

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2026

Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 19 August 2026 at 6.00pm in Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall

Chair: Councillor M Ruane

**In attendance in
Chamber:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor K Feehan
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Murphy	Councillor S O'Hare

**Committee Members in
Attendance via Teams:**

Councillor J Brennan	Councillor D Finn
Councillor M Hearty	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor J Truesdale	Councillor H Young

Officials in Chamber:

Mrs S Murphy, Director, Sustainability and Environment
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability
Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in Attendance
via Teams:**

Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

SE/094/2026: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Campbell and Taylor.

SE/095/2026: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**SE/096/2026: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 2026**

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee
Meeting held on 17 June 2026. (Copy circulated)

SE/076/2026 – Bus Shelter Requests

In response to a query on the above item from Councillor Andrews, Mr Sage advised that officers would revert to him outside of the meeting.

SE/046/2024 – Notice of Motion – Newry Market

In response to a query from Councillor Feehan regarding Newry Christmas market and whether there are any plans for this to be a permanent event, Mr Sage advised that officers would revert to him outside of the meeting.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 June 2026.**

Although not included on the action sheet, Councillor Jackson enquired about the review of public toilets across the District. Mr Sage advised that condition surveys had been undertaken across Council facilities and that the findings would inform the prioritisation of refurbishment and replacement works. He further advised that an update would be provided to the September Sustainability and Environment Working Group.

Members commended the Cleansing Department for its work in maintaining the cleanliness and appearance of the district during several high-profile events held over the summer period.

FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION

SE/097/2025: SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Update on the Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy following Public Consultation. (Copy circulated)

Mr Sage presented the report seeking approval for the publication and launch of the final Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. He advised that the strategy had been subject to public consultation following Committee approval in October 2025 and that feedback received from Members, staff, stakeholders and the public had informed the final draft. He noted that amendments arising from the consultation process were set out in Appendix 1 and that, subject to Council ratification, the strategy was scheduled for launch in September 2026, supported by a communications and awareness campaign.

In proposing the recommendations, Councillor Andrews welcomed the broad range of contributions received during the consultation process and highlighted the importance of securing support from a variety of stakeholders on such a significant issue. This was seconded by Councillor Feehan

Councillor Jackson requested a recorded vote on the item, stating that the DUP could not support the recommendations on the basis that it did not agree with the target of achieving Net Zero by 2050, which it considered to be unachievable.

This was endorsed by Councillor Reilly, who expressed concerns regarding aspects of the Strategy and stated that he considered the images used of flooding in Downpatrick and Newry to be misleading. He argued that flooding in the Clanrye and Quoile rivers was attributable to a lack of dredging and that local carbon reduction measures would not prevent such flooding. He further stated that local decarbonisation measures would have limited impact in the context of global emissions.

Councillor Truesdale welcomed the strategy and commended the work undertaken in its development. She highlighted the clear five-theme framework and noted the strategy's focus on direct emissions reductions, alignment with statutory requirements, inclusion of baseline carbon emissions data and consideration of local climate impacts. She sought clarification on the monitoring of actions and whether budgets, ownership and implementation details would be incorporated into future iterations of the action plan.

In response, Mr Sage advised that the action plan represented the first year of implementation and would be developed further, including the identification of budgets and action owners. He noted that many actions would require business cases and funding, with priority given to measures that would deliver the greatest impact. He added that progress would be reported annually and that the action plan would be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

Councillor Finn welcomed the strategy and echoed the comments regarding the work undertaken in its preparation. She highlighted the importance of the Council demonstrating leadership in addressing climate change and sought details on how the strategy would be promoted and communicated to the public.

Mr Sage advised that the launch of the strategy would be supported by a public awareness campaign developed in conjunction with the Communications and Marketing Department, together with engagement activities involving schools and community groups. He further advised that the Head of Sustainability would provide Councillor Finn with additional information on the launch arrangements outside of the meeting.

As there was dissent within the Chamber, the item was put to a recorded vote, the results of which were as follows: (copy appended to minutes).

FOR	11
AGAINST	2
ABSTENTION	0

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Feehan, to note the contents of the report and the outcomes of the public consultation process and to approve progression of the final draft Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy for publication and launch.

SE/098/2025:

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS UNDER THE TOBACCO AND VAPES ACT

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Consultation on proposals under the Tobacco and Vapes Act. (Copy circulated)

Mrs Trainor advised the report sought approval to submit Council's response to the Department of Health and Social Care consultation on regulatory proposals under the Tobacco and Vapes Act. She advised that the consultation sought views on proposals relating to the packaging, appearance and retail display of tobacco, vaping and nicotine products.

