

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2025

**Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 19 March 2025 at 6.15pm in Council Chamber,
Monaghan Row, Newry**

Chair: Councillor C Enright

**In attendance in
Chamber:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor K Feehan
Councillor D Finn	Councillor V Harte
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor H Young	

**Committee Members in
Attendance via Teams:**

Councillor J Brennan	Councillor P Campbell
Councillor O Magennis	Councillor D Taylor

Officials in Chamber:

Mrs S Murphy, Director Sustainability and Environment
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability
Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director Environment
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

**Officials in attendance
Via Teams:**

Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

SE/031/2025:

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Kearns.

As the Chairperson was an apology, it was agreed that the Deputy Chairperson would host the meeting.

SE/032/2025:

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Reilly declared an interest in Item 7 – Response to Department of Health Consultation on Hospitals.

SE/033/2025:

**ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 FEBRUARY 2025**

Read:

Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 19 February 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

SE/017/2025: Notice of Motion – Sharing financial information with other Councils regarding Climate Change.

Councillor Enright requested an update regarding the potential for redacting sensitive information in order to make the document shareable.

Mrs Murphy advised that she would revert to the Member directly on the matter.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 19 February 2025.**

FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION

SE/034/2025: OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – STREET LIGHTING

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment, regarding Notice of Motion – Street Lighting (**Copy circulated**)

Mrs Murphy advised that statutory responsibility for street lighting on public roads lay with DFI Roads, with certain criteria to be considered for the location and design of street lighting, however advised that Council would engage with DFI Roads to address the issue of lighting across the District as detailed within the report.

Councillor Finn thanked officers for bringing the report, advising that while she understood that the statutory responsibility lay with DFI, she believed that Council should also consider reviewing lighting within green spaces that were Council owned. She stated that a number of people were undertaking physical activities within these spaces, such as dog walkers and young families and stressed the need for additional lighting in relation to women's safety. She also noted that while street lighting may not resolve the issue, it would certainly deter fly tipping due to the visibility with additional lighting.

Councillor Finn proposed that in addition to the recommendations within the report, that Council owned green spaces would be reviewed to identify any areas that could avail of additional lighting across the District.

This was seconded by Councillor Feehan.

Mrs Murphy advised that an update report would be brought back to Committee regarding consideration of lighting in park areas but advised that any lighting scheme would be subject to business case approval and an environmental impact assessment within the area.

Councillor Harte noted the lack of street lighting in areas, stating that the issue was a double-edged sword as after engagement with Play Board NI and Crime Prevention, the advice had been against lighting some areas as it raised anti-social behaviour in the area, and to close some parks at night. She further noted that DFI had removed street lighting from the rear of some residential homes leaving the elderly residents there in fear, stating that lighting was an issue that needed widespread assessment.

Councillor Jackson supported the amendment as proposed by Councillor Finn, stating that lighting was an issue across the District. He referenced a situation where a small rural cluster of homes had street lighting under a historical NIE scheme, however DFI had removed this lighting as their legislation noted a minimum of 10/12 houses. He highlighted the negative

impact on the residents in terms of their safety and wellbeing, given the increase in vandalism and theft within the small area.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to write to the Department of Infrastructure (DFI) Roads to advise of concerns in relation to areas that have little or no street lighting and request that a scoping exercise is undertaken to identify areas that could avail of additional street lighting across the District.

It was also agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Feehan, that that Council owned green spaces would be reviewed to identify any areas that could avail of additional lighting across the District.

SE/035/2025: **SUSTAINABILITY CHARGES FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/2026**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Sustainability Charges for Financial Year 2025/2026 (**Copy circulated**)

Mr Sage outlined the report, noting that there were no amendments to the charging scales from the previous financial year.

Councillor Feehan requested an update to the ongoing issues at Monkshill Cemetery regarding cleanliness.

Mr Sage advised that following a recent review, regular checks on cleanliness were to be carried out and facility checklists were being utilised to ensure that cleanliness was maintained.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to approve the following:

- Councils pricing structure for burial charges in 2025/2026
- Councils pricing structure for market charges in 2025/2026
- Councils pricing structure for Newcastle Harbour mooring dees in 2025/2026

SE/036/2025: **HOME TO HOSPITAL UPDATE**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding Home to Hospital Update (**Copy circulated**)

Mrs Trainor outlined the report, advising that approval was being sought to continue the funding as outlined within the report. She noted that there were 368 trips undertaken to medical facilities within the Mourne area and 175 trips taken within the Slieve Gullion area.

