised the due regard duty under section 1 (1) of the Act.</p> <p>The attached report (Appendix I) provides details of all the Rural Needs Impact Assessments undertaken by public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act during this period and is an integral part of the rural needs monitoring process.</p> <p>Details regarding Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's annual monitoring submission to DAERA is set out within pages 131 -145 of the report.</p> |
| 2.0 | Key issues |
| 2.1 | <p>There is a continuing statutory duty on public authorities, including Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, to monitor and report. Under section 3(1) of the Rural Needs Act, Council must, in such manner as may be directed by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compile information on the exercise of its functions under section 1 of the Act, • include that information in the public authority's own annual report; and • send a copy of that information to DAERA. <p>Information related to Council's Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 will be included within the next edition of NMD Connect.</p> |

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| 3.0 | Recommendations |
| 3.1 | To note DAERA's Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report April 2020 – 2021 |
| 4.0 | Resource implications |
| 4.1 | The report is for noting and there are no anticipated financial or resource implications. |
| 5.0 | Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections) |
| 5.1 | <p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.2 | <p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.3 | <p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> |
| 6.0 | Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply) |

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| 6.1 | <p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 7.0 | Appendices |
| | Appendix I: DAERA Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 |
| 8.0 | Background Documents |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 |