July 6th, 2026

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 6th July 2026** at **6:00 pm** in **Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre.**

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 1 June 2026

For Information

Attachment: Action Sheet 2026 06 01.pdf ***Page 1***

Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing

4.0 Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 1 June 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Annual Meeting Minutes 2026-06-01.pdf ***Page 6***

5.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 1 June 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Council Minutes 2026-06-01.pdf ***Page 14***

Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption

6.0 Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 8 June 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Economy Regeneration and Tourism Minutes 2026-06-08.pdf ***Page 25***

7.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 11 June 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting Minutes 2026-06-11.pdf ***Page 30***

8.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 15 June 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Active and Healthy Communities Minutes 2026 06 15.pdf ***Page 38***

9.0 Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 June 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Sustainabilty_and_Environment_Committee_Minutes_2026_06-17.pdf ***Page 52***

10.0 Planning Section

Correspondence

11.0 Correspondence Report

For Information

11.1 Correspondence from Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs re: NOM - Fires in the Mournes

For Information

Attachment: Response from DAERA re Fires in the Mournes.pdf ***Page 64***

11.2 Correspondence from Secretary of State for Northern Ireland re NOM - Inadequacy £17m Fund for NI Households

For Information

Attachment: Response from Sec of State for NI re Inadequacy of 17m Fund for Northern Ireland Households.pdf ***Page 66***

Notices of Motion

12.0 Notice of Motion - SEN provision

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor C King:

"This Council notes the urgent need for increased SEN provision across Newry, Mourne and Down and South Armagh, particularly for rural families who face barriers accessing support and services.

Council welcomes the £27.5 million allocation in March 2025 by Finance Minister O'Dowd SEN allocation secured to develop pilot programmes in early intervention and workforce training, but expresses concern at the how the Department of Health, Communities and Education are administering this within our constituency.

Council therefore agrees to write to the Departments of Education, Health and Communities seeking a breakdown of SEN funding and investment allocated to the Newry, Mourne and Down and South Armagh areas, including support for rural families, specialist provision and summer schemes.

Council also agrees to develop a local action plan recognising the growing need for SEN provision across the district, with a focus on improving support, accessibility, and opportunities for children and families."

13.0 Notice of Motion - Suspension of Membership the of City and District of Sanctuary

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Reilly:

"Given the uncertainty regarding the effect that the Republic of Ireland joining the EU migration and asylum pact will have on border areas in Northern Ireland, that this Council suspends any move towards membership of the City and District of Sanctuary for asylum seekers and refugees scheme."

14.0 Notice of Motion -150th anniversary of the Catalpa Escape

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Mathers:

"This Council notes the 150th anniversary of the Catalpa Escape which occurs this year.

The audacious escape of 6 Fenian prisoners from the British penal colony of Western Australia was one of the greatest ever prison breaks.

One of the escapees was James McNally, from Newry. It was McNally who actually wrote the famous 'Voice from the Tomb' letter to the IRB leaders in America which put the escape in motion.

On this the 150th anniversary, this Council notes the limited commemorative events taking place in Ireland and compares this to events which have been organised in Australia and America, including a 9-day Fenian Festival in Fremantle Western Australia which has recently concluded.

This Council will write to the Minister for Communities in the Executive and the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport in the Dublin government to request the hosting of commemorative events.

This Council will also examine the possibility of hosting a commemorative event in the district to acknowledge the bravery of the escapees, in particular James McNally, and those who planned and participated in the Catalpa Rescue."

15.0 Notice of Motion - Additional Training Provision for Gaelic Games

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Campbell:

"This Council recognises the significant growth in participation levels across Gaelic Games within the district and acknowledges that a number of clubs are experiencing increasing pressure on existing training and playing facilities.

We would ask that Council Undertake a review of Council owned sporting facilities and land assets to identify opportunities for additional training provision for Gaelic Games. Engage with clubs that have demonstrated, through membership figures, participation rates, facility demand and development plans, that their existing sporting infrastructure is insufficient to meet current need.

Explore options for the temporary, seasonal or permanent use of underutilised Council facilities and lands to accommodate training activity where such use is compatible with existing operational requirements and community need.

Consider such arrangements as an interim measure to support clubs experiencing capacity pressures until the completion and full operation of the Down GAA Centre of Excellence at Ballykinlar."

16.0 Notice of Motion - Purchase of Saintfield Bus Depot for Parking

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Bowsie:

"This council recognises the chronic lack of parking in Saintfield and the impact this has on a flourishing high street. The sole off-street carpark on Downpatrick Street has merely 66 spaces and is at full capacity most days, causing parking problems elsewhere in the village.

The former Saintfield Bus Depot on Belfast Road has the potential to create 42 much-needed additional parking spaces in Saintfield. Translink has agreed to sell this 1/3-acre site to NMD Council. This offer will be honoured until the end of August, before the site is put onto the open market.

This council agrees to buy this last remaining brown-field site in Saintfield for the purposes of creating additional public car parking to meet local community needs."

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Mr Caolain Boyd

Fionnuala Branagh

Cllr Jim Brennan

Lorraine/Emma Burns/McParland

Cllr Pete Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Mrs Daphne Ferguson

Cllr Doire Finn

Ms Joanne Fleming

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Mrs Catherine Hanvey

Cllr Valerie Harte

Mr Conor Haughey

Cllr Martin Hearty

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tierna Howie

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Cllr Aurla King

Cllr Cathal King

Ms Elaine Kirk

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr Niall Lawlor

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Jonathan McGilly

Mr Martin McKibbin

Ms Tracie McLoughlin

Cllr Kate Murphy

Cllr Selina Murphy

Cllr Declan Murphy

Sinead Murphy

Ms Patricia Murtagh

Cllr Siobhan O'Hare

Mr Andy Patterson

Cllr Áine Quinn

Cllr Henry Reilly

Cllr Michael Rice

Ms Alison Robb

Ms Maria Rogan

Cllr Michael Ruane

Mr Conor Sage

Mrs Amanda Smyth

Conor Smyth

Donna Starkey

Sarah Taggart

Cllr David Taylor

Mr David Telford

Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly

Cllr Jill Truesdale

Mrs Marie Ward

Cllr Helena Young

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 1 JULY 2024

Minute Ref	***Subject***	**Decision**	***Lead Officer***	***Actions taken/ Progress to date***	***Remove from Action Sheet Y/N***
C/128/2024	*Minutes of Council Meeting held on 01.07.2024*	It was agreed item C/058/2024: Twinning Newry with City of Ramallah should remain on the action sheet.	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*N*

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 1 DECEMBER 2025

Minute Ref	***Subject***	**Decision**	***Lead Officer***	***Actions taken/ Progress to date***	***Remove from Action Sheet Y/N***
C/189/2025	*Notice of Motion – Water Courses*	The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6	*S Murphy*	*Tabled at S&E Committee June 2026*	*Y*

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2026

Minute Ref	***Subject***	**Decision**	***Lead Officer***	***Actions taken/ Progress to date***	***Remove from Action Sheet Y/N***
C/010/2026	*Planning Section*	It was agreed that a report would be requested providing details on Judicial Reviews and presented at a future Planning Committee Meeting.	*C Mallon*	*Tabled at Planning Committee May 2026*	*Y*

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2026

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
C/023/2026	*Correspondence Report*	*Correspondence from Richard Pengelly, Chief Executive of Education Authority re NOM Voting at 18 C/184/2025* It was agreed that Council write to all schools within the District inviting them to permit elected representatives to attend and engage with pupils for discussion around policies, manifestos and to providing opportunities for pupils to question and scrutinise their local representatives.	*Democratic Services*	*In progress*	*N*

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 1 JUNE 2026

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
C/077/2026	*Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 05/05/26*	It was agreed to note the action sheet.	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*Y*
C/078/2026	*Minutes of Council Meeting held on 05/05/2026*	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*Y*
C/079/2026	*Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 28 April 2026*	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted. *SC/004/2026: Southern Health and Social Care Trust* Councillor Reilly asked that it be put on record that he had asked if there was the possibility of investigating the return of Out of Hours Service for the Mournes area with the Chief Executive of the Trust indicating he was prepared to look at that. Miss Taggart confirmed she would revert to him on the matter.	*Democratic Services* *S Taggart*	*Noted* *Cllr Reilly contacted via email*	*Y* *Y*

C/080/2026	*Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 7 May 2026*	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*Y*
C/081/2026	*Minutes of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held 11/05/2026*	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*Y*
C/082/2026	*Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held 14/05/2026*	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*Y*
C/083/2026	*Minutes of Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held 18/05/2026*	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted. *AHC/037/2026: Notice of Motion, Dog Exercise Area at Dunleath Park* Councillor Devlin said she had made a similar proposal for one in Newcastle in 2017 and how a number of years later two dog parks had been approved in principle, one for Castlewellan Forest Park and one for Kilbroney Forest Park and requested an update or timeline for that previous decision. Mr Mallon confirmed officers would report back with an update.	*Democratic Services* *C Mallon*	*Noted* *In progress*	*Y* *N*
C/084/2026	*Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held 20/05/26*	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, subject to a minor amendment to the attendance sheet.	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*Y*
C/085/2026	*Planning Section*	There were no issues arising.	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*Y*

C/086/2026	*Correspondence Report*	It was agreed to note the correspondence report. It was agreed to note the correspondence report and the following correspondence: • Correspondence from Minister of Health re: Notice of Motion – CAR-T Cell Therapy (C/049/2026) • Correspondence from Minister for Infrastructure re: NOM - Wastewater Infrastructure (C/055/2026) • Correspondence from Minister of Finance and Department for Communities re: NOM – Basic Income for Artists (C/052/2026) • Correspondence from Department for Communities re: NOM – Inadequacy £17m Fund for NI Households (C/057/2026) It was agreed that Council write to NI Water to ask that they provide a breakdown of the level of support/investment required from the Executive in order to bring infrastructure within the District up to an appropriate standard across the board.	*Democratic Services* *Democratic Services*	*Noted* *Correspondence issued*	*Y* *Y*
C/087/2026	*Notice of Motion – Housing Associations*	The Motion was withdrawn	*Democratic Services*	*Noted*	*Y*
C/088/2026	*Emergency Notice of Motion – Fleadh Carparking*	It was agree that this Council recognises the enormous opportunity presented by the upcoming Fleadh in Downpatrick, which is expected to attract up to 2,000 competitors alongside their families, supporters and visitors from across Ireland and beyond. Council further recognises the significant economic benefit this event will bring to Downpatrick and the wider district, particularly for local retailers, hospitality businesses and town centre traders who continue to face substantial economic pressures. Council believes that providing free parking at all Council-owned car parks during the Fleadh would: Encourage visitors to remain within the town centre for longer periods;	*Democratic Services* *C Mallon*	*Actioned*	*Y*

		Increase footfall for local businesses, cafés, pubs and restaurants; Improve accessibility and visitor experience during a major cultural event; Demonstrate Council's commitment to supporting Downpatrick and the local economy; and help ensure the success and long-term legacy of hosting the Fleadh in our district. Accordingly, this Council agrees to: Implement free parking at all Council-owned car parks in Downpatrick for the weekend of the Fleadh; Instruct officers to bring forward the necessary operational arrangements as a matter of urgency; Work collaboratively with local businesses, event organisers and community stakeholders to maximise the economic impact of the Fleadh; and Promote Downpatrick as a welcoming and accessible destination throughout the event.			

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/AGM/

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Council held on Monday 1 June 2026 at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair:
Councillor P Campbell 5.00pm – 5.22pm
Councillor G Hanna 5.22pm – 5.46pm

In attendance:

(Councillors)

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Bowsie
Councillor J Brennan	Councillor L Devlin
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor D Finn
Councillor C Galbraith	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor V Harte	Councillor M Hearty
Councillor T Howie	Councillor G Kearns
Councillor A King	Councillor C King
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor N Lawlor
Councillor D Lee-Surginor	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor O Magennis	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor D McAteer	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor S Murphy	Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J Tinnelly	Councillor J Truesdale

In attendance via Teams:

Councillor C Enright	Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor M Rice	Councillor H Young

(Officials)
Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism
Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Ms E Kirk, Assistant Director of Legal & People
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer
Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

AGM/001/2026 **APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Howell, Jackson and Ruane.