Councillor Truesdale welcomed the report, describing it as a strong and consistent response in support of tighter regulation. She noted that the protection of children and young people was a key theme throughout the response, together with the need for consistency across product types and the importance of ensuring that existing regulatory requirements did not hinder the introduction of new measures.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, the submission of the Environmental Health Department's consultation response detailed in appendix 1 of the officers' report, to the Department of Health and Social Care proposals for regulatory reform on packaging, appearance and display requirements was agreed.**

SE/099/2025:

THE TOY SAFETY REGULATIONS: CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Response to The Toy Safety Regulations: call for evidence. (Copy circulated)

Mrs Trainor advised that the purpose of the report was to seek approval to submit the Council's response to the Office for Product Safety and Standards consultation on proposed changes to the Toy (Safety) Regulations 2011. She advised that the consultation sought views on implementing elements of the new EU Toy Safety Regulation, with the aim of enhancing child protection and reducing the number of unsafe and non-compliant toys placed on the UK market.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to approve the submission detailed at appendix 1 of the officers' report, in response to the call for evidence from the Office for Product Safety & Standards on considerations for recognition of new**

EU product requirements to The Toy (Safety Regulations) within UK.

SE/100/2025: **DAERA CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT AIR QUALITY (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding DAERA consultation on the Draft Air Quality (Amendment) Regulations. (Copy circulated)

Mrs Trainor advised that the purpose of the report was to seek approval to submit the Council's response to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) consultation on proposed legislative amendments to strengthen air quality standards for particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) in Northern Ireland. She advised that the proposed amendments aimed to reduce harmful air pollution, protect public health and align local standards more closely with World Health Organisation guidance and emerging standards across the UK and Ireland. She further noted that DAERA had included 14 consultation questions, and the Council's proposed responses were set out in Appendix A of the officer's report.

In response to a query from Councillor Andrews regarding engagement with key sectors, including agriculture, Mrs Trainor confirmed that the consultation had been conducted on a public basis and that all interested organisations and stakeholders had the opportunity to submit responses.

Councillor Truesdale welcomed the report and expressed support for the proposed strengthening of air quality standards. She noted the well-established health impacts of particulate matter and agreed with officers' assessment that the proposed compliance date of 1 January 2028 would be challenging to achieve. She further acknowledged that delays in progressing the wider Clean Air Strategy had contributed to the timescales facing Councils.

Councillor Truesdale confirmed her support for the report recommendations and reiterated her support for the establishment of an independent Environmental Protection Agency, recognising the importance of clean air, clean water and the natural environment to public wellbeing.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Andrews, to note the contents of the report concerning DAERA proposals to tighten annual average particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) limits, targets and objectives in Northern Ireland, approve the proposed consultation response detailed at appendix 1 of the officers report and agree that it is submitted to DAERA by the consultation deadline of 31 August 2026, subject to approval at Full Council.**

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, 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 D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jackson, 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/101/2026: BUSINESS CASE – VEHICLE AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT PARTS

Read: Report from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Business Case – Vehicle and Grounds Maintenance Equipment Parts. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to approve the recommendations of the business case as detailed in section 2.6 of the officers' report.

SE/102/2026: BUSINESS CASE – FOREST PARK ROUTEWAYS AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE WORKS

Read: Report from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Business Case – Forest Park Routeways and Associated Landscape Works. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to approve the recommendation of the business case as detailed at section 2.5 of the officers' report.

SE/103/2026:

CONTRACT EXTENSIONS

Read:

Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Waste Management Contract Extensions. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to approve the contract extensions as detailed at Appendices 1 and 2 of the officers' report.

SE/104/2026:

MIXED DRY RECYCLABLES

Read:

Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Extension of Mixed Dry Recycling Contracts. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to approve the extension of the contract for the receipt and processing of Mixed Dry Recyclables from 30 September 2026 to 31 March 2027.

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

SE/105/2026:

ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN-COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THURSDAY 28 MAY 2026 & JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN HELD ON 25 JUNE 2026

Read:

Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting In-Committee Minutes of Thursday 28 May 2026 & Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin Held On 25 June 2026. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to note the documents.

FOR NOTING

SE/106/2026: **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY
28 MAY 2026**

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting No 106 Minutes Thursday 28 May 2026. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to note the document.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.45pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 September 2026.

Signed: _____
Councillor M Ruane
Chairperson

Signed: _____
Mrs Sinead Murphy
Director of Sustainability & Environment

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 19/08/2026. VENUE: Warrenpoint Town Hall. MEETING: Sustainability and Environment Committee.

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Sustainability And Climate Change Strategy

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews	For			
J Brennan	For			
P Campbell				Absent
K Feehan	For			
D Finn	For			
M Hearty	For			
J Jackson		Against		
D Murphy	For			
K Murphy	For			
S O'Hare	For			
H Reilly		Against		
M Ruane	For			
D Taylor				Absent
J Truesdale	For			
H Young	For			
TOTALS	11	2	0	2