

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AHC/2025

**Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on
Monday 18 August 2025 at 6.00pm in the Council Chambers,
Downshire Civic Centre**

Chairperson: Councillor C Bowsie

**In attendance
in Chamber:**

Councillor L Devlin	Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor R Howell	Councillor J Jackson
Councillor D Lee-Surginor	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor L McEvoy	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Murphy	

**Committee Members in
attendance (via Teams):**

Councillor J Brennan	Councillor D Finn
Councillor J Truesdale	

**Non Committee Members
in attendance:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor G Sharvin
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Officials in Chamber:

Mr A Patterson, Director, Active and Healthy Communities
Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy Living
Mrs M Flynn, Head of Engagement
Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer
Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance:

NMD Strategic Stakeholder Forum
Mr L Devine
Mr N McCrickard

AHC/060/2025: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Gibbons and Magennis and Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development.

AHC/061/2025: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**AHC/062/2025: PRESENTATION – NMD STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER FORUM –
SOCIAL SUPERMARKET INITIATIVE**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Devine and Mr McCrickard from NMD Strategic Stakeholder Forum to the Committee Meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr McCrickard and Mr Devine took Members through a presentation entitled 'Strategic Stakeholder Forum' highlighting the work of the Forum that operated a collaborative model to drive a joined up community focused approach across the District. (Copy attached to these minutes).

During the presentation Members were provided with an overview of the Social Supermarket Programme as well as the Employ Me initiative that highlighted the value in terms of collaboration, particularly using the strengths of the voluntary and community sector to produce real, tangible and long lasting results for participants on programmes.

Mr McCrickard spoke of how the collective forum, where working collaboratively and in partnership was the way forward, especially given the current financial constraints, resulted in better results for everyone involved.

Members were advised that the Department of Health, for example, had initiatives where the Area Integrated Partnership Boards were trying to realign health to involve the community sector and also work with the Department for Communities working on test and learn pilots. Those two central government bodies alone would enable more to be done at local level.

Mr McCrickard advised they were trying to engage in those conversations and were seeking the support of Council to ensure that, if given an opportunity to engage on local initiatives with Government departments, that they had the backing of Council.

The Strategic Stakeholder Forum through initiatives such as the Social Supermarket had proven that working closely and collaboratively with the local community sector made things happen.

Councillors Devlin, Lee-Surginor, D Murphy and Andrews each took the opportunity to commend the work of the Strategic Stakeholder Forum and the impact its programmes had for countless people, particularly with the cost of living crisis.

Councillor Finn proposed the Active and Healthy Committee provide letters of support for the Strategic Stakeholder Forum working with the various Government Departments and write on their behalf to offer support for applications when required. Councillor Devlin seconded the proposal.

Mr McCrickard and Mr Devine thanked Members for their time and for their support.

**AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by
Councillor Devlin that the Active and Healthy Communities
Committee provide letters of support for the Strategic Stakeholder
Forum working with the various Government Departments and
write on their behalf to offer support for applications when
required.**

AHC/063/2025: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2025

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 16 June 2025. **(Copy circulated)**.

AHC/058/2025 – Summer Activity Programme

Councillor Devlin took the opportunity to thank officers for the summer activity programme that had been rolled out across the District. She spoke of the quality of youth work involved and how it was delivered at a cost that was value for money and the importance of that particularly given that poverty affected many parents especially over the summer months.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Howell, to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 16 June 2025.

AHC/064/2025: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE REPORT

Read: Report dated 18 August 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development presented by Mrs M Flynn, Head of Engagement regarding an update on District Electoral Area (DEA) Forums. **(Copy circulated)**

Action Sheet from Downpatrick DEA Meeting: Request to use Lower Green, Strangford for funfair site

Councillor Galbraith enquired if an officer had consulted with everyone involved with the funfair to reach a solution to noise disturbances for residents. Mrs Flynn advised she would follow up on the matter and revert back to Councillor Galbraith directly with an update.