In his outgoing speech as Chairperson of Council, Councillor Campbell reflected on a year that he described as both an honour and a privilege. He spoke of travelling throughout the District, meeting residents and witnessing first hand the dedication of individuals and organisations working to improve local communities. He paid tribute to Council staff, acknowledging their commitment to delivering initiatives that strengthen communities, protect the environment and support economic growth. He highlighted the Chairperson's Awards as one of the standout achievements of his term, noting the success of opening

nominations to the public and expressing his gratitude to the Democratic Services team for helping deliver a memorable and inclusive event.

Councillor Campbell also praised the young people of Newry, Mourne and Down, citing his involvement in Local Democracy Week, school visits, the Youth Council, sports programmes and environmental projects, stating that their enthusiasm, knowledge and leadership potential gave him great confidence for the future of the District.

Offering advice to his successor, he encouraged him to embrace the role, enjoy the opportunities it presented and always remember that the position exists to serve the people of the District.

In closing, Councillor Campbell thanked his wife and family for their unwavering support throughout his year in office and expressed his appreciation to everyone who had supported him during what he described as the experience of a lifetime.

Councillor Kearns, in her outgoing remarks as Vice Chairperson of Council, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve and described the role as both a privilege and a rewarding experience. She reflected on representing the community, engaging with residents and local groups, and supporting a wide range of community initiatives throughout her term.

Councillor Kearns stated that she had sought to contribute positively to making Newry, Mourne and Down a better place to live and work, noting that meeting a variety of groups and individuals had demonstrated the Council's commitment to recognising and valuing the contributions made by local communities. She acknowledged that the role had involved a busy schedule and described the experience as an important learning opportunity. Among the engagements that had particularly impacted her were visits to the Active Group, T.A.G., young adults with learning difficulties, Ballyholland Downs Day, the Down's Syndrome Group, the Gateway Choir in Dominican College and the Albert Basin Fun Day.

Councillor Kearns thanked Sinn Féin for nominating her to the position and expressed her appreciation to the Chairperson, fellow Councillors and Council staff for their support throughout the year. She concluded by wishing the incoming Chairperson and Vice Chairperson every success in their term of office.

Councillor Byrne offered his thanks to Councillors Campbell and Kearns, noting that having held the role previously he knew what an emotional end to the term it could be. He noted that the role had allowed them to give back to the people of the District and thanked them both on behalf of the SDLP for their dedication and commitment to their roles.

Councillor Hanna thanked both Councillor Campbell and Councillor Kearns for their hard work over the year, noting that he had been advised that it could be a lonely role given the size of the District and the travelling that was involved.

Councillor Truesdale, on behalf of the Alliance Party, thanked Councillor Campbell for his enthusiastic leadership and representation of the District throughout his term as Chairperson, noting that he had carried out the role with dedication and wishing him a well-deserved break. She also commended Councillor Kearns for the enthusiasm and enjoyment she had shown during her engagements as Deputy Chairperson.

Councillor D Murphy, on behalf of Sinn Féin, thanked the outgoing Councillor Campbell and Councillor Kearns for their work, nothing that he had the pleasure of their company at various events and they had always been warm and welcoming to everyone at every event.

Councillor Taylor also offered his thanks to Councillors Campbell and Kearns, noting that given the size of the District they were able to be present at a number of events, see a wide variety of roles and responsibilities across the District and wished them well for the future.

Mrs Ward, on behalf of Council and the Senior Management Team (SMT), thanked Councillor Campbell and Councillor Kearns, for all the work carried out over the last year, noting that it could be a challenging but enjoyable role with a big time commitment given the size of the District and wished them a well deserved rest.

AGM/002/2026 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AGM/003/2026 APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Read: Appointment to Statutory Positions of Responsibility Year 3. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Ward called upon Councillor Hanna as nominating officer for DUP to nominate a Councillor for the position of Chairperson of Council for Year 4, 2026/27.

Councillor Hanna nominated himself for the position of Chairperson. This was seconded by Councillor Reilly.

Councillor Hanna was duly nominated as Chairperson of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council for the year 2026/27.

Mrs Ward called upon Councillor Byrne as nominating officer for SDLP to nominate a Councillor for the position of Deputy Chairperson of Council for Year 4, 2026/27.

Councillor Byrne nominated Councillor Finn for the position of Deputy Chairperson. This was seconded by Councillor Andrews.

Councillor Finn was duly nominated as Deputy Chairperson of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council for the year 2026/27.

Mrs Ward then called upon the nominating officers of each of the parties to nominate to the following statutory positions of responsibility and the following nominations were made by the respective nominating officers and formally accepted by the nominees:

Chair of ERT Councillor Feehan
Proposed by Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Devlin

Deputy Chair of ERT Councillor S Murphy
Proposed by Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor D Murphy

Chair of AHC Councillor Howie
Proposed by Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor

Deputy Chair of AHC Councillor Mathers
Proposed by Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor D Murphy

Chair of S&E Councillor Ruane
Proposed by Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor D Murphy

Deputy Chair of S&E Councillor Andrews
Proposed by Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Devlin

Chair of SPR Councillor Bowsie
Proposed by Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Lewis

Deputy Chair of SPR Councillor Hanlon
Proposed by Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor D Murphy

Chair of Planning Councillor Larkin
Proposed by Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor D Murphy

Deputy Chair of Planning Councillor Rice
Proposed by Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor D Murphy

Mrs Ward noted Council's thanks to the outgoing Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson for their work over the year and invited them to step down.

Councillors Campbell and Kearns vacated the Chair at this point in the meeting.

Councillor Hanna and Councillor Finn assumed the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson roles respectively at this point – 5.22pm.

AGM/004/2026 NEWLY APPOINTED CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR ASSUME ROLES

Councillor Hanna said it was both an honour and a privilege to assume the role of Chairperson and wear the Chain of Office. He noted that he was the first Unionist Chairperson of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council since its establishment and described the occasion as a significant milestone. He thanked the electorate, his party colleagues and DUP representatives for their support and for entrusting him with the position.

Reflecting on his background, Councillor Hanna spoke of his 47-year career in the motor industry, with 39 of those operating his own business, and his commitment to retaining skills and employment opportunities within the local area. Councillor Hanna also highlighted his 12 years of service in the Ulster Defence Regiment and his continued involvement in the veterans' community, including his role supporting former members and families affected by the Troubles. He expressed hope that those difficult years were firmly in the past and looked forward to a positive future for the area.

Describing himself as a proud Ulster Scot and Mourne man, he noted that his family had worked, farmed, fished and lived in the area for many generations, which sparked his decision to run for election, reaffirming his commitment to serving local people and emphasised the importance of councillors working together to deliver high-quality services and improve outcomes for residents.

Councillor Hanna announced that his chosen charities for the year would be Mourne Stimulus Day Centre, which supported adults with physical and learning disabilities, and Heartbeat NI, which supported children living with heart conditions and their families. Looking ahead to his year in office, he pledged to support local businesses, advocate for improved healthcare facilities and services, and continue to campaign for better roads and essential infrastructure. He also expressed his desire to see greater recognition and respect for minority traditions, including Ulster-Scots culture.

In closing, Councillor Hanna affirmed his commitment to carrying out the duties of Chairperson with integrity and respect for all residents across the District and said he looked forward to leading the Council during the year ahead.

Councillor Finn congratulated Councillor Hanna on his election as Chairperson and expressed her appreciation to Councillor Kearns for her successful year as Deputy Chairperson, acknowledging the contribution of women in public life and local government.

Councillor Finn described her appointment as a privilege and reflected on her election to Council in 2023, thanking those who had supported her and expressing her determination to represent them to the best of her ability. She noted that throughout her time on Council she had sought to advocate for local people and issues affecting communities, including support for local businesses and community organisations, opportunities for young people, and the promotion of the arts and cultural sector. She said she believed politics should focus on improving people's everyday lives and helping communities realise their full potential.

Councillor Finn praised the District's strong creative and community spirit, recognising the contributions of artists, musicians, volunteers and grassroots organisations. She welcomed the establishment of a dedicated Arts Working Group within Council and stated her intention to use her role to champion the arts and ensure greater recognition for the contribution of the creative sector. She also highlighted her commitment to supporting young people and encouraging confidence in their future, while stressing the importance of political leadership that was caring, inspiring and forward-looking. In addition, she identified climate change as a key challenge for current and future generations and pledged to promote the District's natural environment and support efforts to protect it.

Councillor Finn emphasised that she would represent all residents across the District, regardless of background or community, and looked forward to serving in her new role. She concluded by thanking her family, friends and partner for their support, and paid tribute to her SDLP colleagues for their encouragement and dedication to their constituents.

Councillor Lewis, on behalf of the DUP, welcomed Councillor Hanna and Councillor Finn to their new roles and expressed confidence that they would carry out their duties to the best of their abilities. He thanked the public for entrusting them with the responsibility of their respective positions and wished them well for the year ahead.

Councillor D Murphy, on behalf of Sinn Féin, congratulated Councillor Hanna and Councillor Finn on their appointments. He acknowledged that, despite differing political views on some

fundamental issues, this would not prevent constructive collaboration during the coming year. He also noted the challenges faced by those entering public life, particularly women, and expressed confidence that Councillor Finn would perform her role effectively.

Councillor Taylor congratulated Councillor Hanna and Councillor Finn on their appointments and noted that the occasion was a proud moment for the Unionist community. He acknowledged Councillor Finn's enthusiasm and wished both Members every success during their term.

Councillor Byrne, on behalf of the SDLP, wished Councillor Hanna and Councillor Finn well in their respective roles. He encouraged them to enjoy the experience and noted their ability to engage positively with people at public events. He also welcomed the increasing number of female elected representatives and emphasised the importance of elected members advocating on behalf of their constituents.

Councillor Truesdale, on behalf of the Alliance Party, congratulated Councillor Hanna and Councillor Finn on their appointments. She noted that the coming year would be an interesting one for the Council and expressed confidence in their commitment to serving their constituents.

Councillor Tinnelly congratulated Councillor Hanna, describing him as both a colleague and friend, and wished him every success in the role. He also wished Councillor Finn well and acknowledged her enthusiasm for public service.

Councillor Reilly expressed his delight at Councillor Hanna's appointment as Chairperson, noting the significance of the role for the Mournes area and the Unionist community. He described Councillor Hanna as a diligent and hardworking individual who would seek to represent all residents across the District.

Councillors Hanna and Finn thanked Members for their kind words and support.

Mrs Ward, on behalf of the Senior Management Team and Democratic Services, welcomed Councillor Hanna and Councillor Finn to their new roles. She acknowledged the significant commitment involved, particularly with an election due to take place during their term of office and assured them that officers would provide support and guidance throughout the year.

AGM/005/2026 APPOINTMENTS TO STATUTORY COMMITTEES 2026/27

Read: List of Committee picks 2026/27 **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Ward advised that, at the Annual Meeting of Council held on 5 June 2023, Council had agreed, by qualified majority vote and in accordance with Part 4, Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, to use the default quota of greatest remainder method for the appointment of positions on committees, with the remaining seven positions to be allocated using the d'Hondt method.

She advised that the seven positions available for allocation were one position on the Active and Healthy Communities Committee, one on the Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee, one on the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee, one on the Sustainability

and Environment Committee, two on the Planning Committee and one on the Audit Committee.

The positions were confirmed as follows:

Sinn Féin Planning
Proposed by Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor D Murphy.

UUP S&E
Proposed by Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Lewis.

