

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 11 October 2018 at 5.00pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor M Savage

In Attendance:

Councillor P Byrne	Councillor M Carr
Councillor S Doran	Councillor C Enright
Councillor D Hyland	Councillor A McMurray
Councillor J Rice	Councillor M Ruane
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor J Trainor

Officials in Attendance: Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Mr J McBride, Assistant Director Community Planning & Performance
Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy
Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services, HR & Safeguarding
Mrs E McParland, Democratic Services Manager
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/132/2018: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Burgess, McMahon, Ó Muíri, Walker and Chief Executive, Mr Hannaway.

SPR/133/2018: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

SPR/134/2018: ACTION SHEET OF THE STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2018

Read: Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 September 2018. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Hyland, seconded by Councillor Doran, it was agreed that the Action Sheet of 13 September 2018 be noted and actions removed as marked.**

EQUALITY AND POLICY

SPR/135/2018: REPORT ON SECTION 75 POLICY SCREENING REPORT – QUARTERLY REPORT FOR PERIOD JULY-SEPTEMBER 2018

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period July-September 2018 **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: It was agreed to note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period July–September 2018.

SPR/136/2018: **REPORT ON IRISH LANGUAGE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME 2019/2020 AND IRISH LANGUAGE BURSARY SCHEME 2019/2020**

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Irish Language Financial Assistance Scheme 2019/2020 and Irish Language Bursary Scheme 2019/2020 **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Byrne queried whether the successful applications were paid out in full as the scheme was hugely successful and would grow in the future.

Mrs Mackin advised that Council had agreed that 50% of all financial assistance calls would be paid out due to over-subscription.

Councillor Byrne stated 100% of the funding could have been given to the successful applications as the funding was ringfenced for Irish Language and the mechanism for delivering financial assistance for ringfenced monies should be looked at again.

Councillor Enright agreed with Councillor Byrne stating to arbitrarily cut all financial assistance calls due to sport being oversubscribed was not acceptable and caused hardship to those organisations trying to run Irish Language schemes with only half the budget allocated.

Councillor McMurray queried why the majority of applications came from the Slieve Gullion and Crotlieve area and asked whether the advertising of the scheme could be improved upon.

Mrs Mackin advised the scheme was through an open call across the District and was promoted equally.

Mrs Carville advised officers would take the comments on board, however there would be implications for other schemes and all need to be considered. She stated officers would feed into the DEA Fora in order for them to promote the scheme across the District.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Hyland, seconded by Councillor Ruane, the following was agreed:**

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SPR/137/2018: **STATUTORY REPORTING – RURAL NEEDS ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 JUNE 2017-31 MARCH 2018**

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018 from Mr Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy regarding Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 June 2017-31 March 2018. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Byrne asked that the rural needs criteria for Play Strategy be added into the report for next year as there are children within the rural area who would never meet the criteria to access a play facility.

Agreed: **It was agreed to note the contents of the report**

PERFORMANCE

SPR/138/2018: PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT POLICY

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018 from Ms Kate Bingham, Head of Performance and Improvement, regarding Performance Improvement Policy. **(Copy circulated)**

Some Members expressed concerns about the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and Council officials in relation to policy development. Councillor Savage advised the policy under discussion was what Council was to adhere to and any issues of concern going forward could be raised regarding the operation of the council in line with the policy.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed that Council approve the Performance Improvement Policy for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.**

SPR/139/2018: PARTY GROUPS CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO NILGA "DEVOLUTION WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND" REPORT

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018 from Mr Johnny McBride Assistant Director, Community Planning and Performance detailing a draft Consultation response to NILGA "Devolution within Northern Ireland" Report. **(Copy circulated)**

In response to a query from Councillor Carr, Mr McBride confirmed there had not been a review by Central Government on the issue of the transfer of planning, however this Council had carried out a review with the former Chief Planner in Scotland and it was agreed to prepare a comparison of costs before and after transfer for the RTS Committee.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to approve the draft response to be submitted to NILGA, without local government having scrutiny powers over NI Executive responsibilities.**

CORPORATE SERVICES – HUMAN RESOURCES

SPR/140/2018: REPORT ON ANNUAL MONITORING RETURN

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018, from Ms C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services: HR & Safeguarding, regarding Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return: 2 January 2017-1 January 2018 **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Byrne queried the trend in terms of ratios of protestant and catholic employees and whether there would be an accusation that the numbers were not reflective of each community.

Mrs Carville advised there had been no changes to any of the recruitment processes or the way Council advertises its jobs therefore there was no reason to believe there had been any change to Council procedures that would warrant criticism.

Councillor Carr stated over 160 were appointed over the year and queried how many had left the employment over that time.

Mrs Miskelly advised the appointees and leavers were both outlined in para.2.2 which includes all employees including temporary contracts, seasonal workers etc. She stated there would be a broader 3 year return completed which would have more detailed analysis and addresses or redresses any imbalances. She stated detailed discussions had taken place with the Equality Commission also.

Agreed: **It was agreed to note the contents of the report on Annual Monitoring Return.**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Doran, 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 para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government (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/141/2018: CHIEF EXECUTIVE APPRAISAL

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018, from Ms C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services: HR & Safeguarding, regarding Chief Executive Appraisal 2017-18 **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Doran, seconded by Councillor Ruane, to note the contents of the officer's report relating to the Chief Executive's appraisal and approve a payment of one increment being made as a non-consolidated, non-pensionable payment under the Pension Scheme Regulations.**

SPR/142/2018: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS UPDATE

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018, from Ms C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services: HR & Safeguarding and Mr K Montgmoery, Assistant

Director Corporate Services: Finance, regarding Industrial Relations Update **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: Agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to note the contents of the officer's report and approve the recommendations at paragraph 3.1 and 3.2 and paragraphs 4.1 – 4.4 relating to resource and financial implications for the provision of Finance, HR and Trade Union support for a programme of work aimed at addressing areas of concern in respect of industrial relations matters within Council.

SPR/143/2018: UPDATE ON RATES SUPPORT GRANT

Read: Correspondence dated 4 October 2018, received from Mr L O'Reilly, Permanent Secretary, Department for Communities, regarding Court of Appeal Judgement, Rates Support Grant Allocations in 2018/19 and Future Years and correspondence dated 10 October 2018 from Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive in response. **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: Agreed on the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Ruane, to note the contents of letter dated 4 October 2018 from Department for Communities regarding the successful Appeal from Mid Ulster District Council v DoE (now DfC) and advising of the impact of this ruling on rates support grant (RSG) allocation in 2018/19 and future years, and approving officers to take action to challenge any unlawful deductions of RSG allocation to NMDDC.

SPR/144/2018: REQUEST FROM ALBERT BASIN TASK & FINISH GROUP TO CARRY OUT WORKS

Read: Report dated 11 October 2018, from Mr C Haughey, Head of Outdoor Leisure, regarding Albert Basin-Task & Finish Working Group **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Doran, to note the contents of the officer's report detailing a request from the Albert Basin Task and Finish WG for improvement works to be carried out at the entrance to the Albert Basin at the Greenway, at the cost outlined in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

SPR/145/2018: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ALBERT BASIN TASK & FINISH GROUP – 12 SEPTEMBER 2018

Read: Report of Albert Basin Task & Finish Working Group Meeting held on 12 September 2018 in Training Room, Monaghan Row, Newry **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor Ruane, to approve the contents of the Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group action sheet of meeting held on 12 September 2018.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 6.13pm

For consideration at the Council Meeting to be held on 5 November 2018.

Signed: **Councillor Michael Savage**
Chairperson

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