Action sheet from the Mournes DEA Meeting: Newcastle Leisure Centre

Councillor Devlin requested an update on the procurement process regarding consultants and enquired if there would be public consultation on the design process for the new Leisure Centre, specifically outside the statutory planning process.

Mr Patterson confirmed the procurement process was ongoing and it was hoped that in the next few weeks an update would be brought back to Members regarding the next steps. Mr Patterson also confirmed there would be consultation with regards to the design of the scheme that would precede the statutory planning consultation process.

In thanking the Director for the update, Councillor Devlin spoke of the importance of all elected members placing information in the public domain that was factually correct. She added that if any Members were aware of a bigger site that could accommodate and better serve the leisure and community needs of Newcastle that they inform the Senior Management Team to allow for investigation in advance of the next Council meeting so that Council could move forward

collectively to progress the leisure centre plans.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Devlin, to note the report and approve the actions in the action sheets attached for:

- Rowallane DEA Forum Meeting held on 10 June 2025
- Downpatrick DEA Forum Meeting held on 10 June 2025
- Slieve Croob DEA Forum Meeting held on 17 June 2025
- Newry DEA Forum Meeting held on 8 July 2025
- Slieve Gullion DEA Forum Meeting held on 1 July 2025
- Mourne DEA Forum Meeting held on 22 July 2025

AHC/065/2025: LEISURE CENTRE CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS 2025/26

Read: Report dated 18 August 2025 from Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director of Healthy Living, regarding Leisure Centre Closure Arrangements. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Galbraith enquired whether new members were made aware of scheduled closures.

Mr Haughey confirmed new members were informed and once the closure arrangements for 2025/26 were approved, they would be communicated to all members.

Councillor Mathers spoke of the importance of communication with service users well in advance.

Councillor Mathers highlighted a minor error within the report that was noted.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, to approve the leisure closure arrangements for the 2025/26 period as detailed within the officer's report.

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

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, 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 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.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Devlin, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

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

AHC/066/2025: 2025/26 COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

Read: Report dated 18 August 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development presented by Mrs M Flynn, Head of Engagement regarding 2025/26 Community Support Programme and Community Development Service Level Agreements. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, to award funding from the 2025/26 Community Support Programme budget and to enter into Service Level Agreements with the named organisations with regards to their funding and service provision, as detailed within the officer’s report.**

AHC/067/2025: AREAS AT RISK PROGRAMME FUNDING

Read: Report dated 18 August 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development presented by Mrs M Flynn, Head of Engagement regarding Areas at Risk Programme Funding. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mathers, to note receipt of Letters of Offer for the continuation of programme delivery for the period 2025/26 as set out within the officer’s report.**

AHC/068/2025: COMMUNITY FESTIVAL AND EVENTS PROGRAMME FUNDING

Read: Report dated 18 August 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development presented by Mrs M Flynn, Head of Engagement regarding Community Festival and Events Programme Funding. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to note receipt of Letters of Offer for the continuation of programme delivery for the period 2025/26 as set out within the officer’s report.**

FOR NOTING

AHC/069/2025: POLICING & COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (PCSP) AND NEWRY & DOWNPATRICK NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PARTNERSHIP (NRP) REPORT

Read: Report dated 18 August 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding actions arising from recent Newry and Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Meetings and the PCSP Meeting. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Andrews took the opportunity to thank the new Chair and Vice Chair for sending him a letter following his term as Chair of the PCSP.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to note the following:**

- **Minutes of the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Meeting held on 28 May 2025 and approved on 25 June 2025**
- **Action Sheet of the Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Meeting held on 31 March 2025 and approved on 24 June 2025**
- **Minutes of the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting held on 27 May 2025, approved at the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting on 29 July 2025.**

AHC/070/2025: PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING EVENTS

Read: Report dated 18 August 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding actions arising from recent Newry and Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Meetings and the PCSP Meeting. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to note the contents of this report, including the upcoming Participatory Budget events in each of the 7 District Electoral Areas.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.40pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 1 September 2025

Signed: Councillor C Bowsie
Chairperson

Signed: Andrew Patterson
Director Active and Healthy Communities



Presentation to the Active & Healthy Communities Committee
Monday 18th August 2025

Introduction

- The Strategic Stakeholder Forum (SSF) operates via a collaborative model **driving a joined-up, community-focused approach** across the district.