Councillor Gibbons Active & Healthy Communities
Proposed by Councillor Gibbons, seconded by Councillor Lewis.

Councillor Tinnelly ERT
Proposed by Councillor Tinnelly, seconded by Councillor Devlin.

UUP SPR
Proposed by Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Lewis.

Councillor Gibbons Audit
Proposed by Councillor Gibbons, seconded by Councillor Taylor.

Councillor Tinnelly Planning
Proposed by Councillor Tinnelly, seconded by Councillor McAteer.

The Chief Executive advised that the remaining names for committee selection should be given to Democratic Services as soon as possible.

Agreed: **It was agreed to approve the appointments to Committees using Quota of Greatest Remainder. (*Copy of Committee List 2025/26 appended to these Minutes)***

AGM/006/2026 **TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO EXTERNAL BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS (EXCLUDING STATUTORY POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY) AND INTERNAL BODIES AND FORUMS**

Read: List of External Bodies and Organisations 2025/26.
(Copy circulated)

Mrs Ward requested that appointees be forwarded to Democratic Services by the nominating officers as soon as possible.

Noted: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, to note the External Bodies and Organisations List. (excluding Statutory Positions of Responsibility)**

AGM/007/2026 **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR INCOMING YEAR**

Read: Schedule of Meetings for the year 2025/26.
(Copy circulated)

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed to approve the Schedule of Meetings for the year 2026/27.**

AGM/008/2026 **SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES PAYABLE TO COUNCILLORS**

Read: Newry Mourne & Down District Council Scheme of Allowances payable to Councillors. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor Reilly, it was agreed to approve the Newry Mourne & Down District Council Scheme of Allowances payable to Councillors.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 5.46pm

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 July 2026.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

_____
Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 1 June 2026 at 6.30pm in Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor G Hanna

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor T Andrews
Councillor J Brennan
Councillor P Campbell
Councillor K Feehan
Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor V Harte
Councillor T Howie
Councillor A King
Councillor M Larkin
Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor O Magennis
Councillor D McAteer
Councillor S Murphy
Councillor A Quinn
Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J Truesdale
Councillor C Bowsie
Councillor P Byrne
Councillor L Devlin
Councillor D Finn
Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor M Hearty
Councillor G Kearns
Councillor C King
Councillor N Lawlor
Councillor A Lewis
Councillor A Mathers
Councillor D Murphy
Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor H Reilly
Councillor J Tinnelly

In attendance via Teams:

Councillor W Clarke
Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor M Rice
Councillor C Enright
Councillor K Murphy
Councillor H Young

Officials in attendance: Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability and Environment
Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Health Communities
Ms E Kirk, Assistant Director of People & Legal
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Ms D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

C/075/2026 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Howell, Jackson and Ruane.

The Chairperson advised that an emergency notice of motion had been received and would be dealt with at the appropriate time during the meeting.

C/076/2026 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

C/077/2026 **ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 5 MAY 2026**

Read: Action sheet from Council Meeting held on 5 May 2026. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor S Murphy the Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 5 May 2026 was agreed.**

COUNCIL MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/078/2026 **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 5 MAY 2026**

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 5 May 2026 **(copy circulated).**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Harte, the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 5 May 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/079/2026 **MINUTES OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28 APRIL 2026**

Read: Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 28 April 2026 **(copy circulated).**

SC/004/2026: Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Councillor Reilly asked that it be put on record that he had asked if there was the possibility of investigating the return of Out of Hours Service for the Mournes area with the Chief Executive of the Trust indicating he was prepared to look at that.

Miss Taggart confirmed she would revert to him on the matter.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Lewis, the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28 April 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/080/2026 **MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 MAY 2026**

Read: Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 7 May 2026 **(copy circulated**).

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Bowsie, the Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 7 May 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/081/2026 **MINUTES OF ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 MAY 2026**

Read: Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2026 **(copy circulated**).

Councillor Bowsie took the opportunity to congratulate Councillor Hanna on his appointment as Chair of the Council, the first Unionist Chair for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Councillor Bowsie spoke of the King's recent visit stating that this had been a tremendous boost for the District with Council Chairperson and Chief Executive greeting the King and having a photograph of same appearing in the Mourne Observer. He went on the ask that given that it had been a considerable Council engagement why it had not been publicised on any of the Council social media channels, commenting that there had been a communication blackout.

The Chief Executive pointed out this was not a matter within the Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Minutes however it would be picked up outside of the meeting and assured Members there had been no intention of a media blackout.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, the Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/082/2026 **MINUTES OF STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 MAY 2026**

Read: Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 14 May 2026 **(copy circulated).**

SPR/073/2026: Cullyhanna Community Centre
Councillor Magennis welcomed the roof replacement and internal works upgrade for Cullyhanna Community Centre stating it was great news for South Armagh and for Cullyhanna.

Councillor Reilly referred to the issue of the coastal infrastructure commenting on his disappointment that neither the Assembly nor the Minister had replied as yet. He went on to speak of his disappointment at the Greencastle Ferry being no longer operational and enquired if Officers could form a taskforce to examine every opportunity for that service to resume given its link with County Louth and the Kingdom of Mourne and it being a really good tourism facility.

The Chief Executive advised as the matter was not discussed within the Strategy, Policy and Resources Minutes it could be considered outside the meeting and referred to the relevant Committee.

SPR/079/2026: Planning – Professional Support
In response to a query from Councillor Hanlon regarding a timeline for the professional support for Planning, Mr Mallon confirmed that once ratified by Council, officers would be in the position to progress the appointment following the call-in period.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Reilly, the Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 14 May 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/083/2026 MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2026

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 18 May 2026 **(copy circulated).**

Councillor Mathers congratulated Newry Park Run on its first anniversary stating it was a great achievement for the area.

AHC/037/2026: Notice of Motion, Dog Exercise Area at Dunleath Park
In welcoming the progression of the dog exercise area for Downpatrick, Councillor Devlin said she had made a similar proposal for one in Newcastle in 2017 which unfortunately had been unable to progress. She referred to how a number of years later two dog parks had been approved in principle, one for Castlewellan Forest Park and one for Kilbroney Forest Park.

Councillor Devlin spoke of how, with the outstanding work being carried out in Castlewellan Forest Park, that a dog park would be an added benefit and requested an update or timeline for that previous decision.

Mr Mallon confirmed officers would report back with an update.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Lawlor, the Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 18 May 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/084/2026 **MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 MAY 2026**

Read: Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 20 May 2026 **(copy circulated)**.

Miss Taggart advised Councillor O'Hare's apologies for the meeting would be recorded.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Magennis, the Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 20 May 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, subject to a minor amendment to the attendance sheet.**

C/085/2026 **PLANNING SECTION**

There were no planning issues arising.

C/086/2026 **CORRESPONDENCE REPORT**

Read: Report from Mrs Ward, Chief Executive, regarding an update on correspondence received for the attention of Council **(copy circulated)**.

Correspondence from Minister of Health re NOM - CAR-T Cell Therapy (C/049/2026)
Councillor Feehan voiced his disappointment at the response received from the Minister, particularly as he had brought the matter to Council to advocate on behalf of a local family that had lost a young mother fighting blood cancer and who had to receive her treatment in London.

He took the opportunity to once again highlight the significant issue whereby mothers were having to leave their children behind to go and fight for their lives someplace else which was totally unacceptable.

Councillor Feehan spoke at length about how Council had requested to meet with the Health Minister and then senior officials at the Department of Health with the answer to both requests being no. He stated that he was bewildered at how the Department of Health was stonewalling such requests from Council whilst Members were advocating on behalf of families advising that he would continue to fight on their behalf.

Correspondence from Minister for Infrastructure re: NOM - Wastewater Infrastructure (C/055/2026)
Councillor Feehan stated he was very grateful to the Minister for Infrastructure for the comprehensive response received. He spoke of his concerns in relation to developer contributions, and how whilst intentions might be good behind them, the consequences were going to drive up the price of housing as ultimately such contributions would be passed on to consumers.

Councillor Feehan proposed Council write to NI Water to ask that they provide a breakdown of the level of support/investment required from the Executive in order to bring infrastructure within the District up to an appropriate standard across the board.

Councillor McAteer seconded Councillor Feehan's proposal.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor McAteer that Council write to NI Water to ask that they provide a breakdown of the level of support/investment required from the Executive in order to bring infrastructure within the District up to an appropriate standard across the board.**

Correspondence from Minister of Finance and Department for Communities re: NOM – Basic Income for Artists (C/052/2026)

Councillor Finn voiced her disappointment that there was no space within the budget and that she hoped the Executive could agree a budget soon given that it had still not happened within the new financial year.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Campbell, to note the correspondence report and the following correspondence:**

- **Correspondence from Minister of Health re: Notice of Motion – CAR-T Cell Therapy (C/049/2026)**
- **Correspondence from Minister for Infrastructure re: NOM - Wastewater Infrastructure (C/055/2026)**
- **Correspondence from Minister of Finance and Department for Communities re: NOM – Basic Income for Artists (C/052/2026)**
- **Correspondence from Department for Communities re: NOM – Inadequacy £17m Fund for NI Households (C/057/2026)**

C/087/2026: **NOTICE OF MOTION – HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS**

The following Motion had been received from Councillor Galbraith:

"This Council notes:
That many tenants living in Housing Association properties across Newry, Mourne and Down District Council are required or strongly encouraged to obtain contents insurance as a condition associated with protecting their belongings within rented accommodation;
That tenants are increasingly experiencing property damage and loss arising not from tenant negligence, but from delayed, inadequate, or unresolved repairs by Housing Associations, including but not limited to water ingress, damp, mould, roofing failures, plumbing leaks, and structural defects;

That in many such cases, tenants are left financially liable for replacing damaged personal belongings through their own contents insurance policies, despite the root cause being a failure or delay by the landlord to carry out timely repairs;
That this situation places an unfair financial burden on tenants, many of whom are already facing significant cost-of-living pressures;
That Housing Associations have statutory and contractual responsibilities to maintain properties to a safe and habitable standard and should be accountable where avoidable delays in repairs result in damage to tenants' possessions.
This Council therefore calls on:
All Housing Associations operating within the District to review and amend their policies so that tenants are not unfairly required to rely solely on personal contents insurance where damage arises directly from Housing Association repair delays, negligence, or failure to act within reasonable timescales;
The Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Department for Communities to introduce clear regional guidance requiring Housing Associations to accept liability and provide compensation where tenant belongings are damaged due to preventable delays in repairs;
Housing Associations to establish transparent compensation procedures for tenants affected by delayed maintenance issues, including accessible appeals mechanisms and clearly defined repair response times;
The Chief Executive of Council to write formally to all registered Housing Associations operating within the District, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and the Department for Communities outlining Council's position and requesting urgent engagement on this matter.
This Council further agrees to support efforts to strengthen tenant protections and improve accountability standards across the social housing sector."

Agreed: **The Motion was withdrawn.**

EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION

The Chairperson advised an Emergency Notice of Motion had been received, the wording of which had been emailed to all Councillors and to enable it to be heard, it would be necessary to suspend Standing Order 29.1 for which a qualified majority vote was required, no fewer than 80% of Members present and voting.

The Chairperson put the matter to a recorded vote, the results of which were as follows: (copy attached)

FOR:	**38**
AGAINST:	**0**
ABSTENTIONS:	**0**

Miss Taggart confirmed a qualified majority had been reached.

The Chairperson advised that Standing Order 29.1 would be suspended by qualified majority vote to hear the emergency motion.

C/088/2026: **EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION – FLEADH CARPARKING**

The following Emergency Motion was received from Councillor Galbraith:

"This Council recognises the enormous opportunity presented by the upcoming Fleadh in Downpatrick, which is expected to attract up to 2,000 competitors alongside their families, supporters and visitors from across Ireland and beyond.
Council further recognises the significant economic benefit this event will bring to Downpatrick and the wider district, particularly for local retailers, hospitality businesses and town centre traders who continue to face substantial economic pressures.