Councillor Reilly queried how the service was promoted and advertised and what the qualifying criteria was for a registered user, noting that the benefit seemed minimal for the annual cost.

Mrs Trainor advised that the service was undertaken through Bolster Community Association, and that she was unsure of the qualifying criteria requirement but would revert to the Member on the query.

Councillor Andrews expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the service volunteers and asked if there was any way Council could assist in signposting and raising awareness of the services offered across the District, such as this scheme and the Down Community Rural Network.

Mrs Trainor advised that she would look at all services across the District and revert to the Member on the services available, and how they compared across the District.

Councillor Taylor noted his support for the scheme and recognised the support it offered to the most vulnerable and isolated individuals within the community. He reiterated Councillor Reilly's query regarding cost effectiveness and asked if Council could assist with the promotion of the scheme in the coming year.

Mrs Trainor advised that she would look at what Council could do to assist with the promotion of the scheme.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve the continued funding for The Mourne and Slieve Gullion Home to Hospital Volunteer driver schemes from 01 April 2025 – 31 March 2026, and that Council seek Expressions of Interest from suitable Community and Voluntary Sector organisations to administer the schemes, subject to funding being identified.

SE/037/2025:

RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONSULTATION ON HOSPITALS – CREATING A NETWORK FOR BETTER OUTCOMES

Read:

Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding Response to department of Health Consultation on Hospitals – Creating a Network for Better Outcomes. (**Copy circulated**)

Mrs Trainor outlined the report and consultation response, advising that although submitted it was subject to amendment following Council approval.

In proposing the report, Councillor Feehan thanked officers for their time in compiling the response. He noted that he had called for the Department of Health (DoH) to facilitate an in-person information session prior to the closure of the consultation, and their inability to do so was met with anger within the local community. He reiterated the need for an area hospital

within Newry and welcomed the powerful response as submitted by Council as he believed that it represented the views of the local people well.

Councillor Reilly requested clarification on Council's position on the proposal of the type of hospitals at Q6 of the consultation, to which Mrs Trainor advised that Council strongly disagreed with the proposal regarding Daisy Hill hospital, as understood by officers.

Councillor Andrews highlighted the valuable work carried out within hospitals and supported all efforts to keep the hospitals open. He noted that he had been contacted regarding the position of the Downe Hospital as a local hospital and felt that it also needed to be reconsidered.

Councillor Enright clarified that the report was primarily focusing on Daisy Hill as an area hospital, and not the Downe hospital as an area hospital. He further noted that Belfast had the largest number of hospitals of any city within the UK and was fully sportive of the consultation response.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to approve the consultation response in Appendix 1 entitled Hospitals – Creating a Network for Better Outcomes by the Department of Health.**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following items, 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 any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to come out of closed session.**

The Chairperson advised the following had been agreed whilst in closed session:

RESTRICTED – FOR DECISION

SE/038/2025: **BUSINESS CASE FOR MONITORING AND LINE RENTAL OF COUNCIL PUBLIC SPACE CCTV**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Business Case for Monitoring and Line Rental of Council Public Space CCTV. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to approve the**

recommendations of the Business Cases as per section 2.2 of the Officer's Report.

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

SE/039/2025: **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 30 JANUARY 2025 AND MEMBERS BULLETIN OF 27 FEBRUARY 2025**

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting In Committee Minutes of 30 January 2025 and ARC21 Joint Committee Members Monthly Bulletin of 27 February 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to note the documents.**

SE/040/2025: **MINUTES OF CLEANSING AND REFUSE TASK GROUP HELD 19 FEBRUARY 2025**

Read: Minutes of Cleansing and Refuse Task Group of 19 February 2025 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to note the minutes.**

FOR NOTING

SE/041/2025: **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 30 JANUARY 2025**

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting Minutes of Meeting held 30 January 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the minutes.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.53pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 April 2025

Signed: **Councillor Cadogan Enright**
Deputy Chairperson

Signed: **Mrs Sinead Murphy**
Director of Sustainability & Environment