

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AHC/2026

Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 21 September 2026 at 6.00pm in the Council Chambers, Downshire Civic Centre

Chairperson: Councillor T Howie

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor J Brennan	Councillor P Campbell
Councillor C Galbraith	Councillor J Jackson
Councillor A King	Councillor N Lawlor
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor K Murphy

Committee Members in attendance via Teams:

Councillor D Finn	Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor R Howell	Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor A Lewis	Councillor Magennis

Officials in Chamber: Mr A Patterson, Director, Active and Healthy Communities
Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy Living
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development
Ms D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

AHC/066/2026: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

There were no apologies.

AHC/067/2026: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AHC/068/2026: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 AUGUST 2026

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 17 August 2026. (Copy circulated).

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 17 August 2026.**

AHC/069/2026:

DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE REPORT

Read:

Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the District Electoral Area Forums. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to note the report and approve the actions in the Action Sheets attached for:

- **Newry DEA Forum Meeting held on 4 August 2026**
- **Slieve Gullion DEA Forum Meeting held on 4 August 2026**
- **Downpatrick DEA Forum Meeting held on 11 August 2026**
- **Rowallane DEA Forum Meeting held on 18 August 2026**

AHC/070/2026:

LEISURE CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS 2026-2027

Read:

Report from Conor Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding leisure closing arrangements for 2026-2027. (Copy circulated)

The Chairperson asked that the dates for leisure closure arrangements be communicated clearly with facility users.

Mr Haughey confirmed notifications would go out via the Be Active App and Council public notices.

Councillor Mathers enquired about staff training days particularly for Newry Leisure Centre with reference made to reduced hours subject to staff cover.

Mr Haughey explained these were annual training dates in all centres, as highlighted in the appendix and due to training taking place from mid-morning to 6pm it was subject to staff cover as rotas and shift patterns may be changed to enable staff to take part in training. He added there were occasions when centres had to close a bit earlier due to that however most of the time they were open between 6pm to 10pm in all centres.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve the leisure closure arrangements for the 2026/27 period as detailed within appendix 1 of the officer's report.

FOR NOTING

AHC/071/2026:

FUNDED PROGRAMME DELIVERY UPDATE

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director: Community Development regarding correspondence in relation to confirmation of funding for the 2026/27 Good Relations Programme and Ending Violence against Women and Girls Fund. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Lee-Surginor took the opportunity to welcome the Executive Office approving the budget allocation and issue of Letters of Offer for the 2026/27 District Council Good Relations Programme and Ending Violence against Women and Girls Fund.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jackson it was agreed to note the correspondence from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister confirming budget allocation for the 2026/27 District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) and Ending Violence against Women and Girls Fund (EVAWG).

AHC/072/2026:

INDOOR LEISURE BOOKING PRIORITISATION

Read: Report from Conor Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding how booking requests for facility hire are prioritised within indoor leisure facilities. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jackson it was agreed to note the contents of the officers report.

AHC/073/2026:

INDOOR LEISURE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION 2026

Read: Report from Conor Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding the findings of the Indoor Leisure Customer Satisfaction Survey and Mystery Shopper Programme undertaken during 2026. (Copy circulated)

Councillors Galbraith and Brennan expressed concern at the lift to the vitality suite in the Down Leisure Centre having been out of order for quite a while and asked for an update.

Mr Haughey said unfortunately the lift was still out of order and that officers had met that day with the contractor regarding difficulties in getting specialised parts for the lift. There was to be a further meeting, the outcome of which would be communicated to Members.

Mr Haughey advised that whilst not the best solution there was a lift to the front of the building and assured members discussions were ongoing to get the other lift operational again. He added that the problem with the lift was due to members of the public going into the lift from the pool side and that they were wet and that was affecting corrosion on the cable etc. Members were informed there had been a total revamp on the lift itself had been completed however it was electrical issues that were causing problems at the minute and an update would be provided once available.

Councillor Mathers stated he was glad the report showed service users were generally happy with the Leisure services; however he wished to reiterate his concerns which had already been highlighted regarding some instances of dissatisfaction among service users in terms of classes being cancelled at short notice. He added communication was key and that officers should speak to some of the service users and gather ideas as to how to alleviate these problems moving forward.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jackson it was agreed to note the contents of the officers report.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.10pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 5 October 2026.

Signed: _____
Councillor T Howie
Chairperson

Signed: _____
Andrew Patterson
Director Active and Healthy Communities