Council believes that providing free parking at all Council-owned car parks during the Fleadh would:
Encourage visitors to remain within the town centre for longer periods;
Increase footfall for local businesses, cafés, pubs and restaurants;
Improve accessibility and visitor experience during a major cultural event;
Demonstrate Council's commitment to supporting Downpatrick and the local economy; and help ensure the success and long-term legacy of hosting the Fleadh in our district.
Accordingly, this Council agrees to: Implement free parking at all Council-owned car parks in Downpatrick for the weekend of the Fleadh;
Instruct officers to bring forward the necessary operational arrangements as a matter of urgency;
Work collaboratively with local businesses, event organisers and community stakeholders to maximise the economic impact of the Fleadh; and
Promote Downpatrick as a welcoming and accessible destination throughout the event."

The Motion was seconded by Councillor A King.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor Galbraith advised he had brought it forward as it was not simply another event coming to the District but was a once-in-a-generation opportunity for businesses and people of Downpatrick. There were expected to be up to 2,000 competitors, alongside families, supporters, musicians and visitors travelling from across Ireland and beyond which would mean thousands of people spending time, money and energy within the town.

Councillor Galbraith pointed out the motion was about sending out a very clear message, that Downpatrick was open, welcoming and ready to make the most of the opportunity.

Members were advised free parking during the Fleadh was not just for those visiting but to bring the people into the town to enjoy what the Fleadh had to offer and to encourage locals to stay in the town longer as an investment for local traders, cafés, restaurants, pubs, in local footfall and in the long-term reputation of Downpatrick as a destination town capable of hosting major events successfully.

Councillor Galbraith pointed out nobody travelling to the Fleadh should arrive in to the County town Of Down and feel they were being charged at every turn and that visitors should be encouraged to park easily, move around freely and spend their money in local businesses. He added it was about legacy and an opportunity to showcase Downpatrick on a regional and all-island stage.

In welcoming the Motion, Councillor Hanlon wished to put on record her thanks to Council officials who had worked closely with her in terms of securing car parking space for the competitors. She thanked SERC, the Leisure Centre and the local Scouts who had all been very accommodating in offering carparking space with Council officials also looking at utilising the Rathkeltair carpark. She added everyone working together had been very positive, especially the businesses who held a meeting and were very keen to make this a successful event for Downpatrick. She also thanked the PCSP for their support in providing Hi Vis vests stating it was good opportunity to put on record the Council's support for the Fleadh.

Councillor Hearty welcomed the Motion commenting that Councillor Galbraith had spoken eloquently about the opportunities the Fleadh would provide for Downpatrick, and how Crossmaglen had held one for the first time in over 50 years only that week which had brought a tremendous economic and social boost, not just to the town but to the entire area.

Councillor Truesdale thanked Councillor Galbraith for bringing the Motion for what was an enormous opportunity and how whatever could be done to assist the town with car parking and getting all those people there should be done.

Councillor Galbraith thanked Members for their support.

The Chairperson declared the Motion carried.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Galbraith, seconded by Councillor A King that this Council recognises the enormous opportunity presented by the upcoming Fleadh in Downpatrick, which is expected to attract up to 2,000 competitors alongside their families, supporters and visitors from across Ireland and beyond.**
Council further recognises the significant economic benefit this event will bring to Downpatrick and the wider district, particularly for local retailers, hospitality businesses and town centre traders who continue to face substantial economic pressures.
Council believes that providing free parking at all Council-owned car parks during the Fleadh would:
Encourage visitors to remain within the town centre for longer periods;
Increase footfall for local businesses, cafés, pubs and restaurants;
Improve accessibility and visitor experience during a major cultural event;
Demonstrate Council's commitment to supporting Downpatrick and the local economy; and help ensure the success and long-term legacy of hosting the Fleadh in our district.
Accordingly, this Council agrees to: Implement free parking at all Council-owned car parks in Downpatrick for the weekend of the Fleadh;
Instruct officers to bring forward the necessary operational arrangements as a matter of urgency;

Work collaboratively with local businesses, event organisers and community stakeholders to maximise the economic impact of the Fleadh; and
Promote Downpatrick as a welcoming and accessible destination throughout the event.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.57pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 July 2026.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

_____
Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 1st June 2026 **VENUE:** Downshire Civic Centre **MEETING:** Council

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Qualified Majority Vote to hear Emergency Motion re: free carparking for Downpatrick Fleadh

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews	1			
C Bowsie	2			
J Brennan	3			
P Byrne	4			
P Campbell	5			
W Clarke	6			
L Devlin	7			
C Enright	8			
K Feehan	9			
D Finn	10			
C Galbraith	11			
M Gibbons	12			
O Hanlon	13			
G Hanna	14			
V Harte	15			
M Hearty	16			
R Howell				1
T Howie	17			
J Jackson				2
G Kearns	18			
A King	19			
C King	20			
M Larkin	21			
N Lawlor	22			
D Lee-Surginor	23			
A Lewis	24			
O Magennis	25			
A Mathers	26			
D McAteer	27			
D Murphy	28			
K Murphy	29			
S Murphy	30			
S O'Hare	31			
A Quinn	32			
H Reilly	33			
M Rice	34			
M Ruane				3
D Taylor	35			
J Tinnelly	36			
J Truesdale	37			
H Young	38			
TOTALS	**38**	**0**	**0**	**3**

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 8 June 2026 at 6.00pm in Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall

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Chairperson:	Councillor K Feehan	
Committee Members	Councillor T Andrews	Councillor O Hanlon
	Councillor G Hanna	Councillor G Kearns
	Councillor N Lawlor	Councillor A Lewis
	Councillor S Murphy	Councillor A Quinn
	Councillor M Ruane	Councillor H Young
Committee Members in attendance via Teams:	Councillor W Clarke	Councillor D Lee-Surginor

Officials in attendance: Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

Officials in attendance via Teams: Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

ERT/062/2026 **APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

An apology was received from Councillor Galbraith.

The Chairperson advised that in an effort to be more transparent, many of the reports were tabled in open session while the appendices were in closed session. He asked that should Members have any questions regarding an appendix that they wait until the meeting was in closed session to raise any queries.

ERT/063/2026 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

ERT/064/2026 **ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 11 MAY 2026**

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2026. **(Copy circulated)**

ERT/034/2026 – Action Sheet ERT Committee Meeting Monday 9 March 2026

In response to a request from Councillor Hanlon for a progress update on the establishment of a Dedicated Events Working Group, Mr Mallon advised that all nominations had been received and that invitations would be issued for a meeting at the end of the month.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2026.**

ERT/065/2026 **TO AGREE START TIMES FOR ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2026-27**

Read: Proposed Start Times for Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meetings 2026-27 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Ruane, the start times for Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meetings 2026-27 were agreed.**

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

ERT/066/2026 **ERT BUSINESS PLANS**

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism regarding Directorate Business Plan. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Mallon presented the report, which reviewed the 2025–26 Business Plan and outlined the 2026–27 Business Plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Young regarding the breakdown of jobs created through business start-up activity, Mrs Smyth advised that the figure provided in the report had been derived using a standard ratio for jobs created for each business plan developed through the programme and confirmed that a more detailed breakdown was not available beyond the figures presented.

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

- **Assessment of the ERT Directorate Business Plan 2025-26.**
- **ERT Directorate Business Plan 2026-27.**

ERT/067/2026 **CONSUMER TRADE SHOWS 2026-27**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Tourism Trade / Consumer Shows for 2026/27. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Smyth noted that the report set out a number of consumer and trade events to be attended throughout the year, which provided the Council with opportunities to engage with

trade operators, showcase the district, and work collaboratively to increase tourism visits to the area.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to approve participation in the tourism trade and consumer shows outlined in Section 2.1 of the officers' report, in collaboration with Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland, to support the tourism sector and promote the destination.**

ERT/068/2026 **PEACEPLUS**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Smyth noted that the report set out two items, Section 2.1 detailed projects approved under the PEACEPLUS Partnership to proceed to procurement, of which three required approval at Committee, with the relevant business cases included as appendices to the report. She stated that section 2.2 outlined that a bid had been submitted to SEUPB for additional funding, which, if successful, would be required to be expended by the end of September.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, the following was agreed;**

- **Approve the business case for procurement, appointment and delivery of activities under Strand 2 and 3 of the Co-designed Local Action Plan as set out in the officers' report.**
- **To note the minutes of PEACEPLUS Partnership on 21 May 2026.**
- **To note the submission of a bid for additional funding for summer programmes.**

ERT/069/2026 **RURAL NI POLICY CONSULTATION**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Rural NI: Our New Approach 2026-2041. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Smyth presented the report, advising that DAERA had been engaging with a range of stakeholders on the development of a new rural policy, details of which were set out at Section 2.1 of the report. She noted that Council officers had engaged with DAERA on its proposals, including those relating to the establishment of local partnerships, for which the Department envisaged a role for Councils in their formation and implementation. She further advised that the detail remained under development and that officers continued to work closely with the Department as proposals evolved.

Mrs Smyth confirmed that DAERA had opened a consultation on the draft policy and that the Council's response had been submitted within the required timeframe. The response was presented for Members' consideration, and approval was sought for its formal submission to the

Department.

In response to a query from Councillor Lee-Surginor regarding how the Council's response to the consultation had been coordinated, Mrs Smyth advised that officers within ERT and AHC had engaged with the Department during the policy's development, and that the response had been coordinated across those officers, with additional engagement undertaken with relevant stakeholders.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to approve the Council's submission of a response to the consultation: DAERA's Rural NI – Our New Approach 2026-2041 draft policy.**

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 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).**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.**

The Chairperson advised that the following had been agreed while in closed session.

ERT/070/2026 **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM NETWORK**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Facilitation for Mourne Gullion Strangford Sustainable Tourism Network Development Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve the business case, procurement and appointment of a Facilitator to deliver the Mourne Gullion Strangford Sustainable Tourism Network programme of work over a 2-year term.**

FOR NOTING

ERT/071/2026 **CROSSMAGLEN IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Crossmaglen Square Improvement Plan. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Quinn expressed her thanks to the facilitators who had visited Crossmaglen to engage with the community and noted that she looked forward to further engagement and the progression of the project.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note Crossmaglen Square Improvement Plan and its recommendations and that further information will be presented to members on opportunities arising from shaping sustainable places.**

ERT/072/2026 **LEP GRANTS REVIVE AND REIMAGINE**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Local Economic Partnership Grants: Revive and Re-imagine. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the launch of the Revive and Reimagine: Commercial Property Grant and Property Façade Renewal Schemes.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.19pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 July 2026

Signed: **Councillor K Feehan**
Chairperson
Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee

_____

Signed: **Conor Mallon**
Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism

_____

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 11 June 2026 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre

In the Chair: Councillor C Bowsie

In Attendance in Chamber:

Councillor P Byrne
Councillor M Hearty
Councillor C King
Councillor D McAteer
Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor A King
Councillor A Mathers
Councillor M Rice

Committee Members in Attendance via Teams:

Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor D Taylor
Councillor H Reilly
Councillor J Truesdale

Officials in Attendance in Chamber:

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism
Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director of Healthy Living
Ms V Keegan, Assistant Director of Digital & Communications
Ms E Kirk, Assistant Director Legal & People
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director of Community Engagement
Mr G Scott, Safeguarding Co-Ordinator
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

Officials in attendance via Teams:

Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration
Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism

SPR/089/2026: **APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSONS REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Howell and Howie.