Our partners



Setting the Scene: SSF Approach G Governance



Overview of SSF's approach: multi-agency coordination, shared governance, and cross-sector decision-making.



Success during the pandemic in uniting services quickly and efficiently.



Council's continued support, including a **G% funding uplift this year**, has enabled programme growth.



Taking Action



Parliament Buildings - September 2022

The SSF came together to highlight their policy paper, 'Living Well Together – Planning for Recovery and Renewal' to ask for solutions to the challenges our community faces.

The event provided an opportunity for the SSF Forum to showcase what can be achieved with Community Organisations through partnership working.



The Power of Collaboration



Through the SSF, multiple agencies and community partners **coordinate efforts** to provide **holistic support** for residents—aligning food support with health and employment initiatives.



Collaborative working has improved outreach, reduced duplication, and delivered tangible community benefits.



Spotlight Initiative #1 – Social Supermarket Programme (SSM)

- Throughout the lifetime of this programme the SSM has provided **vital support to 484 individuals** with affordable groceries each week PLUS a vital wraparound support service.
- The biggest results reported by participants have included:
 - Reduced household **stress**
 - **Financial** education and support
 - Reduced social **isolation**
 - Access to **mental health** support
 - **Community referrals** for additional support
 - Positive employability outcomes – **employment, education / training**



SSM Video



Social Supermarket results

- **2023/2024 – 121** individuals supported (Pilot scheme)
- **2024/2025 - 256** individuals supported
- **2025/2026 – 107** individuals supported (in Q1)

Quarter 1 Figures

- Single Membership - 15
 - Double Membership - 10 (20)
 - Family Membership - 18 (72)
- Total - 43 Households (107 Individuals)**

On track to support approximately **300 individuals** in **2025/2026 (target is 250)**.



Social Supermarket in action



Clanrye Group's Social Supermarket Relocates
Clanrye Group's vital Social Supermarket has been relocated from The Quays to Ballybot House in...



The initiative aims to positively influence the eating habits and overall health of people living in low-income communities through practical, locally delivered support.



From newryreporter.com



Personal stories

Finlay

"I couldn't have continued without this support, I just wouldn't have managed. It has been such a help to me.

I received essentials for the baby – something I was so guilty not having.

I felt at ease, supported and cared for. I really enjoyed the relaxation classes. I needed them more than I thought. I've loved it. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!"



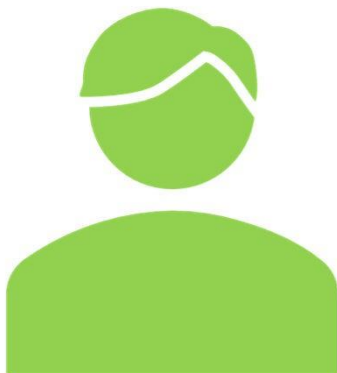
Personal stories

Sean

"I hit rock bottom when my wife died. I didn't want to get out of bed or speak to anyone. I was slowly giving up.

Life changed 6 months ago when the Social Supermarket open a door to get help and support I didn't know I needed.

Life is a little brighter now. Thank you."



Spotlight Initiative #2 – employme



- A unique partnership developed as a result of SSF collaboration.
- Employment and skills programme connecting jobseekers to training, employers, and wraparound support.
- **2127** participants supported since inception
- **G23** Employment Outcomes
- **Localised results for Downpatrick :**
 - 395 Participants supported
 - 215 Employment outcomes



New Initiatives & Future Plans



Our ask