SPR/090/2026: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest

SPR/091/2026: **ACTION SHEET OF STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES MEETING HELD ON 14 MAY 2026**

Read: Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 14 May 2026. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor A King, it was agreed to note the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 14 May 2026.**

SPR/092/2026: **TO AGREE START TIMES FOR STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2026/27**

Read: Start Times of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meetings for 2026/27 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to approve the start times for the Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meetings for 2026/27.**

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

SPR/093/2026: **DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANS**

Read: Report from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive, regarding Directorate Business Plans. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Ward advised that the Directorate Business Plan review of 2025/26 was tabled for consideration, alongside the forward-looking Business Plan for 2026–27, reminding Members that the Business Plans were derived from, and considered as part of, the Council's Corporate Plan.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Mathers, the following was agreed:**

- **The assessment of the Chief Executive – Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2025/26.**
- **The Chief Executive – Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2026/27.**

SPR/094/2026: **UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR POLICY REPORT**

Read: Report from Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director Healthy Living, regarding Unreasonable Behaviour Policy Report. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Haughey advised that the report sought approval for the adoption of the Council's Unreasonable Behaviour Policy, noting that Council was committed to the principle that unreasonable behaviour by any person should not be accepted. He advised that, as part of the Council's safeguarding processes, the need for the policy and associated procedures had been identified to support the protection of all staff and users of Council facilities.

In proposing the report, Councillor Hanlon noted the importance of having the policy in place to protect both staff and service users.

Following a query from Councillor A King regarding whether the policy had originated from issues within leisure facilities, Mr Haughey confirmed that all Council staff could be subjected to unreasonable behaviour from service users. However, he noted that given the high volume of users accessing leisure facilities, incidents were more likely to arise in that setting.

Councillor McAteer welcomed the report and stated that when action was taken against dog fouling the policy would help protect the enforcement officers.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor A King, it was agreed to approve the Unreasonable Behaviour Policy and Procedures for adoption and introduction through Council.**

SPR/095/2026: **ANNUAL COMPLAINT HANDLING REPORT**

Read: Report from Ms E Kirk, Assistant Director People & Legal, regarding Annual Complaint Handling Report. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Kirk advised that the report presented the Annual Complaints Handling Report for 2025–26, noting that Members were asked to note the contents of the report and to approve the alignment of future reporting with the financial year, with the reporting period running from April to March.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor A King, the following was agreed:**

- **Approve the transition from calendar year to financial year reporting for the Council's Annual Complaints Report.**
- **Note the 2025/26 Annual Complaints Handling Report.**

SPR/096/2026: **GREENWAY FEASIBILITY AND DESIGN: WARRENPOINT TO NEWCASTLE**

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director: Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Greenway Feasibility and Design: Warrenpoint to Newcastle. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Mallon advised that the report outlined a Letter of Offer received from the Department for Infrastructure and the Department for Transport in relation to the proposed Greenway from Warrenpoint to Newcastle, which would be delivered in two phases. He explained that the report sought Members' approval to note the Letter of Offer and to approve the appointment of a design team through an existing framework to progress the feasibility study for the proposed Greenway between Warrenpoint and Newcastle.

In proposing the report, Councillor McAteer stated that it was encouraging to see the project progressing. He welcomed the strategic and long-term approach being taken by the Council to develop and enhance the network of greenways and associated active travel infrastructure, noting that this would further strengthen the area's tourism offering. He acknowledged that the project was a long-term initiative but emphasised that such decisions were important in planning for the future. He also highlighted the significance of the proposed route from

Warrenpoint onwards, and the importance of integrating it with other key infrastructure projects, including the Carlingford Lough Greenway and the Carlingford Lough Ferry. He noted that, with the anticipated opening of the Narrow Water Bridge, improved connectivity between these projects would be of considerable benefit and formed an important part of the Council's wider strategic vision.

In seconding the report, Councillor Reilly noted his delight that areas such as Kilkeel and Annalong were being included and queried how phase 2 would be implemented.

Mr Mallon explained that the proposed approach would see both phases of the project progress concurrently, advising that phase 1 would involve the development of the Warrenpoint to Rostrevor section to concept design stage, while phase 2 would progress at a more strategic level, adopting a corridor-wide approach to assess the opportunities and constraints associated with the proposed Greenway route from Warrenpoint to Greencastle and onwards to Newcastle.

Councillor Rice queried the proposed route and whether it would be coastal, to which Mr Mallon confirmed that the feasibility aspect would look at route selection, but the hope would be the path would be coastal where possible.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Reilly, the following was agreed:**

- **To note the Letter of Offer from Department for Infrastructure and Department of Transport.**
- **To approve the appointment of a design team through an existing framework to progress the feasibility study on the proposed Greenway from Warrenpoint to Newcastle.**

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 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).**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hearty, seconded by Councillor C King, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

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

SPR/097/2026: **MEIGH COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director: Community Development, regarding Meigh Community Centre. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve the capital budget and appointment of the preferred contractor to deliver the works as detailed within the report.**

SPR/098/2026: **SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT RESOURCES**

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment, regarding Sustainability & Environment Resources. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve the additional staff resources as detailed at section 2.2 of the officer's report.**

SPR/099/2026: **STRANGFORD & LECALE LANDSCAPE CONNECTIONS**

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Strangford & Lecale Landscape Connections. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor A King, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, the following was agreed, subject to a positive funding decision by the NLHF Board of Trustees on 24 June 2026:**

- **To accept and execute the Letter of Offer and all associated documentation required to commence the Development Phase.**
- **To approve the Council's 2026/27 revenue contribution.**
- **To commence recruitment for the approved externally funded posts.**

SPR/100/2026: **FINANCE STRUCTURE**

Read: Report from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director: Finance & Performance, regarding Finance Structure. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor C King, it was agreed to approve the proposed structure for the Finance & Performance Department as detailed in section 2 and Appendix 1 of the officer's report.**

SPR/101/2026: **COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES**

Read: Report from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive, regarding Communications Resources. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor C King, the following was agreed:**

- **To approve, under the Corporate Services Directorate, Digital & Communications Department, the associated business case and recommended Option 3.**
- **To approve the extension of the two temporary Communications and Marketing Officer positions to maintain operational capacity while the recruitment process is undertaken.**

SPR/102/2026: **YEAR END MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2025/26**

Read: Report from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director People & Performance, regarding Year End Management Accounts. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor A King, it was agreed to note the year end management accounts position for 25/26 and to approve the recommendations as set out in section 2.5 of the officer's report regarding the future allocation of reserves.**

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

SPR/103/2026: **LAND & PROPERTY SERVICES NI VALUATIONS 2026**

Read: Report from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director: Finance & Performance, regarding Land & Property Services NI Valuations 2026. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the payment to LPS NI for the 2026 valuations. Expenditure is included within revenue budgets.**

SPR/104/2026: **NEWRY TOWN HALL CLOSURE**

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Newry Town Hall Closure. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the update on management of assets to date, and to agree to the proposals for the remaining identified assets within Newry Town Hall.**

SPR/105/2026: **NIAO AUDIT FEE**

Read: Report from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director: Finance & Performance, regarding NIAO Audit Fee. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the update in relation to the increased Audit Fees.**

SPR/107/2026: **KILKEEL LEISURE CENTRE UPDATE**

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Kilkeel Leisure Centre Update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the contents of the report.**

FOR NOTING

SPR/107/2026: **MINUTES OF NCCR PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING 23/03/2026**

Read: Minutes of NCCR Programme Board Meeting 23/03/2026. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Byrne raised concerns regarding the timing of the NCCR Working Group minutes and the reporting of actions arising, noting that the March minutes were being considered after a subsequent meeting had already taken place and suggested that Members should receive more timely updates, particularly in relation to the public perception survey and stakeholder feedback. He emphasised that this was not intended as a criticism but to ensure that the Committee remained informed of ongoing developments.

Mr Mallon confirmed that he would take the feedback into consideration.

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

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 6.53pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 July 2026.

Signed: _____

Councillor Callum Bowsie
Chairperson

Signed: _____

Marie Ward
Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AHC/2026

Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 15 June 2026 at 6.00pm in the Council Chambers, Downshire Civic Centre

Chairperson: Councillor T Howie

In attendance in Chamber:
Councillor P Campbell
Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor J Jackson
Councillor A King
Councillor N Lawlor
Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor A Lewis
Councillor A Mathers
Councillor K Murphy

Committee Members in attendance via Teams:
Councillor J Brennan
Councillor D Finn
Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor R Howell

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
Mrs M Flynn, Head of Community Engagement & Relations
Ms D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

Non-Committee Members in Chamber: Councillor T Andrews

Non-Committee Members in attendance via team:
Councillor G Hanna
Councillor H Reilly

Also in attendance in Chamber: Mr K Whitson, PGA Master Professional

AHC/039/2026: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Magennis.

Councillor Howie said she looked forward to Chairing the Committee for the year.

The Chairperson took the opportunity to condemn the attack on Stephen Ogilvie and said thoughts were with him and his family. She voiced condemnation at the subsequent violence that took place across Belfast and within the District.

AHC/040/2026: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AHC/041/2026: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2026

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 18 May 2026. **(Copy circulated)**.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor A King, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 18 May 2026.**

AHC/042/2026: START TIMES FOR ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE FOR 2026/27

Read: Proposed Start Times for Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meetings for 2026/27. **(Copy circulated)**.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Campbell, the start times of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee for 2026/27 were agreed.**

AHC/043/2026: PRESENTATION ON PARK GOLF

Read: Presentation from Mr K Whitson, PGA Master Professional regarding Park Golf. **(Copy attached)**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Whitson and invited him to make his presentation.

Mr Whitson thanked Members for the opportunity to meet and provided a detailed overview of the presentation highlighting all that Park Golf had to offer in Newcastle. Members were advised this was an opportunity to build a highly accessible and modern Facility, strengthening local connection and access to the sport.

Following the presentation, the Chairperson thanked Mr Whitson for his presentation and invited questions and comments from Members.

Comments and questions from Members were as follows:

- In conjunction with Council officials and/or other Golf Clubs such as Crossgar or Ardglass would there be plans to develop this into other DEAs?
- Council would be entering into a lease agreement with Royal County Down for the for the upkeep and maintenance costs. Were there any additional costs foreseen for Council?
- The proposal had the potential to be really positive and build upon the legacy of the Irish Open in 2024. There were great things about sport at any level that delivered much more than just physical benefits including public health benefits, benefits for mental health and wellbeing and social connection within communities.

- The emphasis on accessibility for all with this project was so important and whether that was for young people looking for something fun and affordable to do, to older residents looking for a manageable way to stay active, this facility had the potential to bring wider benefits to the area.
- Was the proposed layout similar to the old pitch and putt layout?
- Was there any indication as to whether there would be any trees removed as part of the process?
- With the emphasis on accessibility being so important, would the booking process reflect that and be open to people of all ages and all abilities?
- In terms of booking, how would people collect the golf equipment to play?
- Would the park still be accessible to the public to use and walk through with their families and dogs as they did currently?
- It was a great initiative with potential for the tourism industry.
- Would it be an all year-round facility?
- To enable inclusiveness and accessibility there would need to be value for money for users.
- Were there other Park Golf Projects?
- How safe was it to play?

Responses to points raised included the following:

- Council was very fortunate to have the opportunity to be working alongside Royal County Down and the agencies listed regarding the project which lent itself well to the setting in Newcastle.
- Council officials were keen to get approval from Council and develop the project over the next year and use it as a pilot project.
- The upkeep of the likes of the greens and tee boxes would be undertaken alongside Royal County Down (RCD) green keepers because that was the type of skill set that lent itself to that and there would be a license agreement to allow those works to happen.
- It would however still be a Council facility and Council would still be responsible for the overall maintenance of the site.
- There was a large number of green staff at Royal County Down. RCD had interns from all over the world including Augusta, Chicago Golf Club and England and that was something the club would like to develop over the years. Park Golf would give a young greenkeeper the opportunity to hone their skills and this facility would provide the opportunity to learn those skills.
- The intention was to develop Park Golf on the footprint of the former nine-hole pitch and putt course.
- A remedial inspection had been carried out details of which were contained within the report, including some works required to reduce flooding in certain areas but there was no intention to remove trees within the parkland. The remedial work was for drainage and landscaping of the fairways.
- The project team had not finalised the booking system arrangements as yet, however it will be a facility where families could come together and play it as they found it so there is no intention to have a booking system as such.
- It was different from golf where you are naturally hitting a golf ball, so it was safe for families and dog walkers to still to use the park.
- In regard to the clubs and balls required to play the course itself, it was the intention to use the partner that delivered the summer schemes and activities in Castle Park each year, who would hold the equipment so that people could receive and return equipment after use on site. Costs and hire charges had not yet been finalised.

- The duration of opening throughout the year is yet to be finalised but it was likely to be seasonal access for general visitors, with schools and other groups utilising it out of season.
- Council were not doing this for profit and like all other centres it was to be open to all and therefore equipment hire would be kept at low cost to enable people to use the facility.
- There were a significant number of pitch and putt facilities on the island of Ireland, but this would be the first Park Golf facility.
- This could be something that golf clubs in their own right may wish to bolt onto their own golf courses and that this form of golf would gain momentum.
- Nothing was 100% safe and if there was a golf club involved there was a small risk however it was absolutely the safest form of golf. The ball did not fly high and was very light, similar to a tennis ball. There was also only one golf club used meaning only one person could use it at any given time.
- It was envisaged Council would oversee the maintenance of the general area of the park, with RCD bringing the expertise of the green staff to prepare the finer surfaces such as the tees, fairways and the greens.

Mr Patterson stated Council officials were very much looking to progress the project over the next year and whilst there was a lot of work to do, it was hoped the site would be operational by next summer.

In welcoming the project, the Chairperson said it was very important that it be marketed and advertised as it was a very unique selling point that Council was bringing forward.

Councillor Howell left the meeting during the presentation – 6.30pm

AHC/044/2026: PARK GOLF NEWCASTLE

Read: Report from Conor Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding Park Golf, Newcastle. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to approve the development of a Park Golf facility at Island Park, Newcastle, in partnership with Royal County Down Golf Club, as set out within the officer's report and approve to procure and appoint contractors to undertake the necessary site works.**

AHC/045/2025: ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLAN

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding Directorate Business Plans for Active and Healthy Communities. **(Copy circulated)**

In response to a query from the Chairperson regarding the PARs Programme and a target having not been met due to a vacancy, Mr Haughey confirmed a postholder had been appointed.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Campbell it was agreed to approve the Assessment of the AHC Directorate Business Plan 2025-26 and the AHC Directorate Business Plan 2026-27.**

AHC/046/2026: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUM UPDATE

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director: Community Development delivered by Mrs M Flynn regarding District Electoral Area (DEA) Forums Update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Lawlor, it was agreed to note the report and approve the actions in the action sheets attached for:**

- **Slieve Gullion Forum Meeting held on 12 May 2026**
- **Mournes DEA Forum Meeting on 19 May 2026**
- **Newry DEA Forum Meeting held on 21 May 2026**

Councillor Brennan left the meeting at this point – 6.43pm.

AHC/047/2026: SLIEVE GULLION MULTI-SPORTS HUB REVIEW

Read: Report from Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding a review of the Slieve Gullion Multi-Sports Hub. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, it was agreed to note the updated Multi-Sports Facilities Review for Slieve Gullion DEA. It was also agreed to approve Council to enter a partnership agreement with Camlough Community Association, to progress the development of the new Community Centre with multi-sports hall at Camlough Village, utilising the allocated Sports Facility Capital Budget for the Slieve Gullion DEA.**

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Mathers, 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 Campbell, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

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

AHC/048/2026: **FUNDED PROGRAMME DELIVERY**

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director: Community Development, delivered by Mrs M Flynn regarding Funded Programme Delivery. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Howie, seconded by Councillor Finn it was agreed to urgently write to First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Communities Minister, Justice Minister, Finance Minister and Departmental officials for urgent delivery of all the funding referenced within the officers report.**

On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor A King it was agreed to continue with delivery of the funded programmes as detailed in this report to the end of September 2026, pending receipt of Letters of Offer from the Programme Funders (Department for Communities, Department of Justice and The Executive Office).

AHC/049/2026: **COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME – SOCIAL SUPERMARKET**

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director: Community Development, delivered by Mrs M Flynn regarding Community Support Programme, Social Supermarket. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed to proceed with delivery of the Community Support Programme - Social Supermarket Funding as set out in Section 2.2 of the officer's report.**

AHC/050/2026: **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – MEIGH COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director: Community Development, regarding Expression of Interest – Meigh Community Centre. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor A King, it was agreed note the contents of the officer's report and that Expressions of Interest for land at the rear of Meigh Community Centre,**

Dromintee Road, Meigh, Newry - Appendix 1, progress to stage 3 of the Sport and Leasing Policy 2016.

FOR NOTING

AHC/051/2026: PCSP & NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director: Community Development regarding an update on PCSP and Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor it was agreed to note the following:**

- **Minutes of the Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Meeting held on 2 February 2026 and approved on 12 May 2026;**
- **Minutes of the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Meeting held on 18 February 2026 and approved on 20 May 2026;**
- **Minutes of the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting held on 31 March 2026, approved at the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting on 26 May 2026.**

AHC/052/2026: SUMMER ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

Read: Report from Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding the Summer Activity Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Galbraith referred to £1 summer promotions at designated centres stating there was quite a lot of information contained within the brochure and asked if that information could be put out in a simpler format? He also enquired if it was being promoted through social media.

Mr Haughey acknowledged there was a lot being provided right across the District for the five-week period for the summer activity programme including the £1 promotions and that officers could break that down into week by week sections on the Be Active App.

Mr Haughey confirmed it was being promoted.

In response to a query from Councillor Galbraith, Mr Haughey confirmed the £1 swim session promotion applied to those autism swim sessions also.

The Chairperson enquired if those sessions were clearly labelled on the Be Active app as specifically for autism swim sessions. Mr Haughey confirmed they identified as specifically neurodivergent or autism swimming lessons and whilst Council did not process children, they were advertised and booked with coaches and the swim team managing that.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor it was agreed to note the planned Summer Activity Programme for July and August 2026.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.04pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 July 2026.

Signed: _____
Councillor T Howie
Chairperson

Signed: _____
Andrew Patterson
Director Active and Healthy Communities



AGENDA

- OVERVIEW
- VISION AND OBJECTIVES
- EVIDENCE OF DEMAND
- WHAT IS PARK GOLF?
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- Q&A



OVERVIEW

Newcastle is lucky to have one of the finest golf courses in the world, however, the sport has a high barrier to entry for our community and local tourists.

An opportunity exists to build a new, highly accessible and modern facility which strengthens local connection and access to the sport.





VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Drive Participation
Make golf easily accessible to all in the hometown of the #1 course in the World

Community Cohesion
Provide a welcoming facility which promotes health, skill development and connects communities

Reinvigorate Council Land
Build on the foundations of the pitch and putt legacy and Newcastle Tennis Club next door

Boost Tourism
A first of its kind facility in the country and a great addition to Newcastle's bustling amenities

Access for all
Work with schools, retirement homes and other local groups. Provide volunteering opportunitiies

DEMAND



'OFF COURSE 'GOLF IS GROWING FAST

Golf is booming again, fuelled by the rampant growth in easy to access formats. More people play golf off course than on-course in the US



LACK OF LOW-COST GOLF IN THE AREA

The area isn't short of great golf courses but it is short of easy to access facilities. It is difficult to 'try' golf as green fees outprice the majority



SHORTER FORMAT SPORT FOR BUSY LIVES

Other sports like padel have seen a huge surge in popularity (fastest growing sport in the world) due to accessibility and relative time to play



REMOVES INTIMIDATION

Golf can be a difficult sport to start due to the traditions and rules, so many decide not to bother



WHAT IS PARK GOLF?



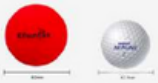
Invented in Japan

First invented due to a chronic shortage of land, most courses are 9 holes with each hole rarely longer than 100 yards.



One club for all shots

Referred to as a 'single' the club is used from tee to green, from tee shots right through to putting. Simplifying the game and accessibility overall.



Bigger, lighter ball

This allows for easier contact with the ball and reduces the distance that the ball travels.



Compact courses

Often found in relatively small strips of land and incorporate artificial surfaces to minimise maintenance required.



Eco friendly and sustainable

Courses are designed to benefit the local area and wildlife - to co-exist and better the area vs taking anything away.



Accessible for all ages

Due to the simplicity of the game, it is ideal for players of all backgrounds and abilities

WHAT IS PARK GOLF?



ENVIRONMENTAL

BIODIVERSITY

WETLAND AREAS

DOG WALKING ACCESS

WILDING AREAS



OPERATIONAL TEAM

PART TIME FACILITY MANAGER (COUNCIL OPERATED)

STEERING GROUP (VOLUNTEERS)

COUNCIL TEAM

ROYAL COUNTY DOWN GREENSTAFF ASSISTANCE

COACHING FROM PGA TEAM AT ROYAL COUNTY DOWN

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

GREENKEEPING EXPERTISE

TRAINING FACILITY (TBC)

SUPPORT GRANT

PARK GOLF SCOTLAND

DUNNIKER COMMUNITY GOLF (MARK CHRISTIE)

INFORMATION, INSIGHTS AND ADVICE FROM EXISTING FACILITY

COMMUNITY PATHWAYS AND PROGRAMS

GOLF IRELAND

SITE VISITS AND ONGOING SUPPORT

FUNDING ADVICE

FUTURE FUNDING ACCESS


THANK YOU

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2025

Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 17 June 2026 at 6.00pm in Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall

Chair:	Councillor M Ruane	
In attendance in Chamber:	Councillor T Andrews	Councillor J Brennan
	Councillor M Hearty	Councillor J Jackson
	Councillor D Murphy	Councillor S O'Hare
	Councillor H Young	
Committee Members in Attendance via Teams:	Councillor P Campbell	Councillor K Feehan
	Councillor H Reilly	Councillor D Taylor
	Councillor J Truesdale	
Non-Committee Members In Attendance via Teams:	Councillor W Clarke	Councillor A Lewis
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/069/2026: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Finn and K Murphy

SE/070/2026: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SE/071/2026: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 MAY 2026

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 20 May 2026. **(Copy circulated)**

Although not on the action sheet, Councillor Jackson enquired about a review of public toilets across the district. The Chairperson advised that officers would revert to him outside the meeting and the matter would be included on the action sheet for the next meeting.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 29 April 2026.**

SE/072/2026 **TO AGREE START TIMES FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP MEETINGS 2026-27**

Read: Proposed Start Times for Sustainability & Environment Committee & Working Group Meetings 2026-2027 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, the start times for Sustainability & Environment Committee & Working Group Meetings 2026-2027 were agreed.**

FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION

SE/073/2025: **OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – WATER COURSES**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Notice of Motion – Water Courses. (**Copy circulated)**

Councillor Truesdale thanked officers for progressing the matter. She acknowledged that, as the work had not been undertaken previously, it involved significant effort but emphasised the importance of identifying all watercourses for which the Council was the riparian owner, given the extent of flooding and delays caused by disputes over responsibility. She expressed the view that, in the longer term, this would save time in determining ownership and support cleaner, free-flowing watercourses discharging to the sea.

She advised that new information received the previous week regarding the weir had been submitted to the Council, DfI and DAERA. However, she noted that the associated retaining walls had remained in the planning system for approximately eighteen months. She reported having made repeated requests for a response from Planning to NIEA without success and stressed that the importance of the weir to Newcastle was being underestimated and residents were increasingly frustrated by the lack of meaningful action.

Councillor Truesdale highlighted that the weir, which connected to the retaining walls via concrete arms, was important for wildlife and fish and maintained a minimum water level in the Shimna River. She warned that failure to address the issue could have serious consequences. She further reported that, in recent months, three geese, a duck and an otter had died in the boating lake. Local anglers attributed this to fermenting debris accumulating due to insufficient water flow and inadequate clearance, leading also to exposed riverbeds and a strong sulphuric odour in warm weather.

While acknowledging the district's geographical challenges, she stressed the need for proactive preparedness rather than reactive responses and noted that it was encouraging to see progress being made.

Mr Sage advising the purpose of the report was to facilitate discussion on the Notice of Motion received and note the ongoing work of Council as detailed in section 2 of the officers' report.

Councillor Andrews welcomed the motion and expressed support for the recommendations.

In response to a query from Councillor Clarke regarding the weir, Mr Sage referred to section 2.3 of the report which noted that officers will continue to engage proactively with DFI Rivers and other stakeholders in order to clarify ownership and associated responsibilities in relation to the weir.

The proposal was put to a vote by way of a show of hands and voting was as follows:

FOR:	13
AGAINST:	0
ABSTENTIONS:	0

The motion was declared carried.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Young, to consider the recommendations of the Notice of Motion and note the ongoing work by Council as detailed in section 2 of the officers' report.**

SE/074/2025: **DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLAN**

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director, Sustainability and Environment, regarding Directorate Business Plans. (**Copy circulated)**

Mrs Murphy presented the report, which provided an overview of 2025/26 activity and the Directorate Business Plan for 2026/27.

Councillor Truesdale noted that the plan demonstrated the extent of work undertaken by the Sustainability and Environment Directorate and welcomed its proactive approach to reducing waste at source, rather than addressing issues after they arose.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, the Assessment of the Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plan 2026-26 and the Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plan 2026-27 were agreed.**

SE/075/2025: **UPDATE REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION - LISLEA MEN'S SHED PROPOSED WILDFOWL & WILDLIFE PRESERVE AT CAMLOUGH LAKE**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Update re Notice of Motion - Lislea Men's Shed proposed Wildfowl & Wildlife Preserve at Camlough Lake. (**Copy circulated)**

Mr Sage advised that the purpose of the report was to provide an update following a site meeting between the Council Sustainability Team and members of Lislea Men's Shed on 22 May 2026 at Camlough Lake, as a follow-up to the Notice of Motion deferred from the Council meeting on 13 April 2026.

Councillor D Murphy proposed to accept the officers' recommendations. He enquired whether the Council had determined ownership of the area opposite the lake known locally as 'The Commons'.

Mr Sage confirmed that ownership had not yet been established and advised this would be investigated, with an update to be brought to a future Committee meeting.

Councillor Young expressed support for the recommendations and described the plans as very impressive.

Councillor Andrews concurred with Councillor Young and commended all those involved in the project.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Andrews, that officers continue to engage with and support the Lislea Men's Shed where possible with the project and bring back a further report to S&E Committee when appropriate.**

SE/076/2025: **BUS SHELTER REQUESTS**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Bus Shelter Requests. (**Copy circulated)**

Mr Sage advised that the purpose of the report was to seek approval for the replacement and relocation of an existing bus shelter at Ballymacarn Road, Spa, and the installation of two new bus shelters at Annacloy Road, Teconnaught. He noted the relocation in Spa was fully funded by the developer, while the two shelters in Teconnaught were to be funded through the capital programme.

Referring to the proposed shelters in Teconnaught, Councillor Brennan stated that the provision was not solely for passenger comfort but also significant health and safety considerations, particularly in relation to pupils crossing the road to access bus services. He advised that he had previously approached Translink regarding the matter but was informed that no funding was available, and welcomed the Council's intervention to bringing the proposal forward.

Councillor Andrews welcomed the proposals and noted many had been lobbying on the matter for some time.

Councillor Lewis thanked officers for the work undertaken, noting that the developer was willing to work with the Council regarding the location of the new shelter in Spa. He highlighted that the relocation of the shelter had been a planning stipulation, with the report issued over a year previously, and suggested a more streamlined process be considered for similar cases in future.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor Andrews, to approve the request to relocate and replace the**

existing shelter at Ballymacarn Road, Spa and for the erection of two new bus shelters at Annacloy Road, Teconnaught.

SE/077/2025: **MARKET STREET CAR PARK, DOWNPATRICK**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Market Street Car Park, Downpatrick. (**Copy circulated)**

Mr Sage advised the purpose of the report was seek approval for use of Market Street car parks and associated spaces in Downpatrick for the Fleadh Cheoil An Dúin and Rallye Lecale in June and July 2026.

Councillor Campbell thanked officers and noted that Rallye Locale would have a significant impact on the town. He added that the Downpatrick Regeneration Working Group had been working towards this since March and welcomed the collaborative efforts across Council departments in delivering the initiative.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Campbell, the request for use of Market Street car parks and associated spaces in Downpatrick for the Fleadh Cheoil An Dúin and Rallye Lecale in June and July 2026 respectively was agreed.**

SE/078/2026: **CONSULTATION FROM WASTE TO WORTH: NORTHERN IRELAND WASTE PREVENTION PROGRAMME**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding DAERA "From Waste to Worth: Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme" Consultation. (**Copy circulated)**

Mrs Trainor advised that the purpose of the report was to seek Committee approval of the Council's response to the consultation as detailed in Appendix 1. She noted the Department had published a Waste Prevention Programme for Northern Ireland, outlining its strategic approach to reducing waste generation and supporting the transition to a circular economy.

Councillor Young welcomed the report and queried if there were plans to provide funding to the National Trust to assist with managing high levels of litter and plastic pollution at Murlough Beach. Mrs Trainor confirmed that this would be examined and that an officer would revert to her outside the meeting.

Councillor O'Hare also welcomed the report. She noted the proposed Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and described it as a positive initiative but highlighted that issues had arisen in the South of Ireland, where a scheme was already in place, including increased and unforeseen costs.

Mrs Trainor responded that Council receive regular updates on the DRS and would take on board all information received from their colleagues in the South of Ireland.

Councillor Andrews expressed support for the recommendations but highlighted the importance of costs being met by central government, not local Councils.

Councillor Reilly referred to Extended Producer Responsibility, describing the Department's proposals as lacking clarity and suggesting that they did not provide a clear structural approach to recycling or delivering tangible benefits. He further noted that some companies utilised anaerobic digestion to generate energy, which the Council could potentially use, and added that all such options would require careful consideration if the Council was to address these issues effectively.

In response to a query from Councillor Reilly regarding income figures from waste, Mrs Murphy advised that, as the matter related to the financial affairs of the Council, the figures would be shared in closed session.

Councillor Truesdale stated that the programme would require a data-led approach, given variations in waste across Council areas, and noted that the transition to new ways of working would involve all stakeholders, including the community and voluntary sector.

She referred to Question 3 of the response document and sought clarification on whether existing kerbside systems, including collection frequency, would be impacted by the DRS and Extended Producer Responsibility. She also asked whether consideration had been given to reintroducing standalone glass collections or bottle banks, and whether the Council was exploring improved arrangements for the disposal of lithium batteries, highlighting concerns about their incorrect disposal in general waste.

Mrs Murphy advised that she would respond further to Councillor Truesdale's query regarding (DRS) and the associated transition. She noted that the removal of DRS materials from existing kerbside collections would impact the composition of recycling waste streams and could affect reported recycling rates, as those materials would be processed separately. She added that the Council would still be required to achieve high recycling rates from the remaining waste stream and that ongoing analysis was informing future collection models.

In relation to glass collections, she advised that the Council currently operated a co-mingled kerbside system, with glass separated and recycled by its contractor and reported through waste data returns. She noted that any potential changes to the collection model would require careful consideration, particularly in light of the Council's response to the *Rethinking Resources* consultation.

Mrs Murphy further advised that the Council received funding through Extended Producer Responsibility and that workstreams were underway, including waste data modelling, to inform future proposals. She indicated that reports would be brought back to Members in the coming months for consideration.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to approve the consultation response as detailed at appendix 1 of the officers' report, on the DAERA "From Waste to Worth – Northern Ireland Waste Prevention Programme", and note the potential future operational and financial implications for local government arising from implementation of waste prevention and circular economy initiatives.**

SE/079/2026: **CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON PROPOSED ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY REFORMS**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment regarding Proposed Animal Welfare Policy Reforms in Northern Ireland. (**Copy circulated)**

Mrs Trainor presented the report, which sought Members' approval for the Council's response to the DAERA public consultation on proposed animal welfare policy reforms in Northern Ireland. She noted that the proposals aimed to strengthen welfare protections for companion animals, including the regulation of rescue and rehoming organisations, revisions to dog licensing fees, restrictions on aversive training devices, and enhanced microchipping requirements.

Councillor Truesdale stated that the public held strong expectations regarding animal welfare standards in Northern Ireland and that Councils would need to meet these through the assumption of additional responsibilities. She noted the limited capacity of the Council's dog warden service, with four wardens covering a large, predominantly rural district.

Councillor Truesdale expressed support for proposals to increase dog licensing fees and to enable full cost recovery for registration and licensing, while noting uncertainties regarding how much projected income this would raise. She also supported the proposed ban on aversive training devices and acknowledged the cross-departmental nature of the proposals.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve the Council's response to the DAERA Consultation on proposed animal welfare policy reforms and that the response as detailed in Appendix 1 of the officers report be submitted to the Department on behalf of NMDDC within the required timeframe, subject to ratification by Council.**

SE/080/2026: **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT FOR DELIVERY OF SERVICES BETWEEN COUNCILS AND THE DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding The Drinking Water Inspectorate Service Level Agreements. (**Copy circulated)**

Mrs Trainor advised that the purpose of the report was to seek Committee approval for the Service Level Agreements between Council and the Drinking Water Inspectorate NI for services provided by the Environmental Health Department, as outlined in Appendix 1. She noted that the previous Service Level Agreement was updated in 2021.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to approve the Service Level Agreements between Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and the Drinking Water Inspectorate for Northern Ireland in relation to services provided by the Council's Environmental Health Department as detailed in the officers' report.**

SE/081/2026: **EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT PLAN 2026-2029**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Education and Enforcement Plan 2026-2029. (**Copy circulated)**

Mrs Trainor advised that the purpose of the report was to present the Council's Education and Enforcement Plan 2026–2029 and to seek Committee approval for its implementation. She explained that the Plan had been developed to provide a structured and measurable framework to improve enforcement outcomes across key environmental issues, including fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling, alongside the promotion of recycling.

She noted that the Plan set out a multi-year programme of work focused on enforcement, education, partnership working, and the use of data and technology, adding that the draft had been considered by the Sustainability and Environment Working Group in May 2026, where Members had reviewed the proposed approach and supported its progression to Committee for approval.

Councillor Young welcomed the Plan and thanked officers for the significant work involved in its preparation, noting the strong focus on the use of data and technology, particularly in light of recent motions brought by Councillors Howie and C King. Councillors Andrews and O'Hare concurred with these remarks.

Councillor O'Hare queried the involvement of schools in the various competitions and programmes and asked whether participation was evenly distributed across the district and sufficiently wide in uptake. She further enquired whether participation could be broadened, suggesting that greater involvement from English and other relevant school departments might assist in increasing engagement.

Mrs Murphy responded that engagement with schools fell across both the Sustainability and Environment sections, and that all schools were included on a database used by Education Officers to distribute programme information. She advised that specific figures on uptake were not available at the time but could be reviewed. She further noted that, in implementing the Plan, consideration could be given to broadening engagement, including targeting specific school departments, and suggested that a consultation exercise could be undertaken prior to rollout.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to approve implementation of the Education and Enforcement Plan 2026-2029 and the proposed programme of actions across enforcement, education, technology and partnership working as outlined within the Plan.**

SE/082/2026: **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FOOD SAFETY PLANS**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Environmental Health, Food Safety Plans. (**Copy circulated)**

Mrs Trainor advised that the purpose of the report was to seek approval for the Food Service Plan 2026–27, the Chemical Sampling Plan 2026–27, and the Food Sampling Policy. She also provided an update on the outcome of the recent Food Standards Agency audit of approved

premises, which recognised the professionalism, diligence and strong performance of the Environmental Health Team, demonstrating their capacity to deliver consistently high standards of food safety regulation under significant work pressures and providing assurance on the effectiveness of this key public protection service.

She further updated Members on the statistical return to the Food Standards Agency for quarters three and four of 2025–26, which showed sustained improvement in performance, with the Council assessed as having a low level of concern, the highest performance category.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor Hearty, it was agreed that Council adopt the Food Service Plan 2026/27, the Chemical Sampling Plan 2026/27 and The Food Sampling Policy.**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, 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 Hearty, 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/083/2026: **NEWRY MARKET REPORT**

Read: Report from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Newry Market Update. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Young, to readvertise an Expression of Interest (EOI) for a third party to assist Council with the revitalisation of Newry Market and that the charges for the Christmas Market remain the same as detailed in section 2.4 of the officers' report.**

SE/084/2026: **BUSINESS CASE FOR FLEET REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME**

Read: Report from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Fleet Procurement Programme 2023-27 – Business Case. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, to approve the recommended options within the Fleet Replacement Business Cases as detailed in section 2.3 of the officers' report.**

SE/085/2026: **SUSTAINABILITY CONTRACTS**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Sustainability Contracts. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jackson, to approve the award of contracts as detailed in Appendix 1 and 2 of the officers' report.**

SE/086/2026: **BUSINESS CASE - FEMININE HYGIENE CONTRACTS**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Business Case for supply of Feminine Hygiene Products. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, to approve the recommendation of the business case as outlined in Section 2.3 of the officers' report.**

SE/087/2026: **BUSINESS CASE – VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Business Case for Maintenance of Ventilation & Air Conditioning Systems. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Andrews, to approve the recommendation of the business case as outlined in Section 2.2 of the officers' report.**

SE/088/2026: **WASTE MANAGEMENT CONTRACTS**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment regarding Waste Management Contracts. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hearty, to approve the contract extensions as outlined in Appendix 1 of the officers' report.**

SE/089/2026: **LOCAL AUTHORITY DEEDS FOR CLOSED LANDFILL SITES**

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment regarding Local Authority Deeds for Closed Landfill Sites. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Brennan, to approve Council entering into Local Authority Performance Deeds with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency in respect of Drumanakelly and Aughnagun landfill sites and provide consent for the Deeds to be signed and sealed in accordance with Council standing orders. It was further agreed to note that this is a statutory requirement to ensure compliance with PPC permit conditions and to support the ongoing management and aftercare obligations associated with these closed landfill sites.**

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

SE/090/2026: **ACTION SHEET AND PRESENTATIONS FROM S&E WORKING GROUP ON WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 2026**

Read: Action Sheet and Presentations From S&E Working Group on Wednesday 20 May 2026. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hearty, to note the documents.**

SE/091/2026: **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN-COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2026 & JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN HELD ON 28 MAY 2026**

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting In-Committee Minutes of Thursday 30 April 2026 & Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin Held On 28 May 2026. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hearty, to note the documents.**

FOR NOTING

SE/092/2026: **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2026**

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting No 104 Minutes Thursday 30 April 2026. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Jackson, to note the document.**

SE/093/2026: **SCHEME OF DELEGATION - REQUESTS FOR USE OF COUNCIL LAND - 1 MARCH 2024 - 31 MAY 2026**

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director: Sustainability and Environment, regarding Scheme of Delegation – requests for use of Council land – 1 March 2024 to 31 May 2026. (**Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Jackson, to note the decisions taken by the Sustainability and Environment Director from 1 March 2026 to 31 May 2026 in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation for Officers.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.59pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 July 2026.

Signed: **Councillor M Ruane**
Chairperson

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

From the Office of the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe
Depairtment o' Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers
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Our Ref: COR-0354-2026
Date: 4 June 2026

Dear Marie

NOTICE OF MOTION – FIRES IN THE MOURNES

Thank you for the letter to the First and deputy First Ministers on 07 May regarding a Notice of Motion that was agreed by Newry Mourne and Down District Council on 05 May 2026. Your correspondence has been passed to me for consideration and a response.

I agree with the concerns expressed by the Council about the impact these fires have had on the Mournes and I have put on record my thanks to the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and other agencies and stakeholders who helped bring the fires under control. I have also urged anyone with information on those responsible for these fires to make that information available to authorities to secure successful prosecutions.

To help to holistically address the wildfire issue, I published an Action Plan on 02 April 2026, to accompany the Wildfires in Northern Ireland Strategic Framework 2025-2030. This Action Plan includes a series of initiatives relating to wildfire preparation, preparedness, response, recovery and enforcement. I thank the Council for the welcome given to these plans. One of the specific actions is to inform stakeholders of funding opportunities that may support wildfire work in NI.

At present, my Department funds a variety of work associated with wildfires through the Environment Fund, including habitat recovery in the Mournes. The Department is also funding the Pau Costa Foundation to develop Wildfire Management and Response Plans through the Carrier Bag Levy. I am aware of other funding sources that are supporting work related to wildfires throughout Northern Ireland such as Peace Plus.

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.

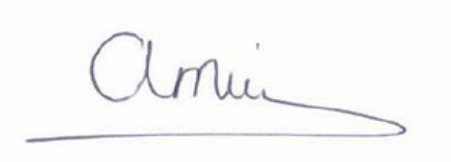
INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Standard

Other funding streams will support environmental land management which may be beneficial such as Farming with Nature Scheme and the Shared Island Funding for peatland restoration projects.

It is however vitally important that we ensure funding for the environment more broadly at both central and local levels is both recognised and prioritised.

The availability of any further funding opportunities will be articulated widely through the Wildfire Stakeholder Forum as they arise.

Yours sincerely



ANDREW MUIR MLA
Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon Hillary Benn MP

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

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Downshire Civic Centre
Downpatrick
BT30 6GQ

Email: Donna.Starkey@nmandd.org

03 June 2026

Your reference: c/057/2026
Our reference: MC/26/256

Dear Marie,

Thank you for your letter of 21 April on behalf of the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council regarding their motion of 13 April regarding the rising cost of fuel and energy prices as a result of the war in Iran. I apologise for the delay in responding.

As you note, the war in Iran is having a very serious impact across the globe. The Prime Minister has been clear that the UK will not be pulled into the conflict, and ministers are focused on supporting those most affected by the rise in energy prices. The Government has taken a number of steps to help.

The Government has provided funding for a comparable offer for the domestic share of the Renewables Obligation between 2026/27 and 2028/29. It is for the Northern Ireland Executive to decide how they would like to deliver such a scheme and, I welcome the Minister for Economy's recent announcement on this.

Further support for home heating oil was announced on 16 March by the Prime Minister and will help households facing immediate energy price increases. We recognise that this is a particular issue in Northern Ireland, and so £17m of the over £50m of support announced is being provided to the Northern Ireland Executive.

Again, I welcome the Executive's recent announcement on how they will use this funding to support the most vulnerable households.

Given the unique circumstances the Government has taken an exceptional approach by not applying the Barnett formula but instead basing proportionate funding on the level of heating oil use across the nations, resulting in the devolved governments receiving almost half of the funding announced on 16 March.

The Chancellor and Secretary of State for Business and Trade announced further support on 15 April regarding the expansion of the British Industrial Competitiveness Scheme (BICS) to cut the energy bills in Great Britain.

The BICS, which was announced in the Industrial Strategy last June, will reduce electricity costs by c.£35-40/MWh for thousands of businesses. The scheme will benefit manufacturing electricity intensive frontier industries, such as automotive and aerospace, and foundational manufacturing industries in their supply chains, such as chemicals.

The final design of the BICS means the scheme will be expanded to cover an extra 3,000 businesses. Bills will be cut by up to 25% for over 10,000 manufacturers from April 2027, with no increase to household and business energy bills. The BICS is to be expanded by 40%, with one-off additional payments in 2027 rolled out to an extra 3,000 businesses and to cover support firms would have received from April 2026.

I am pleased to confirm that the UK Government will provide the Northern Ireland Executive with equivalent funding to develop a comparable scheme in Northern Ireland, subject to business case approval. Department of Business and Trade officials are taking forward discussions on this scheme with Executive counterparts.

On 21 May, the Chancellor announced a new package of temporary and targeted support to help support businesses most exposed to the crisis and ease cost of living pressures. The Government will cancel planned rises in fuel duty later this year, freezing the main rate until next year. Thanks to the decisions of this government, fuel duty is as low now as it has been at any point for over 16 years and is substantially lower in real terms.

Alongside this, the government will provide targeted help for those most exposed to fuel costs, including farmers, the haulage sector, and around 2 million employees and 1 million self-employed people who drive for work, saving up to £145 a year for someone doing around 6,000 business miles. The Government will continue to monitor prices closely and consider further action if levels increase significantly.

From 15 June to 1 September, the Government will also temporarily reduce VAT on eligible summer attractions by three quarters to 5%, helping to lower the costs of family activities such as children's cinema tickets and a wider range of attractions.

This relief is temporary and targeted at families with children, helping household budgets while also supporting footfall for local businesses over the summer months.

The Government is also providing targeted support of £350m to the chemicals sector and a further £120m to the ceramics sector to support the increased efficiency and decarbonisation of these sectors. This is just a first step, and we want to work with industry to understand how we can work together to ensure we make the critical inputs our economy requires in the UK.

The Government is also launching a business engagement exercise, with a view to making further targeted cuts to agri-food tariffs, suspending tariffs on 125 types of products which will impact prices of staple goods that families across the UK buy every week.

To help tackle those who seek to benefit from the current climate, the Government is equipping the Competition and Markets Authority, and other regulators, with new, focused investigatory powers to detect and crack down on price gouging. When a major supply shock hits, these powers will help them to spot trouble early, move faster, and protect consumers from harm.

Furthermore, the Government is reforming the foreign branches exemption, a rule that allows companies to offset overseas losses, so multinationals can't use it to reduce the tax they pay in the UK. This will ensure profits made here are properly taxed. We expect these reforms to raise hundreds of millions a year and fund the package of measures set out.

As the Chancellor has set out, a rapid de-escalation in the Middle East remains the best way to keep prices low at the pump, but the Government will also take the necessary decisions to help families with the cost of living and protect the public finances. As with all taxes, the Government keeps fuel duty under review;

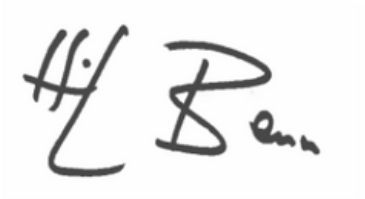
The Chancellor has also asked the Competition and Markets Authority to be vigilant in ensuring that in no part of our economy, including essentials like road fuel and red diesel, are people exploiting the current crisis to make excess profits at consumers' expense.

Considerable additional resources have been made available to the Executive for the current Spending Review period. The Government is providing the Executive with a record £19.3bn per year on average funding settlement over the Spending Review period, the largest in the history of devolution. In addition to this the Government announced £370m in additional funding at the Budget and a further £388m in Barnett Consequentials was announced by the Chancellor on Tuesday 3 March. It is for the Executive to best consider how they use this funding and how best to support households affected by rising energy costs.

As you can see from the above measures, the Government is taking steps to support households and businesses across the UK amidst the rising cost of energy. HM

Treasury will continue to monitor the situation, and as the Chancellor has set out, any further support will be targeted at those who need it most.

Yours sincerely,



RT HON HILARY BENN MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND