



February 26th, 2021

**Notice Of Meeting**

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 1st March 2021** at **6:00 pm** in **Microsoft Teams**.

# Agenda

## 1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

## 2.0 Declarations of Interest

### *Striking the Rate*

### 3.0 To set a District Rate for the Financial Year 2021/22 as required under section 3 of the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011, as amended by The Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.

📎 *Council Report re District Rate 2021-22 -final.pdf*

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#### App 1 Medium Term Financial Plan

📎 *Appendix 1.pdf*

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#### App 2 Capital Strategy Report 2021-22

📎 *Appendix 2.pdf*

*Page 6*

#### App 3 Four Year Capital Programme

📎 *Appendix 3.pdf*

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#### App 4 Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021-22

📎 *NMDDC\_Treasury-Management-Strategy-2021-22 - Appendix 4.pdf*

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#### App 5 Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2021-22

📎 *NMDDC\_Minimum Revenue Provision-Statement-2021-22 - Appendix 5.pdf*

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### ***FOR NOTING Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014***

#### App 6 Action Sheets of meetings of Strategic Finance Working Group to consider rate setting process 2021-22

📎 *Action Sheets of meetings of Strategic Finance Working Group to consider rate setting process 2021-22.pdf* **Not included**

### *For Noting*

## **4.0 Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 1 February 2021**

 [Action Sheet Council Meeting 01 02 2021.pdf](#)

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### ***Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing***

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## **5.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 1 February 2021**

 [Council Minutes-01-02-2021.pdf](#)

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## **6.0 Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 25 January 2021**

 [Minutes - Sp Council 25-01-2021.pdf](#)

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## **7.0 Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 17 February 2021**

 [Special Council Meeting 17-02-2021.pdf](#)

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### ***Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption***

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## **8.0 Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 8 February 2021**

 [ERT Minutes 08 Feb 2021.pdf](#)

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## **9.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 11 February 2021**

 [Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Minutes 11022021.pdf](#)

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## **10.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 15 February 2021**

 [Active and Healthy Communities Committee 150221.pdf](#)

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## **11.0 Minutes of Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on 17 February 2021**

 [Neighbourhood Services Committee Minutes - 17-02-2021.pdf](#)

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## **12.0 Planning Section**

There were no issues referred from the Planning Committee Meeting held on 10 February 2021.

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## Correspondence

### 13.0 Northern Ireland Housing Council Bulletin February 2021

Copy attached.

 *Housing Council Members Bulletin - February 2021.pdf*

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### 14.0 Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes 14 January 2021

Copy attached.


 *Housing Council Minutes 14 January 2021.pdf*

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### 15.0 Local Government Boundaries Commissioner for Northern Ireland re: Local Government Boundaries Review in Northern Ireland

Correspondence dated 3 February 2021 attached.

 *LGBC Letter 3 February 2021.pdf*

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### 16.0 Minister for Infrastructure re: Gruggandoo Wind Farm

Correspondence dated 21 December 2020 attached.

 *Minister for Infrastructure - Gruggandoo Wind Farm.pdf*

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### 17.0 Northern Ireland Assembly re: Protection from Stalking Bill

Correspondence dated 19 February 2021 attached.

 *NI Assembly - Protection from Stalking Bill.PDF*

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## Conferences/Events

### 18.0 Northern Ireland Housing Council Conference: 15 April 2021

This is an online conference to be held on Thursday 15 April 2021.

The cost is £145 +VAT per delegate.

Conference details attached,

 *Northern Ireland Housing Online Conference 2021.pdf*

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## **19.0 Notice of Motion - Trade Border - removed from agenda**

## **20.0 Notice of Motion - Covid Disruption Payment for all Students**

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Clarke:

“That this Council welcomes the recent announcement of a £500 Covid Disruption payment for students studying full-time Higher Education courses; notes the exclusion of full-time students studying Further Education courses and students studying Higher Education courses in the south of Ireland or in Britain is unfair; acknowledges the difficulty of part time students facing financial hardship also needs to be addressed; and calls on the Minister for the Economy to address the inequalities and ensure that all students who are currently excluded from the Covid Disruption Payment receive the £500 payment”

## **21.0 Notice of Motion - Citizenship for undocumented Irish living in America**

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Ó Muirí:

“This Council recognizing the ongoing plight of the thousands of undocumented Irish living in America, many of whom are from this Council region, urges President Biden to prioritise legislation to create a roadmap to citizenship for them and all those classed as undocumented”.

## **22.0 Notice of Motion - Covid 19, Mental Health**

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Howell:

“This Council recognises the impact that Covid-19 has had on the mental health and well-being of children, young people and families. With this in mind our DEA Forums and coordinators should engage with stakeholders and prioritise allocation of funding for mental health, well-being and support initiatives for these affected groups”.

# Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Patrick Brown

Cllr Robert Burgess

Cllr Pete Byrne

Mrs Dorinnia Carville

Cllr charlie casey

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Dermot Curran

Ms Alice Curran

Cllr Laura Devlin

Mr Eoin Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Sean Doran

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Aoife Finnegan

Cllr Hugh Gallagher

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Mr Conor Haughey

Mrs Janine Hillen

Cllr Roisin Howell

Mr Colum Jackson

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr Alan Lewis

Mr Michael Lipsett

Mrs Regina Mackin

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Gavin Malone

Cllr Cathy Mason

Mr Johnny Mc Bride

Colette McAteer

Cllr Declan McAteer

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Jonathan McGilly

Cllr Harold McKee

Patricia McKeever

Cllr Karen McKevitt

Cllr Andrew McMurray  
.....  
Catrina Miskelly  
.....  
Mr Ken Montgomery  
.....  
Ms Carmel Morgan  
.....  
Cllr Roisin Mulgrew  
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Cllr Barra Ó Muirí  
.....  
Mr Fearghal O'Connor  
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Linda O'Hare  
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Cllr Gerry O'Hare  
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Cllr Kathryn Owen  
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Mr Andy Patterson  
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Cllr Henry Reilly  
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Ms Alison Robb  
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Cllr Michael Ruane  
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Cllr Michael Savage  
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Mr Kevin Scullion  
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin  
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Donna Starkey  
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Cllr Gary Stokes  
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Sarah Taggart  
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Paul Tamati  
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Cllr David Taylor  
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly  
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Cllr John Trainor  
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Cllr William Walker  
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Mrs Marie Ward  
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| <b>Report to:</b>                                   | <b>Council</b>   |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>                             | 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2021   |
| <b>Subject:</b>                                     | <b>District Rate 2021-22</b>   |
| <b>Reporting Officer<br/>(Including Job Title):</b> | Marie Ward, Chief Executive<br>Dorinnia Carville, Director of Corporate Services |
| <b>Contact Officer<br/>(Including Job Title):</b>   | Ken Montgomery, Assistant Director of Finance                                    |

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

|                     |          |                        |  |
|---------------------|----------|------------------------|--|
| <b>For decision</b> | <b>x</b> | <b>For noting only</b> |  |
|---------------------|----------|------------------------|--|

Members are asked to approve the recommendations at 3.1 below.

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>1.0</b> | <b>Purpose and Background</b>   |
| 1.1        | <p>The Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that a Council shall fix by 15 February, for the next financial, the amount estimated to be required to be raised by means of rates made by the Council.</p> <p>Due to the impact of COVID, the statutory date has been amended for the 2021 year. The Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 were made on 12 February 2021, which extended the date to strike the rate to 1 March 2021.</p>  |
| <b>2.0</b> | <b>Key issues</b>   |
| 2.1        | <p><b>Chief Executive's submission to Council on the adequacy of the Council's reserves position and robustness of the revenue estimates.</b></p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the Chief Executive, as Chief Financial Officer is required to provide assurance to Members on the robustness of the revenue estimates and the adequacy of the Council's reserves position as part of the rate setting process.</p> <p>Detailed estimates have been formulated, presented and scrutinised by members via the Strategic Finance Group meetings. These have taken into account past outturn, current spending plans and likely future demand and pressures.</p> <p><b>Significant uncertainties highlighted by the Chief Executive</b></p> <p><b>Future impact of COVID</b></p> <p>The current year has been unprecedented. The impact of COVID has significantly impacted on Council's operations and finances in the current year. The future impact of COVID on operations, on our rate base and on our finances is uncertain, and many assumptions are included in our budgets for 2021-22 (see 2.2).</p> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>In addition here are a number of other significant uncertainties within the current estimates:</p> <p><b>Draft budget at NI Executive level</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NI Executive is currently determining a budget for NI for 2021-22 with a draft budget out for consultation. In the absence of an agreed and legislated budget, there are some significant uncertainties which remain at the time of striking the district rate.</li> <li>• Included within our 2021-22 estimates are various areas of funding received from central government. We have included amounts on the basis of our previous arrangements with central government. However, it is important to note that until such times as a budget is agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive these funding streams are uncertain.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rates Support Grant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councils have been advised of the percentage allocations of Rates Support Grant being made available by the DfC for 2021-22. However until a draft budget is agreed, the total amount of Rates Support Grant to be awarded to the local government sector is not yet confirmed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Uncertainties surrounding Brexit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various uncertainties remain as to the impact of Brexit on the NI Economy and NMDDC rate base and funding streams, and no provision has been made in the estimates for any financial implications arising. Furthermore, included within our 2021-22 estimates are various areas of funding received from the European Union under programmes which we have been advised will continue during the 2021-22 year.</li> </ul> <p>I am satisfied that the estimates presented, subject to the significant uncertainties noted above, should provide adequate financial resources to support the running costs of the Council for 2021-22 and that reasonable consideration of the financial risks to the Council as known to us have been made in the preparation of the estimates.</p> <p>The minimum prudent level of reserves that the Council should maintain is a matter of judgement. CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) guidance does not set a statutory minimum level but advised Councils to have reserves appropriate to meet your medium term financial commitments. Therefore, it is up to the Council itself, taking into account all the relevant local circumstances, to make a professional judgement on what the appropriate level of reserves and balances should be.</p> <p>The Strategic Finance Working Group have proposed the establishment of two new reserves which focus on the long term recovery of the district from the impact of COVID, and also serves to protect the financial viability of the Council and the ratepayer of the district from any longer term economic impacts of the pandemic.</p> |
|--|---|

|            |   |
|------------|---|
|            | <p>Following the establishment of these reserves, the general fund reserve of Council is expected to be in the region of £13m at 1 April 2021, representing around 21% of its gross expenditure.</p> <p>I am therefore content that the current reserves held by the Council are adequate.</p>  |
| 2.2        | <p><b>Key factors contributing to proposed rate increase in 2021-22</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of COVID will continue to affect Council services in 2021-22, with assumptions made and included within budgets as to legislative restrictions that will continue to impact on Council's ability to deliver services.</li> <li>• A 2% pay increase for Local Government employees has been estimated and included in budgets for the 2020-21 year.</li> <li>• The increased tonnages and associated costs of waste and recycling across the district as a result of the COVID pandemic has been estimated to continue into 2021-22 and is included in the budgets.</li> <li>• DfC have advised NMDDC on our percentage RSG allocation, and further advised of the total amount of RSG in the draft budget for the 2021-22 year. Included in budgets is an assumption that the RSG allocation will be in accordance with the draft budget.</li> <li>• The assumption that Councils will continue to receive financial assistance from Central Government in 2021-22 in relation to the impact of COVID on income levels have been made and included in budgets.</li> </ul> |
| <b>3.0</b> | <b>Recommendations</b>  |
| 3.1        | <p>Members are asked to approve the considerations and recommendations of the Strategic Finance Working Group in relation to the 2021-22 rate setting process (see Appendix 6) and, having regard to the Chief Executive's statement as required by the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 (see 2.1 above):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Approve an increase in the district rate for 2021-22 of 1.59% based on an estimated penny product of 2,520,986 meaning a non-domestic rate of 23.9970 pence and a domestic rate of 0.4067 pence;</b></li> <li>2. Approve the establishment of two new reserves of Council, namely a COVID Revitalisation reserve and an Economic Recovery reserve.</li> <li>3. Approve the Medium Term Financial plan and authorise the 2021-22 expenditure included in the estimates (Appendix 1);</li> <li>4. Approve the Capital Strategy Report for 2021-22 as required by the CIPFA Prudential Code. (See Appendix 2);</li> <li>5. Approve the capital programme (see Appendix 3);</li> <li>6. Approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021-22 (see Appendix 4);</li> </ol>  |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
|            | <p>7. Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2021-22 (see Appendix 5).</p> <p>8. Note the action sheets of the Strategic Finance Working Group relating to the rate setting process. (see Appendix 6 : Restricted item)</p>   |
| <b>4.0</b> | <b>Resource implications</b>   |
| 4.1        | Resource implications are as detailed in the appendices.   |
| <b>5.0</b> | <b>Equality and good relations implications</b>  |
| 5.1        | No equality or good relations implications have been identified.   |
| <b>6.0</b> | <b>Rural Proofing implications</b>   |
| 6.1        | Due regard to rural needs has been considered in making the recommendation.  |
| <b>7.0</b> | <b>Appendices</b>  |
|            | <p>Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Plan</p> <p>Appendix 2: Capital Strategy Report 2021-22</p> <p>Appendix 3: Four Year Capital Programme</p> <p>Appendix 4: Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021-22</p> <p>Appendix 5: Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2021-22</p> <p>Appendix 6: Action Sheets of meetings of Strategic Finance Working Group to consider rate setting process 2021-22 [Restricted item].</p> |
| <b>8.0</b> | <b>Background documents</b>  |
|            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011</li> </ul>   |



Net Spend per figs as listed



## Appendix 2

### Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

### Capital Strategy Report 2021/22

#### Introduction

This capital strategy report gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It has been written in an accessible style to enhance members' understanding of these, sometimes technical areas.

Decisions made this year on capital and treasury management will have financial consequences for the Authority for many years into the future. They are therefore subject to both a national regulatory framework and to local policy framework, summarised in this report.

#### Capital Expenditure and Financing

Capital expenditure is where the Authority spends money on assets, such as property or vehicles, that will be used for more than one year. In local government this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and loans and grants to other bodies enabling them to buy assets. The Authority has some limited discretion on what counts as capital expenditure, for example assets costing below £5k are not capitalised and are charged to revenue in year.

In 2021/22, the Authority is planning capital expenditure of £18.3m as summarised below:

*Table 1: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure in £ millions*

|                       | 2019/20<br>actual | 2020/21<br>forecast | 2021/22<br>budget | 2022/23<br>budget | 2023/24<br>budget |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| General Fund services | 10.7              | 14.5                | 18.3              | 21.1              | 20.4              |

The main General Fund capital projects in 2021/22 include Village Action Plans £3.3m, Vehicles, IT and Equipment £3.4m and Residual Waste Treatment Project £2.0m.

**Governance:** Service managers prepare business cases on projects annually in September/October which are included in the Authority's capital programme. Projections are collated by the Corporate Finance Department who calculate the financing cost (which can be nil if the project is fully externally financed). The Council's Finance Working Group appraises all projects based on a comparison of service priorities against financing costs and makes recommendations to Council. The final capital programme is then agreed by full Council at a special meeting to ratify the Council's Four Year Plan in February each year (in March 2021 due to Covid).

All capital expenditure must be financed, either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Authority's own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing and Private Finance Initiative). The planned financing of the above expenditure is as follows:

*Table 2: Capital financing in £ millions*

|                   | 2019/20<br>actual | 2020/21<br>forecast | 2021/22<br>budget | 2022/23<br>budget | 2023/24<br>budget |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| External sources  | 2.1               | 4.0                 | 4.4               | 4.7               | 4.8               |
| Capital resources | -                 | 0.1                 | 0.1               | 1.0               | 1.3               |
| Revenue resources | -1.4              | 6.4                 | 3.8               | 0.4               | -0.7              |
| Debt              | 10.0              | 4.0                 | 10.0              | 15.0              | 15.0              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>10.7</b>       | <b>14.5</b>         | <b>18.3</b>       | <b>21.1</b>       | <b>20.4</b>       |

Debt is only a temporary source of finance, since loans and leases must be repaid, and this is therefore replaced over time by other financing, usually from revenue which is known as minimum revenue provision (MRP). Alternatively, proceeds from selling capital assets (known as capital receipts) may be used to replace debt finance. Planned MRP and use of capital receipts are as follows:

*Table 3: Replacement of debt finance in £ millions*

|                   | 2019/20<br>actual | 2020/21<br>forecast | 2021/22<br>budget | 2022/23<br>budget | 2023/24<br>budget |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Capital resources | -                 | 0.1                 | 0.1               | 1.0               | 1.3               |
| Revenue resources | 6.1               | 4.9                 | 5.8               | 6.2               | 6.7               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>6.1</b>        | <b>5.0</b>          | <b>5.9</b>        | <b>7.2</b>        | <b>8.0</b>        |

The Authority's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP and capital receipts used to replace debt. The CFR is expected to increase by £8m during 2021/22. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Authority's estimated CFR is as follows:

*Table 4: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions*

|                  | 31.3.2020<br>actual | 31.3.2021<br>forecast | 31.3.2022<br>budget | 31.3.2023<br>budget | 31.3.2024<br>budget |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>TOTAL CFR</b> | <b>92.3</b>         | <b>97.8</b>           | <b>105.7</b>        | <b>115.0</b>        | <b>122.6</b>        |

**Asset management:** To ensure that capital assets continue to be of long-term use, the Authority has an asset management strategy in place.

**Asset disposals:** When a capital asset is no longer needed, it may be sold so that the proceeds, known as capital receipts, can be spent on new assets or to repay debt. Repayments of capital grants, loans and investments also generate capital receipts. The Authority plans to receive £0.1m of capital receipts in the coming financial year as follows:

*Table 5: Capital receipts receivable in £ millions*

|             | 2019/20<br>actual | 2020/21<br>forecast | 2021/22<br>budget | 2022/23<br>budget | 2023/24<br>budget |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Asset sales | -                 | 0.1                 | 0.1               | 1.0               | 1.3               |

## Treasury Management

Treasury management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Authority's spending needs, while managing the risks involved. Surplus cash is invested until required, while a shortage of cash will be met by borrowing, to avoid excessive credit balances or overdrafts in the bank current account. The Authority is typically cash rich in the short-term as revenue income is received before it is spent, but cash poor in the long-term as capital expenditure is incurred before being financed. The revenue cash surpluses are offset against capital cash shortfalls to reduce overall borrowing.

Due to decisions taken in the past, the Authority currently has £74.1m borrowing at an average interest rate of 5.69% and £9.8m treasury investments at an average rate of 0.02%.

**Borrowing strategy:** The Authority's main objective when borrowing is to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Authority therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheap short-term loans (currently available at around 0.10%) and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher (currently 1.5 to 2.5%).

Projected levels of the Authority's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing, PFI liabilities, leases and transferred debt) are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement (see above).

*Table 6: Prudential Indicator: Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions*

|                               | 31.3.2020<br>actual | 31.3.2021<br>forecast | 31.3.2022<br>budget | 31.3.2023<br>budget | 31.3.2024<br>budget |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Debt (incl. PFI & leases)     | 74.8                | 74.1                  | 79.6                | 89.9                | 100.0               |
| Capital Financing Requirement | 92.3                | 97.8                  | 105.7               | 115.0               | 122.6               |

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short-term. As can be seen from table 6, the Authority expects to comply with this in the medium term.

**Liability benchmark:** To compare the Authority's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £1m at each year-end. This benchmark is currently £89.0m and is forecast to rise to £116.1m over the next four years.

*Table 7: Borrowing and the Liability Benchmark in £ millions*

|                       | 31.3.2020<br>actual | 31.3.2021<br>forecast | 31.3.2022<br>budget | 31.3.2023<br>budget | 31.3.2024<br>budget |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Outstanding borrowing | 74.8                | 74.1                  | 79.6                | 89.9                | 100.0               |
| Liability benchmark   | 89.0                | 87.3                  | 95.2                | 106.2               | 116.1               |

The table shows that the Authority expects to remain borrowed below its liability benchmark

**Affordable borrowing limit:** The Authority is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the authorised limit for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower "operational boundary" is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

*Table 8: Prudential Indicators: Authorised limit and operational boundary for external debt in £m*

|                                  | 2020/21<br>limit | 2021/22<br>limit | 2022/23<br>limit | 2023/24<br>limit |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Authorised limit - borrowing     | 128.0            | 114.2            | 124.0            | 132.1            |
| Operational boundary - borrowing | 119.5            | 105.7            | 115.0            | 122.6            |

- Further details on borrowing are included in the treasury management strategy.

**Treasury investment strategy:** Treasury investments arise from receiving cash before it is paid out again. Investments made for service reasons or for pure financial gain are not generally considered to be part of treasury management.

The Authority's policy on treasury investments is to prioritise security and liquidity over yield, that is to focus on minimising risk rather than maximising returns. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, for example with the government, other local authorities or selected high-quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss. Both near-term and longer-term investments may be held in pooled funds, where an external fund manager makes decisions on which particular investments to buy and the Authority may request its money back at short notice.

*Table 9: Treasury management investments in £millions*

|                       | 31.3.2020<br>actual | 31.3.2021<br>forecast | 31.3.2022<br>budget | 31.3.2023<br>budget | 31.3.2024<br>budget |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Near-term investments | 0.8                 | 5.0                   | 2.0                 | 2.0                 | 2.0                 |

- Further details on treasury investments are included in the treasury management strategy.

**Risk management:** The effective management and control of risk are prime objectives of the Authority's treasury management activities. The treasury management strategy therefore sets out various indicators and limits to constrain the risk of unexpected losses and details the extent to which financial derivatives may be used to manage treasury risks.

**Governance:** Decisions on treasury management investment and borrowing are made daily and are therefore delegated to the Director of Corporate Services and finance staff, who must act in line with the treasury management strategy approved by council. Bi-annual reports on treasury management activity are presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

### Revenue Budget Implications

Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue, offset by any investment income receivable. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from rates and general government grants.

*Table 10: Prudential Indicator: Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream*

|                                  | 2019/20<br>actual | 2020/21<br>forecast | 2021/22<br>budget | 2022/23<br>budget | 2023/24<br>budget |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Financing costs (£m)             | 8.3               | 7.1                 | 8.0               | 8.5               | 9.2               |
| Proportion of net revenue stream | 13.9%             | 11.2%               | 11.7%             | 12.5%             | 13.1%             |

**Sustainability:** Due to the very long-term nature of capital expenditure and financing, the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred in the next few years will extend for up to 40 years into the future. The Director of Corporate Services is satisfied that the proposed capital programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable.

### **Knowledge and Skills**

The Authority employs professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions.

Where Authority staff do not have the knowledge and skills required, use is made of external advisers and consultants that are specialists in their field. The Authority currently employs Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers. This approach is more cost effective than employing such staff directly and ensures that the Authority has access to knowledge and skills commensurate with its risk appetite.



N.M.D.D.C. Capital Programme 2021 - 2024

11

| Description   | Directorate | AD | TYPE           | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2022/2023 | 2023/2024 | Total   | Income/Grant | Net Budget |
|---|-------------|----|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------|------------|
| Ballykinler Community Centre                              | AHC         | JH | Community      | 70,000    | 1,000     |           |           | 71,000  |              | 71,000     |
| Renewable Energy Projects                                 | AHC         | JH | Community      | 98,000    | 50,000    | 50,000    | 50,000    | 248,000 |              | 248,000    |
| Community Centre Enhancements                             | AHC         | JH | Community      | 50,000    | 50,000    | 50,000    | 50,000    | 200,000 |              | 200,000    |
| Community Engagement Capital Build - Financial Assistance | AHC         | JH | Community      | 381,000   | 275,000   |           |           | 656,000 |              | 656,000    |
| 16 The Square Rostrevor Refurbishment                     | AHC         | JH | Community      | 350,000   | 165,000   |           |           | 515,000 |              | 515,000    |
| Wi-Fi Community Centres                                   | AHC         | JH | Community      | 40,000    | 55,000    | 0         |           | 95,000  |              | 95,000     |
| Derrybegs Path Way BMX Trail SEUPB                        | AHC         | JH | Community      | 50,000    |           |           |           | 50,000  | -50,000      | 0          |
| Pitches- REFCUS (SIF)                                     | AHC         | JH | Community      | 670,500   |           | 27,000    |           | 697,500 | -547,500     | 150,000    |
| RDP - Match Funding Various Capital Schemes               | AHC         | JH | Community      | 225,000   | 75,000    | 0         |           | 300,000 |              | 300,000    |
| Camlough Community Centre                                 | AHC         | JH | Community      | 0         | 50,000    | 0         |           | 50,000  |              | 50,000     |
| Warrenpoint Community Centre                              | AHC         | JH | Community      | 50,000    | 100,000   |           |           | 150,000 |              | 150,000    |
| Newry - Albert Basin Park ( Consultancy 2nd Access)       | AHC         | ML |                | 130,000   |           |           |           | 130,000 |              | 130,000    |
| Kilkeel L. C. -H & Sfty Works                             | AHC         | PT | Leisure Centre | 0         | 980,000   |           |           | 980,000 |              | 980,000    |

## N.M.D.D.C. Capital Programme 2021 - 2024

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| Description   | Directorate | AD | TYPE           | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2022/2023 | 2023/2024 | Total   | Income/Grant | Net Budget |
|---|-------------|----|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------|------------|
| Sport N.I. Your School<br>Your Club Projects(100% funded) | AHC         | PT | Leisure Centre | 53,177    |           |           |           | 53,177  | -53,177      | 0          |
| Newcastle<br>Centre/Tropicana                             | AHC         | PT | Leisure Centre | 70,000    | 180,000   |           |           | 250,000 |              | 250,000    |
| Newcastle Centre &<br>Kilkeel - Wi Fi Indoor<br>Leisure   | AHC         | PT | Tourism        | 43,500    |           |           |           | 43,500  |              | 43,500     |
| Derryleckagh Complex<br>Football Pitch                    | AHC         | PT | Playing Fields |           | 52,350    |           |           | 52,350  |              | 52,350     |
| Derryleckagh Soccer<br>Pavillion                          | AHC         | PT | Playing Fields |           |           | 0         | 250,000   | 250,000 |              | 250,000    |
| Community Walking Trails                                  | AHC         | PT | Sports         | 823,265   | 100,000   |           |           | 923,265 | -548,069     | 375,196    |
| Kilkeel Bowling Pavillion                                 | AHC         | PT | Playing Fields | 0         | 180,000   | 0         |           | 180,000 |              | 180,000    |
| Newry Tennis Courts                                       | AHC         | PT | Tennis Courts  | 25,000    |           |           |           | 25,000  |              | 25,000     |
| Playpark Signage  | AHC         | PT | Playgrounds    | 0         | 60,000    | 30,000    | 0         | 90,000  |              | 90,000     |
| Kilbroney Pitches   | AHC         | PT | Sports         | 20,000    | 40,000    |           |           | 60,000  |              | 60,000     |
| Jennings Park   | AHC         | PT | Playing Fields | 140,000   | 10,000    |           |           | 150,000 | 0            | 150,000    |
| Newry L.C.Disabled<br>Parking                             |             | PT | Leisure Centre | 29,925    |           |           |           | 29,925  | -29,925      | 0          |
| Donard Pk -Car park Ext.<br>TBC                           | AHC         | PT | Car parks      | 20,000    | 230,000   |           |           | 250,000 |              | 250,000    |
| Derrybegs Path Way Trail<br>Funding                       | AHC         | PT | Amenity        | 50,000    |           |           |           | 50,000  | 0            | 50,000     |
| Clanyre Park Amenity Site<br>New Paths                    | AHC         | PT | Amenity        | 25,000    |           |           |           | 25,000  |              | 25,000     |

## N.M.D.D.C. Capital Programme 2021 - 2024

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| Description  | Directorate | AD        | TYPE                   | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2022/2023        | 2023/2024 | Total              | Income/Grant | Net Budget         |
|--|-------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Milburn Football Club                                    | AHC         | PT        | Playing Fields         | 50,000    |           |                  |           | 50,000             |              | 50,000             |
| Play Areas -New Equipment                                | AHC         | PT        | Playing Fields         | 40,000    | 35,000    | 25,000           | 25,000    | 125,000            |              | 125,000            |
| Meigh Amenity Site                                       | AHC         | PT        | Amenity                | 20,000    |           |                  |           | 20,000             |              | 20,000             |
| Play Strategy  | AHC         | PT        | Playing Fields         | 154,000   | 282,667   | 436,667          | 436,666   | 1,310,000          | 0            | 1,310,000          |
| Tennis Bubble Newry                                      | AHC         | PT        | Tennis Courts          | 263,896   |           |                  |           | 263,896            | -123,896     | 140,000            |
| Sports Facility Stgy - Financial Assistance              | AHC         | PT        | Sports                 | 0         | 301,000   |                  |           | 301,000            |              | 301,000            |
| Bann Road Car Parking - Additional spaces and Pavillion  | AHC         | PT        | Playing Fields         | 295,000   |           |                  |           | 295,000            |              | 295,000            |
| Islands Park N'Castle Paths                              | AHC         | PT        | Sports                 |           | 10,000    |                  |           | 10,000             |              | 10,000             |
| Rock Pool  | AHC         | PT        | Leisure Centre         |           | 50,000    |                  |           | 50,000             |              | 50,000             |
| Dundrum Playing Field - Car Parking and Pavillion        | AHC         | PT        | Playing Fields         |           | 115,000   |                  |           | 115,000            |              | 115,000            |
| Sports Dev Strategy & S Hubs                             | AHC         | PT        | Sports                 |           | 200,000   |                  |           | 200,000            |              | 200,000            |
| Milltown Sports Pavillion Planning - I.T. System         | AHC<br>ERT  | PT<br>AMK | Playing Fields<br>I.T. | 131,000   | 649,000   | 250,000<br>7,000 | 8,000     | 250,000<br>795,000 |              | 250,000<br>795,000 |
| Delamont - Various Schemes                               | ERT         | AP        | Tourism                | 50,000    | 10,000    |                  |           | 60,000             |              | 60,000             |
| Ballykinler Hut Project                                  | ERT         | AP        | Heritage               | 65,000    | 150,000   |                  |           | 215,000            | -150,000     | 65,000             |
| Camlough Lake - Recreational Hub                         | ERT         | AP        | Tourism                | 10,000    | 190,000   |                  |           | 200,000            |              | 200,000            |
| Forest Parks Development ( REFCUS)Narnia &Mt Bike Trails | ERT         | AP        | Tourism                | 120,000   | 70,000    |                  |           | 190,000            |              | 190,000            |



N.M.D.D.C. Capital Programme 2021 - 2024

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| Description   | Directorate | AD  | TYPE         | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2022/2023  | 2023/2024  | Total      | Income/Grant | Net Budget |
|---|-------------|-----|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Annalong Harbour                                    | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      | 50,000    | 90,000    |            |            | 140,000    |              | 140,000    |
| Slieve Gullion Forest Park (Trails & Walled Garden) | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      | 490,000   | 450,000   |            |            | 940,000    | -500,000     | 440,000    |
| Down County Museum - Exhibition Upgrade             | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      |           | 30,000    |            |            | 30,000     |              | 30,000     |
| Tyrella Car Park/Beach - Car Park&Amenity Bldg.     | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      | 20,000    | 300,000   |            |            | 320,000    |              | 320,000    |
| Camlough Lake - Vesting                             | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      | 50,000    | 50,000    |            |            | 100,000    |              | 100,000    |
| Mourne Gateway Project                              | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      | 230,000   | 20,000    |            |            | 250,000    |              | 250,000    |
| Kilbroney Park, Various schemes                     | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      | 260,000   | 200,000   |            |            | 460,000    | -90,000      | 370,000    |
| Annalong E.I.                                       | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      | 31,250    | 31,250    |            |            | 62,500     | -31,250      | 31,250     |
| Financial Assistance for Tourist Accomadation       | ERT         | AP  | Tourism      |           | 500,000   | 500,000    |            | 1,000,000  |              | 1,000,000  |
| Bann Rd Car park(Park&Ride)                         | ERT         | CJ  | Park & Ride  |           | 50,000    | 65,000     |            | 115,000    | -50,000      | 65,000     |
| Forkhill Regeneration                               | ERT         | JMG | Regeneration | 0         | 50,000    |            |            | 50,000     | -50,000      | 0          |
| City Centre Re-gen. Project                         | ERT         | JMG | Admin Centre | 1,200,000 | 1,000,000 | 14,000,000 | 18,200,000 | 34,400,000 | -8,000,000   | 26,400,000 |
| Lock no. 6  | ERT         | JMG |              | 50,000    | 50,000    |            |            | 100,000    |              | 100,000    |

N.M.D.D.C. Capital Programme 2021 - 2024

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| Description  | Directorate | AD | TYPE             | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2022/2023 | 2023/2024 | Total     | Income/Grant | Net Budget |
|--|-------------|----|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| Purchase of Downpatrick Police Station Site                  | ERT         |    | JMG Tourism      | 100,000   |           |           |           | 100,000   |              | 100,000    |
| Warrenpoint Front Shore P.R. Scheme                          | ERT         |    | JMG Public Realm | 50,000    | 130,000   |           |           | 180,000   |              | 180,000    |
| Newry - City Centre EIS                                      | ERT         |    | JMG Enterprise   | 1,670,000 | 50,000    |           |           | 1,720,000 | -1,500,000   | 220,000    |
| Downpatrick Regeneration -Irish St. P. Realm                 | ERT         |    | JMG Regeneration | 100,000   |           |           |           | 100,000   |              | 100,000    |
| Derrymore Domain Improvement Scheme - 25 year lease - REFCUS | ERT         |    | JMG Heritage     | 760,890   | 20,000    |           |           | 780,890   | -457,890     | 323,000    |
| Village Actions Plans (R.E.F.C.U.S.)                         | ERT         |    | JMG Regeneration | 501,000   | 3,324,999 | 37,000    |           | 3,862,999 | -2,829,999   | 1,033,000  |
| P.R. Enhancement(inc Grant)                                  | ERT         |    | JMG              | 360,000   | 293,000   |           |           | 653,000   | -493,000     | 160,000    |
| Castlewellan Forest Pk. ( HLF & DAERA Funded) - REFCUS       | ERT         |    | JMG Tourism      | 250,000   | 1,437,548 | 2,148,421 | 635,273   | 4,471,242 | -2,422,831   | 2,048,411  |
| Carlingford lough Greenway - Site Investigation              | ERT         |    | JMG Tourism      |           | 40,000    |           |           | 40,000    |              | 40,000     |
| New Barriers and walkways                                    | NS          | JP | Waste            | 75,000    |           |           |           | 75,000    |              | 75,000     |
| Automate Weighbridge at Drumanakelly                         | NS          | JP | Waste            | 25,000    |           |           |           | 25,000    |              | 25,000     |
| Residual Waste Treatment Project                             | NS          | JP | Waste            |           | 1,947,306 |           |           | 1,947,306 |              | 1,947,306  |
| Bus Shelters   | NS          | KS | Bus Shelters     | 10,000    | 20,000    |           |           | 30,000    |              | 30,000     |

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## Appendix 4

### Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

### Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021/22

#### Introduction

Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMDDC) has and will be borrowing and investing substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.

Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. In addition, the former Department of the Environment (DOE) issued *Guidance on Local Authority Investments* in November 2019 that requires the Authority to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011* to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the DOE Guidance.

**Revised strategy:** In accordance with the DOE Guidance, the Authority will be asked to approve a revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement should the assumptions on which this report is based change significantly. Such circumstances would include, for example, a large unexpected change in interest rates, in the Authority's capital programme or in the level of its investment balance.

#### External Context

**Economic background:** The impact on the UK from coronavirus, lockdown measures, the rollout of vaccines, as well as the new trading arrangements with the European Union (EU), will remain major influences on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2021/22.

The Bank of England (BoE) maintained Bank Rate at 0.10% in December 2020 and Quantitative Easing programme at £895 billion having extended it by £150 billion in the previous month. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted unanimously for both, but no mention was made of the potential future use of negative interest rates. In the November Monetary Policy Report (MPR) forecasts, the Bank expects the UK economy to shrink -2% in Q4 2020 before growing by 7.25% in 2021, lower than the previous forecast of 9%. The BoE also forecasts the economy will now take until Q1 2022 to reach its pre-pandemic level rather than the end of 2021 as previously forecast. By the time of the December MPC announcement, a COVID-19 vaccine was approved for use, which the Bank noted would reduce some of the downside risks to the economic outlook outlined in the November MPR.

UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) for November 2020 registered 0.3% year on year, down from 0.7% in the previous month. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile components, fell to 1.1% from 1.5%. The most recent labour market data for the three months to October 2020 showed the unemployment rate rose to 4.9% while the employment rate fell to 75.2%. Both measures are expected to deteriorate further due to the ongoing impact of coronavirus on the jobs market, particularly when the various



government job retention schemes start to be unwound in 2021, with the BoE forecasting unemployment will peak at 7.75% in Q2 2021. In October, the headline 3-month average annual growth rate for wages were 2.7% for total pay and 2.8% for regular pay. In real terms, after adjusting for inflation, total pay growth was up by 1.9% while regular pay was up 2.1%.

GDP growth rebounded by 16.0% in Q3 2020 having fallen by -18.8% in the second quarter, with the annual rate rising to -8.6% from -20.8%. All sectors rose quarter-on-quarter, with dramatic gains in construction (41.2%), followed by services and production (both 14.7%). Monthly GDP estimates have shown the economic recovery slowing and remains well below its pre-pandemic peak. Looking ahead, the BoE's November MPR forecasts economic growth will rise in 2021 with GDP reaching 11% in Q4 2021, 3.1% in Q4 2022 and 1.6% in Q4 2023.

GDP growth in the euro zone rebounded by 12.7% in Q3 2020 after contracting by -3.7% and -11.8% in the first and second quarters, respectively. Headline inflation, however, remains extremely weak, registering -0.3% year-on-year in November, the fourth successive month of deflation. Core inflation registered 0.2% y/y, well below the European Central Bank's (ECB) target of 'below, but close to 2%'. The ECB is expected to continue holding its main interest rate of 0% and deposit facility rate of -0.5% for some time but expanded its monetary stimulus in December 2020, increasing the size of its asset purchase scheme to €1.85 trillion and extended it until March 2022.

The US economy contracted at an annualised rate of 31.4% in Q2 2020 and then rebounded by 33.4% in Q3. The Federal Reserve maintained the Fed Funds rate at between 0% and 0.25% and announced a change to its inflation targeting regime to a more flexible form of average targeting. The Fed also provided strong indications that interest rates are unlikely to change from current levels over the next three years.

Former vice-president Joe Biden won the 2020 US presidential election. Mr Biden is making tackling coronavirus his immediate priority and will also be reversing several executive orders signed by his predecessor and take the US back into the Paris climate accord and the World Health Organization.

**Credit outlook:** After spiking in late March as coronavirus became a global pandemic and then rising again in October/November, credit default swap (CDS) prices for the larger UK banks have steadily fallen back to almost pre-pandemic levels. Although uncertainty around COVID-19 related loan defaults lead to banks provisioning billions for potential losses in the first half of 2020, drastically reducing profits, reported impairments for Q3 were much reduced in some institutions. However, general bank profitability in 2020 and 2021 may be significantly lower than in previous years.

The credit ratings for many UK institutions were downgraded on the back of downgrades to the sovereign rating. Credit conditions more generally though in banks and building societies have tended to be relatively benign, despite the impact of the pandemic.

Looking forward, the potential for bank losses to be greater than expected when government and central bank support starts to be removed remains a risk, suggesting a cautious approach to bank deposits in 2021/22 remains advisable.

**Interest rate forecast:** The Authority's treasury management adviser Arlingclose is forecasting that BoE Bank Rate will remain at 0.1% until at least the first quarter of 2024. The risks to this forecast are judged to be to the downside as the BoE and UK government continue to react to the coronavirus pandemic and the new EU trading arrangements. The BoE extended its asset purchase programme to £895 billion in November while keeping Bank Rate on hold and maintained this position in December. However, further

interest rate cuts to zero, or possibly negative, cannot yet be ruled out but this is not part of the Arlingclose central forecast.

Gilt yields are expected to remain very low in the medium-term while short-term yields are likely remain below or at zero until such time as the BoE expressly rules out the chance of negative interest rates or growth/inflation prospects improve. The central case is for 10-year and 20-year to rise to around 0.60% and 0.90% respectively over the time horizon. The risks around the gilt yield forecasts are judged to be broadly balanced between upside and downside risks, but there will almost certainly be short-term volatility due to economic and political uncertainty and events.

A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is attached at Appendix A.

For the purpose of setting the budget, it has been assumed that new treasury investments will be made at an average rate of 0.1%, and that new long-term loans will be borrowed at an average rate of 2.5%.

### Local Context

On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, the Authority held £76.3m of borrowing and £9.2m of treasury investments. This is set out in further detail at **Appendix B**. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 1 below.

*Table 1: Balance sheet summary and forecast*

|  | 31.3.20<br>Actual<br>£m | 31.3.21<br>Estimate<br>£m | 31.3.22<br>Forecast<br>£m | 31.3.23<br>Forecast<br>£m | 31.3.24<br>Forecast<br>£m |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Capital financing requirement</b>           | <b>92.3</b>             | <b>97.8</b>               | <b>105.7</b>              | <b>115.0</b>              | <b>122.6</b>              |
| Less: External borrowing *                     | -74.8                   | -70.2                     | -66.1                     | -62.0                     | -58.2                     |
| <b>Internal borrowing</b>                      | <b>17.5</b>             | <b>27.6</b>               | <b>39.6</b>               | <b>53.0</b>               | <b>64.4</b>               |
| Less: Usable reserves                          | -12.5                   | -19.5                     | -19.5                     | -17.8                     | -15.5                     |
| Less: Working capital                          | 8.2                     | 8.0                       | 8.0                       | 8.0                       | 8.0                       |
| <b>Treasury investments (or New borrowing)</b> | <b>-13.2</b>            | <b>-16.1</b>              | <b>-28.1</b>              | <b>-43.2</b>              | <b>-56.9</b>              |

*\* shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing*

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing.

The Authority has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme, but minimal investments and will therefore be required to borrow up to £56.9m over the forecast period.

CIPFA's *Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* recommends that the Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. Table 1 shows that the Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2021/22.

**Liability benchmark:** To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as table 1 above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £1m at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.

Table 2: Liability benchmark

|                            | 31.3.20<br>Actual<br>£m | 31.3.21<br>Estimate<br>£m | 31.3.22<br>Forecast<br>£m | 31.3.23<br>Forecast<br>£m | 31.3.24<br>Forecast<br>£m |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| CFR                        | 92.3                    | 97.8                      | 105.7                     | 115.0                     | 122.6                     |
| Less: Usable reserves      | -12.5                   | -19.5                     | -19.5                     | -17.8                     | -15.5                     |
| Less: Working capital      | 8.2                     | 8.0                       | 8.0                       | 8.0                       | 8.0                       |
| Plus: Minimum investments  | 1.0                     | 1.0                       | 1.0                       | 1.0                       | 1.0                       |
| <b>Liability benchmark</b> | <b>89.0</b>             | <b>87.3</b>               | <b>95.2</b>               | <b>106.2</b>              | <b>116.1</b>              |

**Borrowing Strategy**

The Authority currently holds £74.1 million of loans, a decrease of £0.7 million on the previous financial year end, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. The balance sheet forecast in table 1 shows that the Authority expects to borrow up to £28.1m by the end of 2021/22. The Authority may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £114.2 million.

**Objectives:** The Authority's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

**Strategy:** Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead.

By doing so, the Authority is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal / short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Arlingclose will assist the Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Authority borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2021/22 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.

The Authority has previously raised the majority of its long-term borrowing from the Government Loans Fund via the Department of Finance but will consider long-term loans from other sources including banks, pensions and local authorities, and will investigate the possibility of issuing bonds and similar instruments, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code.

In addition to the above, the Council maintains an overdraft facility of £5m with Danske Bank, its main operating bank.

In addition, the Authority may borrow further short-term loans to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.

**Sources of borrowing:** The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- Government Loans Fund via Department of Finance
- any institution approved for investments (see below)
- any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
- any other UK public sector body
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except NILGOSC Pension Fund)
- capital market bond investors
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues
- Other Local Authorities

**Other sources of debt finance:** In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- leasing
- hire purchase
- Private Finance Initiative
- sale and leaseback

**Municipal Bonds Agency:** UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association. It issues bonds on the capital markets and lends the proceeds to local authorities. This is a more complicated source of finance than the government for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a guarantee to refund their investment in the event that the agency is unable to for any reason; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to full Council.

**Short-term and variable rate loans:** These loans leave the Authority exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the interest rate exposure limits in the treasury management indicators below. Financial derivatives may be used to manage this interest rate risk (see section below).

**Debt rescheduling:** The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Authority may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk.

### Treasury Investment Strategy

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Authority's treasury investment balance has ranged between £13.6 million and £0.9 million, and a level closer to £5m maximum is expected to be maintained in the forthcoming year.

**Objectives:** Both the CIPFA Code and the DOE Guidance require the Authority to invest its treasury funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than



one year, the Authority will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested.

**Negative interest rates:** The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the risk that the Bank of England will set its Bank Rate at or below zero, which is likely to feed through to negative interest rates on all low risk, short-term investment options. Since investments cannot pay negative income, negative rates will be applied by reducing the value of investments. In this event, security will be measured as receiving the contractually agreed amount at maturity, even though this may be less than the amount originally invested.

**Strategy:** Given the increasing risk and very low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority aims to diversify, where practical, into more secure and/or higher yielding asset classes during 2021/22. All of the Authority's surplus cash is currently invested in short-term unsecured bank deposits and money market funds. This diversification will represent a continuation of the strategy adopted in 2018/19.

**Approved counterparties:** The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in table 3 below, subject to the limits shown.

*Table 3: Treasury investment counterparties and limits:*

| Sector  | Time limit | Counterparty limit | Sector limit |
|---|------------|--------------------|--------------|
| The UK Government                             | 50 years   | Unlimited          | n/a          |
| Local authorities & other government entities | 25 years   | £3m                | Unlimited    |
| Secured investments *                         | 25 years   | £3m                | Unlimited    |
| Banks (unsecured) *                           | 13 months  | £3m                | Unlimited    |
| Building societies (unsecured) *              | 13 months  | £3m                | £6m          |
| Registered providers (unsecured) *            | 5 years    | £1m                | £5m          |
| Money market funds *                          | n/a        | £3m                | Unlimited    |

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below

**\* Minimum credit rating:** Treasury investments in the sectors marked with an asterisk will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than A-. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

For entities without published credit ratings, investments may be made either where external advice indicates the entity to be of similar credit quality.

**Government:** Loans to, and bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by, national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Government are deemed to be zero credit risk due to its ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

**Secured investments:** Investments secured on the borrower's assets, which limits the potential losses in the event of insolvency. The amount and quality of the security will be a key factor in the investment decision. Covered bonds and reverse repurchase agreements with banks and building societies are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used. The combined secured and unsecured investments with any one counterparty will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

**Banks and building societies (unsecured):** Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

**Registered providers (unsecured):** Loans to, and bonds issued or guaranteed by, registered providers of social housing or registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

**Money market funds:** Pooled funds that offer same-day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to money market funds, the Authority will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times

**Operational bank accounts:** The Authority may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept below £3m per bank where practical. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Authority maintaining operational continuity.

**Risk assessment and credit ratings:** Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- no new investments will be made,
- any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "negative watch") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

**Other information on the security of investments:** The Authority understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support, reports in the

quality financial press and analysis and advice from the Authority's treasury management adviser. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.

When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2020, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Authority will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Authority's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, or with other local authorities. This will cause investment returns to fall but will protect the principal sum invested.

**Investment limits:** The Authority's revenue reserves available to cover investment losses are forecast to be £19.5 million on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. In order that no more than 15% of available reserves will be put at risk in the case of a single default, the maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £3 million. A group of entities under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes.

Credit risk exposures arising from non-treasury investments, financial derivatives and balances greater than £3m in operational bank accounts count against the relevant investment limits.

Limits are also placed on fund managers, investments in brokers' nominee accounts and foreign countries as below. Investments in pooled funds and multilateral development banks do not count against the limit for any single foreign country, since the risk is diversified over many countries.

*Table 4: Additional investment limits*

|   | Cash limit      |
|---|-----------------|
| Any group of pooled funds under the same management       | £3m per manager |
| Negotiable instruments held in a broker's nominee account | £3m per broker  |
| Foreign countries   | £4m per country |

**Liquidity management:** The Authority uses cash flow forecasting to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Authority being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Authority's medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

The Authority will, where practical, spread its liquid cash over at least four providers (e.g. bank accounts and money market funds) to ensure that access to cash is maintained in the event of operational difficulties at any one provider.

### Treasury Management Indicators

The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

**Security:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score

to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

| Credit risk indicator           | Target |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| Portfolio average credit rating | A      |

**Liquidity:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three month period, without additional borrowing.

| Liquidity risk indicator             | Target |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Total cash available within 3 months | £5m    |

**Interest rate exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates will be:

| Interest rate risk indicator   | Limit    |
|--|----------|
| Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates | £100,000 |
| Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates | £100,000 |

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at current rates.

**Maturity structure of borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

| Refinancing rate risk indicator | Upper limit | Lower limit |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Under 12 months                 | 25%         | 15%         |
| 12 months and within 24 months  | 10%         | 0%          |
| 24 months and within 5 years    | 20%         | 10%         |
| 5 years and within 10 years     | 30%         | 15%         |
| 10 years and above              | 45%         | 30%         |

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

**Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year:** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

| Price risk indicator                        | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|
| Limit on principal invested beyond year end | £2m     | £1m     | £1m     |



### Related Matters

The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to include the following in its treasury management strategy.

**Financial derivatives:** Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g. interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (e.g. LOBO loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in section 79 of the *Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014* removes much of the uncertainty over local authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e. those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).

The Authority will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Authority is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria, assessed using the appropriate credit rating for derivative exposures. An allowance for credit risk calculated using the methodology in the Treasury Management Practices document will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.

In line with the CIPFA Code, the Authority will seek external advice and will consider that advice before entering into financial derivatives to ensure that it fully understands the implications.

**Markets in Financial Instruments Directive:** The Authority has retained retail client status with its providers of financial services, including advisers, banks, brokers and fund managers, allowing it access to a smaller range of services but with the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. Given the size and range of the Authority's treasury management activities, the Chief Financial Officer believes this to be the most appropriate status. This status will be reviewed with the Council's Treasury Advisers due to the potential increase in reserves at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**Government Guidance:** Further matters required by the DOE Guidance are included in Appendix C.

### Financial Implications

The budget for investment income in 2021/22 is minimal, based on an average investment portfolio of £3 million at an interest rate of 0.1%. The budget for debt interest paid in 2021/22 is £2.2 million, based on an average debt portfolio of £76.9 million at an average interest rate of 5.15%. If actual levels of investments and borrowing, or actual interest rates, differ from those forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

### Other Options Considered

The DOE Guidance and the CIPFA Code do not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Chief Financial Officer, having consulted the Director of Corporate Services, believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

| Alternative   | Impact on income and expenditure   | Impact on risk management   |
|---|--|---|
| Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times | Interest income will be lower  | Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater   |
| Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times     | Interest income will be higher   | Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller   |
| Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates              | Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income | Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain            |
| Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates  | Debt interest costs will initially be lower  | Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long-term costs may be less certain |
| Reduce level of borrowing   | Saving on debt interest is likely to exceed lost investment income                       | Reduced investment balance leading to a lower impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be less certain            |

## Appendix A - Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast - December 2020

### Underlying assumptions:

- The medium-term global economic outlook has improved with the distribution of vaccines, but the recent upsurge in coronavirus cases has worsened economic prospects over the short term.
- Restrictive measures and further lockdowns are likely to continue in the UK and Europe until the majority of the population is vaccinated by the second half of 2021. The recovery period will be strong thereafter, but potentially longer than previously envisaged.
- Signs of a slowing UK economic recovery were already evident in UK monthly GDP and PMI data, even before the second lockdown and Tier 4 restrictions. Employment is falling despite an extension to support packages.
- The need to support economic recoveries and use up spare capacity will result in central banks maintaining low interest rates for the medium term.
- Brexit will weigh on UK activity. The combined effect of Brexit and the after-effects of the pandemic will dampen growth relative to peers, maintain spare capacity and limit domestically generated inflation. The Bank of England will therefore maintain loose monetary conditions for the foreseeable future.
- Longer-term yields will also remain depressed, anchored by low central bank policy rates, expectations for potentially even lower rates and insipid longer-term inflation expectations. There is a chance yields may follow a slightly different path in the medium term, depending on investor perceptions of growth and inflation, or the deployment of vaccines.

### Forecast:

- Arlingclose expects Bank Rate to remain at the current 0.10% level.
- Our central case for Bank Rate is no change, but further cuts to zero, or perhaps even into negative territory, cannot be completely ruled out.
- Gilt yields will remain low in the medium term. Shorter term gilt yields are currently negative and will remain around zero or below until either the Bank expressly rules out negative Bank Rate or growth/inflation prospects improve.
- Downside risks remain, and indeed appear heightened, in the near term, as the government reacts to the escalation in infection rates and the Brexit transition period ends.

|                                | Mar-21 | Jun-21 | Sep-21 | Dec-21 | Mar-22 | Jun-22 | Sep-22 | Dec-22 | Mar-23 | Jun-23 | Sep-23 | Dec-23 | Mar-24 |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <b>Official Bank Rate</b>      |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Upside risk                    | 0.00   | 0.00   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   |
| Artingclose Central Case       | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.10   |
| Downside risk                  | 0.30   | 0.40   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   |
| <b>3-month money market r.</b> |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Upside risk                    | 0.05   | 0.05   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.15   | 0.20   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   |
| Artingclose Central Case       | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.20   |
| Downside risk                  | 0.30   | 0.40   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.50   |
| <b>1yr money market rate</b>   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Upside risk                    | 0.05   | 0.05   | 0.10   | 0.10   | 0.15   | 0.20   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   |
| Artingclose Central Case       | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.25   | 0.25   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.30   |
| Downside risk                  | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   |
| <b>5yr gilt yield</b>          |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Upside risk                    | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.45   | 0.45   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.55   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.65   | 0.65   | 0.70   | 0.70   |
| Artingclose Central Case       | 0.00   | 0.00   | 0.05   | 0.10   | 0.15   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.20   | 0.25   | 0.25   | 0.25   | 0.25   | 0.25   |
| Downside risk                  | 0.40   | 0.45   | 0.50   | 0.55   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.60   |
| <b>10yr gilt yield</b>         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Upside risk                    | 0.30   | 0.35   | 0.40   | 0.45   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.55   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.65   | 0.65   | 0.70   | 0.70   |
| Artingclose Central Case       | 0.25   | 0.30   | 0.35   | 0.35   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.45   | 0.45   | 0.50   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.60   |
| Downside risk                  | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   |
| <b>20yr gilt yield</b>         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Upside risk                    | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.45   | 0.45   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.55   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.65   | 0.65   | 0.70   | 0.70   |
| Artingclose Central Case       | 0.70   | 0.70   | 0.75   | 0.75   | 0.75   | 0.80   | 0.80   | 0.85   | 0.85   | 0.85   | 0.85   | 0.90   | 0.90   |
| Downside risk                  | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.35   | 0.35   | 0.35   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   |
| <b>50yr gilt yield</b>         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Upside risk                    | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.45   | 0.45   | 0.50   | 0.50   | 0.55   | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.65   | 0.65   | 0.70   | 0.70   |
| Artingclose Central Case       | 0.60   | 0.60   | 0.65   | 0.65   | 0.65   | 0.70   | 0.70   | 0.75   | 0.75   | 0.75   | 0.75   | 0.80   | 0.80   |
| Downside risk                  | 0.30   | 0.30   | 0.35   | 0.35   | 0.35   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   | 0.40   |

PWLB Certainty Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.80%

PWLB Infrastructure Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.60%



**Appendix B - Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position**

|                                   | 31/12/20<br>Actual portfolio<br>£m | 31/12/20<br>Average rate<br>% |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>External borrowing:</b>        |                                    |                               |
| Government Loans Fund             | 70.3                               | 5.67                          |
| Local authorities                 | 6.0                                | 0.4                           |
| <b>Total gross external debt</b>  | <b>76.3</b>                        |                               |
| <b>Treasury investments:</b>      |                                    |                               |
| Banks (unsecured)                 | 6.0                                |                               |
| Money market funds                | 3.2                                |                               |
| <b>Total treasury investments</b> | <b>9.2</b>                         | 0.02                          |
| <b>Net debt</b>                   | <b>67.1</b>                        |                               |

## Appendix C - Additional requirements of the Government Investment Guidance

**Specified investments:** The DoE Guidance defines specified investments as those:

- denominated in pound sterling,
- due to be repaid within 12 months of arrangement,
- not defined as capital expenditure by legislation, and
- invested with one of:
  - the UK Government,
  - a UK local authority, parish council or community council, or
  - a body or investment scheme of “high credit rating”, and
- where the principal sum to be repaid at maturity is the same as the initial sum invested, other than investments in the UK Government.

The Authority defines “high credit rating” organisations and securities as those having a credit rating of A- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher. For money market funds and other pooled funds “high credit rating” is defined as those having a credit rating of A- or higher.

**Non-specified Investments:** Any investment not meeting the definition of a specified investment is classed as non-specified. NMDDC does not intend to place any funds in non-specified investments.

**Investment training:** Staff regularly attend training courses, seminars and conferences provided by Arlingclose and CIPFA. Relevant staff are also encouraged to study professional qualifications as appropriate.

**Investment advisers:** The Authority has appointed Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers.

**Investment of money borrowed in advance of need:** The Authority may, from time to time, borrow in advance of need, where this is expected to provide the best long-term value for money. Since amounts borrowed will be invested until spent, the Authority is aware that it will be exposed to the risk of loss of the borrowed sums, and the risk that investment and borrowing interest rates may change in the intervening period. These risks will be managed as part of the Authority’s overall management of its treasury risks.

The total amount borrowed will not exceed the authorised borrowing limit of £114.2 million. The maximum period between borrowing and expenditure is expected to be two years, although the Authority is not required to link particular loans with particular items of expenditure.

## Appendix 5

### Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

### Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2021/22

#### Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2021/22

Where the Authority finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there is no statutory minimum. The Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires the Authority to have regard to the former Department of Environment's *Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision* (the DOE Guidance) most recently issued in 2011.

The broad aim of the DOE Guidance is to ensure that capital expenditure is financed over a period that is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits.

The DOE Guidance requires the Authority to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The following statement incorporates options recommended in the Guidance as well as locally determined

- For capital expenditure incurred before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012, MRP will be equal to the principal repayments of the associated borrowing.
- For capital expenditure incurred after 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant asset either in equal instalments or as the principal repayment on an annuity with an annual interest rate equal to the average relevant PWLB rate for the year of expenditure, starting in the year after the asset becomes operational. MRP on purchases of freehold land will be charged over 50 years. MRP on expenditure not related to fixed assets but which has been capitalised by regulation or direction will be charged over an appropriate period.
- For assets acquired by leases or the Private Finance Initiative, MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2021/22 will not be subject to a MRP charge until 2022/23.

Based on the Authority's latest estimate of its capital financing requirement (CFR) on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

|  | 31.03.2021<br>Estimated CFR<br>£m | 2021/22<br>Estimated MRP<br>£ |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Capital expenditure before 01.04.2012          | 32.7                              | 2.2                           |
| Supported capital expenditure after 31.03.2012 | 65.1                              | 3.6                           |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>97.8</b>                       | <b>5.8</b>                    |

**ACTIONS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS**

| Minute Ref | Subject   | Decision   | Lead Officer           | Actions taken/<br>Progress to date | Remove from<br>Action Sheet<br>Y/N |
|------------|---|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| C/178/2019 | Notice of Motion –<br>C/131/2019: Live<br>Animals in Circuses | At the request of Councillor McAteer it was agreed<br>the motion remain on the action sheet. | Democratic<br>Services |                                    | N                                  |

**ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2021**

| Minute Ref | Subject   | Decision  | Lead Officer           | Actions taken/<br>Progress to date | Remove from<br>Action Sheet<br>Y/N |
|------------|---|---|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| C/019/2021 | Action Sheet<br>arising from<br>Council Meeting<br>held on 04.01.21 | The action sheet was agreed                                   | Democratic<br>Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/020/2021 | Minutes of<br>Council Meeting<br>held on 04.01.21                   | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and<br>adopted  | Democratic<br>Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/021/2021 | Minutes of ERT<br>Committee   | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and<br>adopted. | Democratic<br>Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |

| Minute Ref | Subject  | Decision   | Lead Officer        | Actions taken/<br>Progress to date | Remove from<br>Action Sheet<br>Y/N |
|------------|--|--|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|            | Meeting held on 11.01.21                                 |  |                     |                                    |                                    |
| C/022/2021 | Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 12.01.21      | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.                             | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/023/2021 | Minutes of SPR Committee Meeting held on 14.01.21        | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.                             | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/024/2021 | Minutes of AHC Committee Meeting held on 18.01.21        | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.                             | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/025/2021 | Minutes of NS Committee Meeting held on 20.01.21         | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.                             | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/026/2021 | Planning Committee Meeting held on 13.01.21              | There were no issues referred from Planning Committee Meeting held on 13 January 2021. | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/027/2021 | Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes - December 2020 | The Minutes were noted.  | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |



| Minute Ref | Subject   | Decision   | Lead Officer        | Actions taken/<br>Progress to date | Remove from<br>Action Sheet<br>Y/N |
|------------|---|--|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| C/028/2021 | Northern Ireland Housing Council Bulletin – January 2021  | The Bulletin was noted.  | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/029/2021 | Correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council re: Coronavirus Pandemic Impact on GCSE & A Level Students                     | The correspondence was noted.  | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/030/2021 | Correspondence from Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council re: Contribution to Health & Social Care Workers                | The correspondence was noted.  | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/031/2021 | Correspondence from Department of Justice and Department for Infrastructure re: C/186/2020 Annual Christmas Anti Drink Drive Campaign | The correspondence was noted.  | Democratic Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/032/2021 | Correspondence from Department of Finance re:   | It was agreed that Council seek clarity from the Department for Infrastructure on the funding models used for the Newry, Mourne and Down District area and what provisions were given to each section and how it was administered. | Democratic Services | <b>Actioned</b>                    |                                    |

| Minute Ref | Subject  | Decision   | Lead Officer           | Actions taken/<br>Progress to date | Remove from<br>Action Sheet<br>Y/N |
|------------|--|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|            | Pedestrian Road<br>Safety Measures                                     | The correspondence was noted.  |                        | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |
| C/033/21   | Notice of Motion -<br>Universal Credit<br>payments                     | <p>It was agreed to approve the motion as follows and write to the other 10 Councils seeking their support and write to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor outlining Newry, Mourne and Down District Councils support in extending the existing top up to Universal Credit to remain:</p> <p>"As part of his Covid-10 response the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak increased Universal Credit payments by £20 per week until March 2021. This was a welcome and timely initiative given increased heating, energy and food costs from the pandemic. It must be noted that not all benefits were increased and so some in need did not get support. We must remember benefit cuts, in real terms took place over the past 10 years. However, this increase for what it is worth, is welcome. The Chancellor of the Exchequer now needs to ensure that the £20 increase extends beyond March of this year. As the economic facts show, this extra amount has helped families and claimants to meet the extra costs due to the pandemic and has supported many local businesses. In this motion we are asking that Newry Mourne and Down District Council to support the campaign to retain this extra payment and extend it to other benefits, the 120,000 children living in poverty in Northern Ireland deserve any assistance available to them".</p> | Democratic<br>Services | <b>Actioned</b>                    |                                    |
| C/034/21   | *Notice of Motion<br>- Steel Import<br>Duty - Removed<br>at request of | - Removed at request of Councillor as situation has been resolved*   | Democratic<br>Services | <b>Noted</b>                       |                                    |

| Minute Ref | Subject                                     | Decision  | Lead Officer        | Actions taken/<br>Progress to date   | Remove from<br>Action Sheet<br>Y/N |
|------------|---|---|---------------------|--|------------------------------------|
|            | Councillor as situation has been resolved*  |   |                     |  |                                    |
| C/035/21   | Notice of Motion - Outdoor Recreation Group | The Motion was referred to the Active and Healthy Communities Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.   | M Lipsett           | <b>Actioned – considered at February Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting.</b> |                                    |
| C/036/21   | Notice of Motion - Student Choices          | The Motion was referred to the Equality and Good Relations Forum in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.  | C Moffett           | <b>Noted</b>   |                                    |
| C/037/21   | Notice of Motion - Student Support Grant    | It was agreed that Covid-19 pandemic has affected all citizens and that the impact on students has been severe. This Council recognises the difficulties faced by those students in full-time third level education, both at universities and further education colleges, who, because of restrictions, are unable to attend classes in person or live in student accommodation which they have paid for.<br>This Council recognises that many University students have found themselves suffering financial hardship which has caused significant distress and led to poor mental health. This Council calls on university accommodation providers and private landlords who have not provided rent waivers to do so immediately and welcomes the Finance Minister's commitment to support students and urges the Economy Minister to develop a Student Support Grant for all full time third level students, many of whom cannot gain any employment at this time and are unable to claim benefits. | Democratic Services | <b>Actioned</b>  |                                    |

| Minute Ref | Subject  | Decision   | Lead Officer        | Actions taken/<br>Progress to date   | Remove from<br>Action Sheet<br>Y/N |
|------------|--|--|---------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| C/038/21   | Notice of Motion -<br>Child Poverty<br>Task Force              | It was agreed that this Council with alarm the Department of Communities Family Resources Survey 2018/2019 which show that 122,000 children in Northern Ireland live in relative poverty (24% of children) with 109,000 of those living in absolute poverty and expresses deep concern that these figures have increased significantly since the previous year and have not improved at all in the last five years. The rise of the Universal Credit claimant count and expected end of the furlough scheme could see a further increase in these numbers, with the two-child tax credit rule and benefit cap only adding to the pressure on families with children. This Council writes to Departments of Communities, Health and Education and calls on the Minister for Communities to immediately convene a child poverty task force, to set out how their departments will reduce child poverty by next year and over the next decade". | Democratic Services | <b>Actioned</b>  |                                    |
| C/039/21   | Notice of Motion -<br>Brexit, Shared<br>Prosperity Fund        | The Motion was referred to the Brexit Working Group in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.  | C Mallon            | <b>Noted</b>   |                                    |
| C/040/21   | Notice of Motion -<br>'Big Spring Clean<br>Up'                 | The Motion was referred to the Neighbourhood Services Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.  | J McBride           | <b>Actioned – Considered<br/>at February<br/>Neighbourhood<br/>Services Committee<br/>Meeting.</b> |                                    |
| C/041/21   | Notice of Motion<br>– 'Proposed Cuts<br>to Advice<br>Services' | It was agreed that Council notes with concern reports that the Department for Communities 2021-22 draft budget includes no allocation for the independent advice sector to support welfare change which equates to a £1.5 million reduction. The independent Advice Sector supports some of the most vulnerable in our council area, and whilst we are in the grips of a pandemic that is creating further hardships, a reduction in the budget will hamper the ability of this  | D Services          | <b>Actioned</b>  |                                    |

| Minute Ref | Subject | Decision  | Lead Officer | Actions taken/<br>Progress to date | Remove from<br>Action Sheet<br>Y/N |
|------------|---------|---|--------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|            |         | sector to continue providing much needed support. Council calls on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Minister for Communities and the Minister for Finance to work proactively to ensure that funding can be allocated appropriately for the Independent Advice Sector within the budget for 2021-22.' |              |                                    |                                    |
| END        |         |   |              |                                    |                                    |



**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**NMD/C/**

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**Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 1 February 2021 at 6.00pm via Hybrid in Downshire Chamber and Microsoft Teams**

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**In the Chair:** Councillor L Devlin

|                       |                        |                       |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>In attendance:</b> | Councillor T Andrews   | Councillor P Brown    |
|                       | Councillor R Burgess   | Councillor P Byrne    |
|                       | Councillor C Casey     | Councillor D Curran   |
|                       | Councillor C Enright   | Councillor A Finnegan |
|                       | Councillor H Gallagher | Councillor M Gibbons  |
|                       | Councillor O Hanlon    | Councillor G Hanna    |
|                       | Councillor V Harte     | Councillor R Howell   |
|                       | Councillor M Larkin    | Councillor A Lewis    |
|                       | Councillor O Magennis  | Councillor G Malone   |
|                       | Councillor C Mason     | Councillor D McAteer  |
|                       | Councillor K McKevitt  | Councillor A McMurray |
|                       | Councillor R Mulgrew   | Councillor D Murphy   |
|                       | Councillor K Owen      | Councillor G O'Hare   |
|                       | Councillor B Ó Muirí   | Councillor H Reilly   |
|                       | Councillor M Ruane     | Councillor M Savage   |
|                       | Councillor G Sharvin   | Councillor G Stokes   |
|                       | Councillor D Taylor    | Councillor J Tinnelly |
|                       | Councillor W Walker    |                       |

**(Officials)**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
 Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services  
 Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities  
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism  
 Mr J McBride, Director of Neighbourhood Services (Acting)  
 Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal & Administration (Acting)  
 Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director, Culture, Tourism & Events  
 Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer  
 Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

**C/017/2021**

**APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Doran, McEvoy and McKee.

The Chairperson referred to news reports and scenes at hospitals in recent weeks and praised and thanked all those working on the front line. She also referred to the roll out of the Covid vaccination programme which was a very positive step and asked people to be patient.

The Chairperson highlighted Covid stats in the District remained very high and reminded everyone of the importance of adhering to public health guidance.

The Chairperson advised it was "Time to Talk" Day on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and asked people to call a neighbour, a friend or a family member as the number of people feeling isolated had risen due to Covid and the restrictions.

The Chairperson advised item 20 relating to a notice of motion from Councillor McKevitt had been added to the agenda.

Members were advised the wording of an emergency motion from Councillor Savage had been circulated prior to the meeting. In order for the motion to be heard, it would require the suspension of standing orders and 80% of those members present and voting. If successful, the motion would be dealt with after all other matter of business.

## **C/018/2021                      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **C/019/2021                      ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4 JANUARY 2021**

Read:                              Action sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 4 January 2021 (copy circulated).

*C/003/2021: Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 07.12.2020 - It was agreed to invite the Trade Unions to address the Special Meeting of the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee.*

In response to Councillor Brown, the Chief Executive advised the matter was currently with legal services and therefore she could not comment further at this time. She advised that an update would be brought back to Council when it was concluded.

**Agreed:**                              **The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 4 January 2021 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Sharvin.**

## **COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING**

## **C/020/2021                      MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4 JANUARY 2021**

Read:                              Minutes of Council Meeting held on 4 January 2021 (copy circulated).

*SPR/192/2020 – PHA Report*

In response to Councillor Andrew's call to make further requests for testing site facilities in Downpatrick and Newcastle, the Chief Executive confirmed matters had been raised with the Public Health Agency and an update would be provided following the meeting.

**Agreed:**                              **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 4 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Burgess.**

## **COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION**

### **C/021/2021      MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2021**

**Read:** Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 January 2021 (copy circulated).

Councillor Hanna commended the Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism for the swift action taken by the department following recent storm damage at the Annalong Harbour.

**Agreed:**                      **The Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Curran, seconded by Councillor Stokes.**

### **C/022/2021      MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2021**

**Read:** Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 12 January 2021. (copy circulated).

**Agreed:**                      **The Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on 12 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Devlin.**

### **C/023/2021      MINUTES OF STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 JANUARY 2021**

**Read:** Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 14 January 2021 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:**                      **The Minutes of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 14 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Magennis.**

### **C/024/2021      MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2021**

**Read:** Minutes of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 18 January 2021 (copy circulated).

*AHC/003/2021: Action Sheet of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting – Willie Maley Statue*

In response to Councillor Casey, Mr Lipsett confirmed officers were working with the group to identify a suitable site for a statue and advised both he and the DEA Co-ordinator would contact Councillor Casey regarding the matter.

**Agreed:**                      **The Minutes of the Active and Healthy Communities**

**Committee Meeting held on 18 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor O'Hare.**

**C/025/2021      MINUTES OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2021**

**Read:** Minutes of Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on 20 January 2021 (copy circulated).

Councillor Walker highlighted concerns regarding an updated position regarding dog fouling and it was agreed Mr McBride would contact him directly.

**Agreed:**                      **The Minutes of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on 20 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor McKeivitt.**

**PLANNING**

**C/026/2020      EXTRACT OF DRAFT PLANNING MINUTES 13 JANUARY 2021**

**Noted:** There were no issues referred from the Planning Committee Meeting held on 13 January 2021.

**FOR NOTING**

**C/027/2020      NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING COUNCIL MINUTES DECEMBER 2020**

**Read:** Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes dated 10 December 2020. (Copy circulated)

**Agreed:**                      **The Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes dated 10 December 2020 were noted.**

**C/028/2021      NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING COUNCIL BULLETIN – JANUARY 2021**

**Read:** Bulletin dated January 2021 from Northern Ireland Housing Council. (Copy circulated)

**Agreed:**                      **The Northern Ireland Housing Council Bulletin was noted.**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **C/029/2021      FERMANAGH & OMAGH DISTRICT COUNCIL RE: CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC IMPACT ON GCSE & A-LEVEL STUDENTS**

**Read:** Correspondence dated 4 December 2020 from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council re: Coronavirus Pandemic Impact on GCSE & A-level Students. (Copy circulated)

**Agreed:**                                      **The correspondence was noted.**

### **C/030/2021      ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE & CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL RE: CONTRIBUTION TO HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE WORKERS**

**Read:** Correspondence dated 12 January 2021 from Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council re: Contribution to Health & Social Care Workers. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Walker commended the Health Minister for delivering on the calls for contributions to Health and Social Care and Care Home Workers.

**Agreed:**                                      **The correspondence was noted.**

### **C/031/2021      CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED RE: C/186/2020 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DRINK DRIVE CAMPAIGN**

**Read:** Correspondence dated 19 January 2021 from the Department of Justice and correspondence dated 22 January 2021 from the Department for Infrastructure re: C/186/2020 Annual Christmas Drink Drive Campaign. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Sharvin voiced disappointment at the response received from the Department of Justice commenting that although legislation was the responsibility of the Minister for Infrastructure, the Department of Justice held an oversight and feedback role. He advised that it had been hoped and the aim of the motion was to create a partnership in tackling drink driving.

Councillor Owen referred to the reply from the Minister for Infrastructure detailing that 35 of the 280 arrests made in Northern Ireland over the Christmas period were within the Newry, Mourne and Down District which highlighted this was an issue within the District and how to address it for next year.

**Agreed:**                                      **The correspondence was noted.**

### **C/032/2021      RESPONSE FROM DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE RE: PEDESTRIAN ROAD SAFETY MEASURES**

**Read:** Correspondence dated 11 January 2021 from the Department of Finance re: Pedestrian Road Safety Measures. (Copy circulated)

In response to a query from Councillor Magennis, Democratic Services Manager, Miss Taggart confirmed correspondence had been sent to both the Minister of Finance and the



Minister for Infrastructure.

Councillor Murphy expressed disappointment that a response had not been received from the Minister for Infrastructure, however Members were advised a response had only been received in recent days, copies of which were circulated to them via email.

A lengthy discussion ensued during which Members expressed concern at reports of an underspend for Roads. Concerns were also raised regarding the lack of funding for infrastructure and the need for Ministers to work collectively to ensure an increased budget and major investment into infrastructure across Northern Ireland and within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Murphy that Council seek clarity from the Department for Infrastructure on the funding models used for the Newry, Mourne and Down District area and what provisions were given to each section and how it was administered.

**Agreed:** The correspondence was noted.

**C/033/2021**

**NOTICE OF MOTION – UNIVERSAL CREDIT PAYMENTS**

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the name of Councillor Andrews:

**“As part of his Covid-10 response the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak increased Universal Credit payments by £20 per week until March 2021. This was a welcome and timely initiative given increased heating, energy and food costs from the pandemic. It must be noted that not all benefits were increased and so some in need did not get support. We must remember benefit cuts, in real terms took place over the past 10 years. However, this increase for what it is worth, is welcome. The Chancellor of the Exchequer now needs to ensure that the £20 increase extends beyond March of this year. As the economic facts show, this extra amount has helped families and claimants to meet the extra costs due to the pandemic and has supported many local businesses. In this motion we are asking that Newry Mourne and Down District Council to support the campaign to retain this extra payment and extend it to other benefits, the 120,000 children living in poverty in Northern Ireland deserve any assistance available to them”.**

In proposing the motion, Councillor Andrews made an urgent appeal, for the Government, especially the Chancellor of the Exchequer to cancel the cutback to Universal Credit that would come into effect on the 1 April 2021 if the deadline was not extended.

Councillor Andrews asked that should the motion be passed that Council write to the other 10 Councils seeking their support and write to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor outlining our unequivocal support in extending the existing Top Up to Universal Credit to remain.

The motion was seconded by Councillor McAteer.

Councillor McAteer highlighted that the reduction to a one off £500 payment brought it back to £9.61 for as long as it would last and spoke of many anomalies of the proposed cut.

Councillors Walker, Finnegan, Taylor, McMurray and the Chairperson each spoke in support of the motion.

**Agreed:**

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McAteer to approve the motion as follows and write to the other 10 Councils seeking their support and write to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor outlining Newry, Mourne and Down District Councils support in extending the existing top up to Universal Credit to remain:

“As part of his Covid-10 response the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak increased Universal Credit payments by £20 per week until March 2021. This was a welcome and timely initiative given increased heating, energy and food costs from the pandemic. It must be noted that not all benefits were increased and so some in need did not get support. We must remember benefit cuts, in real terms took place over the past 10 years. However, this increase for what it is worth, is welcome. The Chancellor of the Exchequer now needs to ensure that the £20 increase extends beyond March of this year. As the economic facts show, this extra amount has helped families and claimants to meet the extra costs due to the pandemic and has supported many local businesses. In this motion we are asking that Newry Mourne and Down District Council to support the campaign to retain this extra payment and extend it to other benefits, the 120,000 children living in poverty in Northern Ireland deserve any assistance available to them”.

**C/034/2021**

**NOTICE OF MOTION – STEEL IMPORT DUTY**

This notice of motion was removed from the agenda at the request of the Councillor as the situation had been resolved.

**C/035/2021**

**NOTICE OF MOTION – OUTDOOR RECREATION GROUP**

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the name of Councillor McMurray:

“In light of the increase on visitors accessing outdoor amenities which are prevalent in our district, this Council shall, within its structures, create a group regarding Outdoor Recreation within the district. The primary objectives of this group will be to Manage, Promote and Educate regarding outdoor recreation within our district. This will be a constituted group within Council. Its makeup will be representative of both statutory and voluntary sector agencies. As well as those who have a remit for development & management of outdoor recreation. Communication will be made in the first instance with National Governing Bodies and Agencies to ascertain what role Councils in other areas of Ireland, Britain and Europe have had in positively managing access and recreation with our outdoor spaces”.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Enright.

**Agreed:**

The Motion was referred to the Active and Healthy Communities Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the name of Councillor McKeivitt:

**"This Council supports the choice of students to wear trousers as opposed to skirts and vice versa as part of their regulation uniform. In this age of equality, fairness and indeed comfort, no person should be forced to wear an item of uniform which is traditionally gender related. This Council will make contact with all schools in the City and District of both primary and secondary level to encourage and promote that this choice be included in their uniform policy. Furthermore, to contact the Education Authority and Education Minister seeking their support in this matter."**

The motion was seconded by Councillor Trainor.

**Agreed:** The Motion was referred to the Equality and Good Relations Forum in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

**C/037/2021**

## NOTICE OF MOTION – STUDENT SUPPORT GRANT

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the name of Councillor Stokes:

**“The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all citizens and that the impact on our young people has been severe. This Council recognises the difficulties faced by those young people in full-time third level education, both at universities and further education colleges, who, because of restrictions, are unable to attend classes in person or live in student accommodation which they have paid for. This Council recognises that many university students have found themselves suffering financial hardship which has caused significant distress and led to poor mental health. This Council calls on university accommodation providers and private landlords who have not provided rent waivers to do immediately and calls on the Department for the Economy and Department of Finance to develop and fund a Student Support Grant for all full time third level students, many of whom cannot gain any employment at this time and are unable to claim benefits”.**

In proposing the motion, Councillor Stokes spoke of the difficulties faced by young people in full time third level education and the impact the Covid pandemic has had on them. Due to restrictions students of 2020/21 have had to self-isolate on arrival at universities, advised not to travel home at weekends and have been unable to work to support themselves as jobs in hospitality and non-essential retail sector continuously close.

Student financial support schemes were made available in the Republic of Ireland and Wales but unfortunately not yet for students in Northern Ireland with students not eligible for Universal Credit. They have had to continue paying rent for accommodation they don't need and have had high travel costs after being sent home short notice from universities and colleges. Councillor Stokes asked Members to support his motion.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Curran who also spoke of the financial hardships faced by students and the need for a grant fund to support students in this challenging time.

Councillor Howell welcomed Councillors Stokes motion stating Sinn Féin recognised the hardships faced by students, who were not getting the full learning experience they had signed up and paid for.



Councillor Howell referred to the Finance Minister having confirmed his commitment to allocating money to the Department for Economy and proposed the following amendment to the second paragraph to read as follows:

“This Council recognises that many university students have found themselves suffering financial hardship which has caused significant distress and led to poor mental health. This Council calls on university accommodation providers and private landlords who have not provided rent waivers to do so immediately *and welcomes the Finance Minister's commitment to support students and urges the Economy Minister to develop* a Student Support Grant for all full time third level students, many of whom cannot gain any employment at this time and are unable to claim benefits”.

Councillor Howell's amendment was seconded by Councillor Hanlon and accepted by Councillor Stokes.

Councillor Owen then proposed an amendment to the wording of the first paragraph for reference to young people to be changed to students and for it to read as follows:

“The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all citizens and that the impact on *students* has been severe. This Council recognises the difficulties faced by those *students* in full-time third level education, both at universities and further education colleges, who, because of restrictions, are unable to attend classes in person or live in student accommodation which they have paid for”.

Councillor Owen's amendment was accepted by Councillor Stokes.

**Agreed:**

**It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Curran that Covid-19 pandemic has affected all citizens and that the impact on students has been severe. This Council recognises the difficulties faced by those students in full-time third level education, both at universities and further education colleges, who, because of restrictions, are unable to attend classes in person or live in student accommodation which they have paid for.**

**This Council recognises that many university students have found themselves suffering financial hardship which has caused significant distress and led to poor mental health. This Council calls on university accommodation providers and private landlords who have not provided rent waivers to do so immediately and welcomes the Finance Minister's commitment to support students and urges the Economy Minister to develop a Student Support Grant for all full time third level students, many of whom cannot gain any employment at this time and are unable to claim benefits.**

**C/038/2021**

**NOTICE OF MOTION – CHILD POVERTY TASK FORCE**

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the name of Councillor Sharvin:

**“This Council notes with alarm the Department of Communities Family Resources Survey 2018/2019 which show that 122,000 children in Northern Ireland live in relative poverty (24% of children) with 109,000 of those living in absolute poverty and expresses deep concern that these figures have increased significantly since the**

previous year and have not improved at all in the last five years. The rise of the Universal Credit claimant count and expected end of the furlough scheme could see a further increase in these numbers, with the two-child tax credit rule and benefit cap only adding to the pressure on families with children. This Council calls on the Minister for Communities to immediately convene a child poverty task force, to set out how her department will reduce child poverty by next year and over the next decade”.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Sharvin advised the aim of the motion was to highlight and create awareness of the challenges being faced by many in society, particularly children.

Councillor Sharvin referred to the Department for Communities Family Resources Survey which showed 122,000 children were living in poverty within society and spoke of the impact of Covid, the ending of the Furlough Scheme and the two-child tax and benefit caps would have on adding even more pressure onto families.

Councillor Sharvin also referred to the ‘New Decade, New Approach’ committing to the establishment and implementation of a new anti-poverty strategy to be published by December 2021. He stated families and children could not wait that long for a strategy and that was why Council was being asked to write to the Minister for Communities to ensure work was being done to tackle poverty and protect families now.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Devlin who spoke of recent visits to local foodbanks and engagement with community and voluntary sector who assist in tackling what could only be described a tsunami of poverty. She spoke of the need for action as families and society could not afford to wait.

Councillor Hanlon welcomed the motion and referred to work the Minister for Communities had undertaken so far to try and tackle childhood poverty and push the issue forward. Councillor Hanlon commented that whilst the Department for Communities was the lead on this, issues needed to be addressed across the Executive.

Councillor Hanlon proposed an amendment to Councillor Sharvin’s motion for Council to also write to the Department of Health and the Department of Education as follows:

"This Council notes with alarm the Department of Communities Family Resources Survey 2018/2019 which show that 122,000 children in Northern Ireland live in relative poverty (24% of children) with 109,000 of those living in absolute poverty and expresses deep concern that these figures have increased significantly since the previous year and have not improved at all in the last five years. The rise of the Universal Credit claimant count and expected end of the furlough scheme could see a further increase in these numbers, with the two-child tax credit rule and benefit cap only adding to the pressure on families with children. This Council writes to Departments of Communities, *Health and Education* and calls on the Minister for Communities to immediately convene a child poverty task force, to set out how their departments will reduce child poverty by next year and over the next decade”.

Councillor Sharvin accepted Councillor Hanlon’s amendment.

Councillors Taylor, Hanna and McMurray each spoke in support of the motion.

**Agreed:**

**It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Devlin that this Council with alarm the Department of Communities Family Resources Survey 2018/2019 which show that 122,000 children in Northern Ireland live in relative poverty (24% of children) with 109,000 of those living in absolute poverty and expresses deep concern that these figures have increased significantly since the previous year and have not improved at all in the last five years. The rise of the Universal Credit claimant count and expected end of the furlough scheme could see a further increase**



## NOTICE OF MOTION – BREXIT, SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

**“This Council expresses deep concern about the financial consequences of Brexit for Executive departments including the loss of £70 million in EU Structural Funds for the Department for the Economy; regrets that the level of funding promised to the devolved institutions by the British government will not be equivalent to EU Structural Funds; notes that any loss of funding will result in significant negative consequences for Northern Ireland’s economy and society; expresses concern that plans to operate the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from Westminster represent moves to centralise regional development policy; and calls upon the Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance to urge the British Government to commit to using the Shared Prosperity Fund to replace in full the EU funding lost as a result of Brexit and operate in a way that respects devolution settlements”.**

**Agreed:** The Motion was referred to the Brexit Working Group in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

## NOTICE OF MOTION – BIG SPRING CLEAN UP

**“Throughout the Covid pandemic, many residents of and visitors to our district have taken the opportunity to exercise in the parks, rural roads & pathways of our towns & villages to help their physical and mental wellbeing and in so doing, many have found a renewed sense and awareness of the stunning beauty of our district. Regrettably, this increased volume of cyclists and walkers has also lead to a marked increase in the amount of rubbish that is discarded along those very roads and pathways.**

**To that end Newry Mourne & Down Council will organise and supervise a district wide 'Big Spring Clean Up', particularly on our rural roads on a chosen Saturday morning this coming Springtime, delivered through the respective DEA's and involving as many community groups, schools and residents of our district as possible, public health advice permitting.**

**Councils role will be to coordinate what is happening within each DEA and to provide logistical support like litter pickers, bags, hi-vis vests, rubbish collection points etc; on request, and to engage external groups who may wish to partner us in this project.**

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**Agreed:** The Motion was referred to the Neighbourhood Services Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Andrews to suspend Standing orders 16.1.1 at this point in the meeting to allow for the tabling of the emergency motion due to the urgency of the issue and its importance to the district.

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| FOR:         | 35 |
| AGAINST:     | 0  |
| ABSTENTIONS: | 0  |

C/041/2021 NOTICE OF MOTION – PROPOSED CUTS TO ADVICE SERVICES

**‘This Council notes with concern reports that the Department for Communities 2021-22 draft budget includes no allocation for the independent advice sector to support welfare change which equates to a £1.5 million reduction. The independent Advice Sector supports some of the most vulnerable in our council area, and whilst we are in the grips of a pandemic that is creating further hardships, a reduction in the budget will hamper the ability of this sector to continue providing much needed support.**

**Council calls on the Minister for Communities and Minister for Finance to work proactively to ensure that funding can be allocated appropriately for the Independent Advice Sector within the budget for 2021-22.'**

In proposing the motion, Councillor Savage advised that the cuts proposed in the latest Department for Communities budget would see work on fast tracking payments for the terminally ill dumped and vital advice and support services stripped from the most vulnerable.

An Equality Impact Assessment on the Executive Draft Budget for 2021/22 revealed that none of the £57.7million the Department for Communities requested to meet commitments the New Decade, New Approach deal had been provided and this money was intended to fund a range of mitigations recommended by the NI Human Rights Commission including additional support for people impacted by welfare reform, progressing a change to welfare rules to allow terminally ill people to apply for benefits 12 months before they die as opposed to 6 months and £28million to offset the two child policy. The plans also include cuts to 45 advice jobs and youth unemployment programmes postponed.

Councillor Savage spoke of the lifeline the advice services provide to society and the increased need particularly during these times of times real hardship and the pandemic we face.

Councillor Trainor seconded the motion and reiterated the impact of Department for Communities 2021/22 budget cut for advice services and pointed out that whilst the motion calls on the Minister for Communities and the Minister of Finance if work was required by the Executive then so be it as something needed to be done to ensure the vulnerable within our community were protected.

Councillor Finnegan stated the Communities Minister had clearly identified money to be allocated for the independent advice sector and that all Departments were now having to operate on a budget cut that came from the British Government, and a one-year budget as opposed to the three-year budget.

Councillor Finnegan proposed an amendment that Council write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer instead to challenge them as to why they are not honouring the commitment to the North.

Councillor Savage advised he would accept writing to the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting further funds from Whitehall to deal with services from the pandemic.

Councillors Andrews, Taylor, Hanna, McMurray and Murphy all spoke in support of the emergency motion.

**Agreed:**

**It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Trainor that Council notes with concern reports that the Department for Communities 2021-22 draft budget includes no allocation for the independent advice sector to support welfare change which equates to a £1.5 million reduction. The independent Advice Sector supports some of the most vulnerable in our council area, and whilst we are in the grips of a pandemic that is creating further hardships, a reduction in the budget will hamper the ability of this sector to continue providing much needed support.**

**Council calls on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Minister for Communities and the Minister for Finance to work proactively to ensure that funding can be allocated appropriately for the Independent Advice Sector within the budget for 2021-22.'**

Councillor Enright had left the meeting during the above discussion – 7.55pm

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.10pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 1 March 2021.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chief Executive**



**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**RECORDED VOTE**

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DATE: 01/02/2021 VENUE: Teams Meeting MEETING: Council

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Suspension of Standing Orders – 80% of those present and voting.  
35 present and voting – 28 FOR votes required.

| COUNCILLOR    | FOR       | AGAINST | ABSTAIN | ABSENT   |
|---------------|-----------|---------|---------|----------|
| T Andrews     | 1         |         |         |          |
| P Brown       | 2         |         |         |          |
| R Burgess     | 3         |         |         |          |
| P Byrne       | 4         |         |         |          |
| C Casey       | 5         |         |         |          |
| W Clarke      |           |         |         | 1        |
| D Curran      | 6         |         |         |          |
| L Devlin      | 7         |         |         |          |
| S Doran       |           |         |         | 2        |
| C Enright     | 8         |         |         |          |
| A Finnegan    | 9         |         |         |          |
| H Gallagher   | 10        |         |         |          |
| M Gibbons     | 11        |         |         |          |
| O Hanlon      | 12        |         |         |          |
| G Hanna       | 13        |         |         |          |
| V Harte       | 14        |         |         |          |
| R Howell      | 15        |         |         |          |
| M Larkin      | 16        |         |         |          |
| A Lewis       | 17        |         |         |          |
| O Magennis    | 18        |         |         |          |
| G Malone      | 19        |         |         |          |
| C Mason       | 20        |         |         |          |
| D McAteer     | 21        |         |         |          |
| L McEvoy      |           |         |         | 3        |
| H McKee       |           |         |         | 4        |
| K McKevitt    | 22        |         |         |          |
| A McMurray    | 23        |         |         |          |
| R Mulgrew     | 24        |         |         |          |
| D Murphy      | 25        |         |         |          |
| G O'Hare      | 26        |         |         |          |
| B Ó Muirí     | 27        |         |         |          |
| K Owen        | 28        |         |         |          |
| H Reilly      |           |         |         | 5        |
| M Ruane       | 29        |         |         |          |
| M Savage      | 30        |         |         |          |
| G Sharvin     | 31        |         |         |          |
| G Stokes      | 32        |         |         |          |
| D Taylor      | 33        |         |         |          |
| J Tinnelly    | 34        |         |         |          |
| J Trainor     | 35        |         |         |          |
| B Walker      |           |         |         | 6        |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>35</b> |         |         | <b>6</b> |

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**NMC/SC**

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**Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 25 January 2021 at 6.00pm via Microsoft Teams**

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**In the Chair:** Councillor L Devlin

**In attendance:**

**(Councillors)**

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Councillor T Andrews  | Councillor P Brown    |
| Councillor R Burgess  | Councillor P Byrne    |
| Councillor C Casey    | Councillor W Clarke   |
| Councillor D Curran   | Councillor A Finnegan |
| Councillor M Gibbons  | Councillor O Hanlon   |
| Councillor G Hanna    | Councillor V Harte    |
| Councillor R Howell   | Councillor M Larkin   |
| Councillor A Lewis    | Councillor O Magennis |
| Councillor D McAteer  | Councillor H McKee    |
| Councillor K McKevitt | Councillor A McMurray |
| Councillor D Murphy   | Councillor G O'Hare   |
| Councillor B Ó Muirí  | Councillor K Owen     |
| Councillor H Reilly   | Councillor M Ruane    |
| Councillor M Savage   | Councillor G Stokes   |
| Councillor D Taylor   | Councillor J Tinnelly |
| Councillor W Walker   |                       |

**(Officials)**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism  
 Mr J McBride, Director of Neighbourhood Services (Acting)  
 Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager  
 Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in attendance:**

**NI Water**

Mr R Larkin, Finance & Regulation Director  
 Dr S Blockwell Head of Investment Management

**Firmus Energy**

Mr M Scott, Managing Director  
 Mr P Stanfield, Director of Sales, Marketing & Customer Operations

**SC/001/2021**

**APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors McEvoy and Trainor.



The Chairperson welcomed Mr R Larkin and Dr S Blockwell from NI Water to the meeting, outlining the procedure for the evening advising that once NI Water had presented the report, there would be an opportunity for Members to ask any questions related to the report. Members had already received a response to any questions raised in advance of the meeting and thanked Democratic Services for facilitating this.

#### **SC/002/2021      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **SC/003/2021      PRESENTATION FROM NI WATER**

Mr R Larkin thanked Members for the opportunity to present the report and introduced his colleagues, Dr S Blockwell, he then proceeded to make his presentation. (copy appended to these minutes).

Following the presentation there was a question and answer session and the following points were raised:

- Members took the opportunity to thank the staff in NI Water especially on the switchboard for the efficient work and communication updates they provided and welcomed the PC21 Business Plan.
- Downpatrick Road, Killyleagh – There was a reoccurring smell in that area possibly from vents and filters needed replaced.
- Could an update be provided on whether Saintfield was one of the other towns to be included as mentioned in the PC21 report, as there had been ongoing problems especially in the Old Grand Jury Road area.
- Was there a moratorium still in place with regards to planning applications in the Saintfield area and where did the area appear on the list of priorities?
- 28 million investment to water treatment works to Greenbank – what element of this related to the capacity issues, especially in the Meadow, Armagh Road Newry and would this investment meet the chronic social and private housing need in Newry? What contribution was sought from developers in addressing issues?
- There had been a decade of underfunding and in the current situation with Covid this was going to have further serious impact especially in the Newcastle area which recently had another incident of major flooding.
- Members passed on thanks for recent effort and quick response with regards to the Downpatrick factory which recently opened and produced jobs in the local area.
- Would small towns be reviewed in the business plans to meet increasing demands?
- There was a big increase in water being used in the Cranfield area with existing homes and caravan resulting in a loss of pressure?
- What was the process for farmers to report problems with water meters?
- A serious amount of investment was required in the infrastructure to bring it up to standard to meet capacity.

The delegation responded to the queries as follows:

- Councillors play a key role and urged Parties to speak to their party leaders and Ministers to back their areas for investment to ensure funding could be accessed to start addressing some of the under investment in NI.
- Filter systems in Killyleagh were classed as basic maintenance which was part of the Capital Programme. If funding for this was cut basic maintenance could be completed to the standard required.
- NI Water as a Statutory Consultee cannot produce moratoriums, they provide evidence based responses, if there wasn't sufficient capacity on the network then they would look for solutions which become part of the business plan subject to funding and consultation with other agencies.
- Old Grand Jury Road – a lot of investigation had been carried out, issues had been addressed and repaired – no further complaints had been received since.
- Agreed to bring back an update and provide clarity with regards to Saintfield and Darragh Cross.
- Any new development would add additional capacity to the network, infrastructure should be in place in advance, however if further investment was not be secured this would have an impact. There was a new drainage model being implemented in the Greenbank area, however there were more and more issues being identified which would need addressed and further significant investment had been made to address these issues to bring it through to the next stage. If developers can look at storm water separation this allows NI Water to bring more of the foul water to treatment without spilling.

*Councillor Owen left the meeting at this point - 18.55pm*

- Would revert back to Members with further detail on the Killeavy Road, The Meadow Newry and Newcastle areas.

*Councillor Walker left the meeting at this point - 19.01pm*

- Small towns would be reviewed to try and get ahead of investment needed and capacity required depending on priorities.

*Councillor Finnegan left the meeting at this point – 19.08pm*

- With regard to caravan parks, NI Water operate a pressurised system and in areas where there was high demand puts significant pressure on the end of the line, the team work extremely hard when this happens to ensure clean water is still available.
- Due to Covid, NI Water's income dropped significantly however, a package was put in place by the Finance Minister and NI water use this money carefully.

Mr Larkin thanked members for their support and the opportunity to meet with Council taking note of additional areas raised at the meeting with responses to follow.

Councillor McKevitt left the meeting at this point - 19.25pm

# **SC/004/2021      PRESENTATAION FROM FIRMUS ENERGY**

The Chairperson welcomed Mr M Scott and Mr P Stanfield to the meeting and invited them to deliver a presentation. (copy appended to these minutes).

Mr Scott presented an over view of Firmus Energy and their plans for the Newry Mourne and Down area.

*Councillor Casey left the meeting at this point – 19.39pm*

Following the presentation there was a question and answer session and the following points were raised:

- What was the possibility of extending gas to those areas that had previously been excluded?
- What was the long term goals of Firmus Energy and timescale with regards to greener energy?

The delegation responded to the queries as follows:

- Firmus Energy were constantly extending the areas they could reach and would look at all opportunities. If a project was viable they would proceed, if certain areas wee not viable they would be honest and explain the reasons for this.
- Currently looking at conversion programme to turn oil into gas, working with the utility register on how to get blended gas into the system. In the next 2 years the company envisage they would be able to reproduce Biomethane into the system and 7-10 years hopefully Hydrogen using the existing networks and meters.

Representatives from Firmus Energy thanked members for the opportunity to meet with Council.

**There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 19.54pm.**

For adoption at Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to be held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chief Executive**

# **NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of Special Council Meeting regarding Industrial Relations held on Wednesday 17 February 2021 at 5.00pm remotely via Microsoft Teams**

**Chairperson:** Councillor L Devlin

**In attendance:**

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Councillor T Andrews  | Councillor P Brown    |
| Councillor P Byrne    | Councillor C Casey    |
| Councillor W Clarke   | Councillor D Curran   |
| Councillor A Finnegan | Councillor O Hanlon   |
| Councillor R Howell   | Councillor M Larkin   |
| Councillor A Lewis    | Councillor O Magennis |
| Councillor G Malone   | Councillor C Mason    |
| Councillor D McAteer  | Councillor H McKee    |
| Councillor K McKevitt | Councillor A McMurray |
| Councillor R Mulgrew  | Councillor D Murphy   |
| Councillor G O Hare   | Councillor B O Muiri  |
| Councillor K Owen     | Councillor M Ruane    |
| Councillor M Savage   | Councillor G Sharvin  |
| Councillor G Stokes   | Councillor D Taylor   |
| Councillor J Tinnelly | Councillor B Walker   |

**Officials in attendance:** Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
 Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services  
 Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities  
 Mr C Mallon, Director Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism  
 Mr J McBride, Director Neighbourhood Services  
 Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director of HR & Safeguarding  
 Mr F O Connor, Head of Legal Administration  
 Mr P Preen, HR Policy & Projects Manager  
 Ms L Fitzsimmons, HR Manager  
 Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager  
 Ms L Dillon, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in attendance:** Mr John Walsh, Legal Services, Belfast City Council

## **SC/005/2021: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSONS REMARKS**

The Chairperson, welcomed everyone to the Special Meeting of Council regarding industrial relations.

Apologies were received from Councillors Doran, Hanna and McEvoy.

**SC/006/2021: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AGREEMENT**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor McAteer seconded by Councillor Magennis it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matter which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Council or a government department and employees of, or office holders under, the Council.

**Read:** Report dated 17 February 2021 from Ms M Ward Chief Executive regarding an update on Trade Union Dispute. (Copy circulated)

**AGREED:** It was unanimously agreed to come out of closed session.

When the Committee came out of closed session the Chairperson reported the following decisions which had been agreed by all Members:

- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Walker seconded by Councillor Clarke it was agreed that within the vires of Council and cognisant of the legal, financial and audit advice received, to approve as follows:
- (a) The Heads of Terms agreed between Council and joint Trade Union side's legal team, for signature by the Chief Executive, which creates a binding legal agreement on behalf of Council;
  - (b) Authorise the payments detailed within Section 4 of the officer's report;
  - (c) Note the non-legal LRA agreement, dated 08 January 2021.

The meeting concluded at 5.40pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 01 March 2021.

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**Signed:**     **Councillor L Devlin**  
                 **Chairperson of Council**

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**Signed:**     **Ms M Ward**  
                 **Chief Executive**



**NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting  
held on Monday 08 February 2021 at 6.00pm remotely via Microsoft Teams**

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**Chairperson:** Councillor A McMurray

**In attendance:** **(Committee Members)**

Councillor R Burgess  
Councillor D Curran  
Councillor G Hanna  
Councillor V Harte  
Councillor R Howell  
Councillor M Larkin  
Councillor D McAteer  
Councillor R Mulgrew  
Councillor H Reilly  
Councillor M Ruane  
Councillor M Savage  
Councillor G Stokes  
Councillor J Tinnelly

**Non Members:** Councillor T Andrews  
Councillor O Hanlon

**Officials in attendance:** Mr C Mallon Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism  
Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events  
Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration  
Mr A McKay Chief Planning Officer  
Mr C Jackson Assistant Director of Building Control & Regulation  
Ms L Dillon Democratic Services Officer  
Ms C McAteer Democratic Services Officer

**ERT/023/2021:** **APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

No apologies.

**ERT/024/20201: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor T Andrews declared an interest in Minute No. ERT/006/2021 on the Action Sheet, regarding Carlingford Lough Greenway, as he was a member of the East Border Region and he would remove himself from the Meeting should any discussion arise on this issue.

Councillor R Burgess declared an interest in Minute No. ERT/006/2021, on the Action Sheet, regarding Carlingford Lough Greenway, as he was a member of the East Border Region and would remove himself from the Meeting should any discussion arise on this issue.

**ERT/025/2021: ACTION SHEET  
MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION &  
TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING  
- MONDAY 11 JANUARY 2021**

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Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 11 January 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

The following issue was raised:

**ERT/004/2021- Notice of Motion re: Housing System**

**Noted:** A team is to be established to oversee the delivery of a Housing Symposium event. An event plan will be developed which will include wide marketing proposals and the selection of appropriate speakers. It is anticipated the event will be held late summer/early autumn in order to allow a degree of recovery from the pandemic and if possible, the preference is that the event is to be held in a physical format rather than remotely.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 11 January 2021.

## **ENTERPRISE EMPLOYMENT & REGENERATION**

### **ERT/026/2021: FFNI – OPERATIONAL COSTS**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding Council funding for the FFNI Operational Team.  
**(Copy circulated)**

Several members expressed concern at the fact many homes and businesses were still without broadband connectivity and stressed the importance of broadband roll out to everyone, in particular rural areas, as the need for connectivity was vital during the pandemic crisis to allow business and learning to continue.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew seconded by Councillor Savage it was agreed Council fund a contribution in the sum of £19,853 towards the (Full Fibre Northern Ireland) FFNI Operations Team to ensure delivery of the programme and sites by the programme end date of 31 December 2021.

It was also agreed **Mr J McGilly Assistant Director EER:**

- **Contact internet providers to request they provide a map to indicate the areas where high speed broadband has been extended to.**
- **Seek an update on the current position regarding 5G.**

### **ERT/027/2021: WARRENPOINT FRONTSHORE PUBLIC REALM SCHEME**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding the Warrenpoint Front shore Public Realm Scheme.  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Ruane seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed as follows:

1. **Councillors who were not in attendance at the Warrenpoint Front shore Public Realm Scheme Task &**

Finish Group Meeting on 15 January 2021, are provided with an update.

2. To note presentation, and welcome DFI proceeding to a further public engagement process on the study and it's findings.
3. Ensure Council and the consultants looking after the design of the Public Realm Scheme, remain in close contact with DFI to see how they plan to progress beyond the study.
4. Important that an overall approach to the traffic issues in Warrenpoint is looked at to include car parking, park and share, cycling and public transport access.
5. Council utilise the existing Service Level Agreement (SLA) with County Down RCN to obtain their assistance with the upcoming Warrenpoint Front Shore Public Realm Perception and Consultation process.

**ERT/028/2021: WARRENPOINT MUNICIPAL PARK**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding National Lottery Heritage funding for Warrenpoint Municipal Park.  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor McAteer seconded by Councillor Ruane it was agreed as follows:

1. To accept the extension from 30 June 2021 to 31 December 2021 by National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver the approved purposes of the funding.
2. To approve part funding of the "Friends of " first year of insurance costs at 43% NMDDC, 57% National Lottery Heritage Fund (budget available within the project)

**ERT/029/2021: HOSPITALITY EXCHANGE CONFERENCE/EXHIBITION  
- TUESDAY 09 MARCH 2021**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events regarding sponsorship for the Hospitality Exchange Conference/Exhibition.  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Burgess seconded by Councillor Mulgrew it was agreed to grant a one off sponsorship fee to the Hospitality Exchange Business Outlook event that will take place in March 2021.

**EXEMPT INFORMATION**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Savage seconded by Councillor Burgess it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matter 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).

**ERT/030/2021: ERT PROCUREMENT PLAN**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr C Mallon Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism, regarding the ERT Procurement Plan. **(Copy circulated)**

**ERT/031/2021: MARKETING FRAMEWORK:  
COMMUNITY AND ENGAGEMENT SERVICES**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment and Regeneration regarding the establishment of a Community and Engagement Services framework. **(Copy circulated)**

**ERT/032/2021: NEWRY BID - REVOTE**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr C Mallon Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism, regarding the Council

position on the Newry BID revote due to take place on 25 March 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

**ERT/033/2021: NEWRY CHAMBER EVENTS - SPONSORSHIP**

Read: Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration & Tourism, regarding sponsorship for events by Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade. **(Copy circulated)**

**ERT/034/2021: RENT RELIEF – TOURISM FACILITIES**

Read: Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events regarding rent relief associated with tourism facilities. **(Copy circulated)**

**ERT/035/2021: UPDATE RE: SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS**

Read: Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events regarding an update on Service Level Agreements. **(Copy circulated)**

**ERT/036/2021: TOURISM TRADING PITCHES**

Read: Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events regarding a tender process for the appointment of a Vendor Trading Pitches at key tourism facilities. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess seconded by Councillor Hanna it was agreed to come out of closed session.**

When the Committee came out of closed session the Chairperson reported the following decisions:

**ERT/030/2021: ERT Procurement Plan**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna seconded by Councillor Ruane it was agreed to approve:**

**The ERT Procurement Action Plan, as per Appendix I  
The Single Tender Actions as outlined in Appendix II**



**ERT/031/2021: Marketing Framework – Community and Engagement Services**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Reilly seconded by Councillor Stokes it was agreed Council proceed through procurement for the establishment of a Framework arrangement for the provision of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism focused on communication and engagement services.

**ERT/032/2021: Newry BID – Revote**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Stokes seconded by Councillor Savage it was agreed based on the detail presented in the Business Plan, Council approve a vote in favour of the Newry BID renewal for period 2021-2025.

**Noted:** Mr Mallon Director of ERT to discuss with Councillor Stokes a communication to Newry BID, on behalf of the ERT Committee.

**ERT/033/2021: Newry Chamber Events Sponsorship**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Stokes seconded by Councillor Savage it was agreed Council issue a Service Level Agreement to Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade for sponsorship of 2 events:

- North/South Conference – Post Brexit
- NI Small Business Conference

**ERT/034/2021: Rent Relief Tourism Facilities**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Burgess seconded by Councillor Savage it was agreed to offer rent relief for the period 23 March 2020 – 16 June 2020 for tenants at Café in Delamont Country Park and Kilbroney Park Rostrevor.

**ERT/035/2021: Update re: Service Level Agreements**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanna seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed:

- Kilkeel Development Association SLA payments to be made in the 2020/21 Financial Year as outlined in Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events.

- No further SLA payments to be made in the 2020/21 Financial Year to Downpatrick Railway Company.

**ERT/036/2021: Tourism Trading Pitches**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell seconded by Councillor Savage it was agreed to approve the Business Case and recommendations set out in Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events , for a tender process to appoint Trading Pitches vendors at key tourism facilities to meet customer demand.

**FOR NOTING**

**ERT/037/2021: UPDATE RE: ATLANTIC CULTURESPACE**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding AONB and Geopark Atlantic CultureScape Project.  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** To note the update provided regarding the AONB and Geopark Atlantic CultureScape Project as per Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration.

**ERT/038/2021: CASTLEWELLAN FOREST PARK**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding Castlewellan Forest Park. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** To note:

- The Planning Application Notice.
- The action report from the Task and Finish Board Meeting held on 15 January 2021.

**ERT/039/2021:      CONFUCIOUS INSTITUTE ULSTER UNIVERSITY  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**Read:**                      Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding a Memorandum of Understanding with the Confucious Institute at Ulster University.    **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**                **To note a Memorandum of Understanding with the Confucious Institute at Ulster University at a cost of £5,000 for a 12 month period.**

**ERT/040/2021:      ERT HISTORIC ACTION TRACKER**

**Read:**                      Action Tracker Report for Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee.    **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**                **To note the Historic Action Tracker Report for Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee.**

**ERT/041/2021:      LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP &  
TOWNCENTRE TASKFORCE**

**Read:**                      Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding the establishment of a local Labour Market Partnership through the Employability and Skills Working Group.  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**                **To note Council officials will work with the Department for Communities on the establishment of a local Labour Market Partnership through the existing Employability and Skills working group and will commence the implementation of required actions to establish the LMP strategic plans and actions for the area.**

**To note Council officials will proceed to establish a Town Centre Taskforce to inform the future regeneration potential of the District's key urban and rural town centres.**

**Noted:**                      Councillor Curran and Councillor Andrews welcomed that work was underway to establish the taskforce.

**ERT/042/2021: PLANNING PERFORMANCE**

**Read:** Report regarding Planning Performance Figures for January 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** It was agreed to note the Planning Performance Figures for January 2021.

**ERT/043/2021: RESTOCKING COARSE FISHERIES**

**Read:** Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Enterprise Tourism Culture & Events regarding funding for the restocking of coarse fishing in the Quoile and other rivers in the District. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** To note Report dated 08 February 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Enterprise Tourism Culture & Events regarding funding for the restocking of coarse fishing in the Quoile and other rivers in the District.

**AGREED:** In response to concerns regarding the restocking of the Quoile River, it was noted the Council would make further contact with DEARA on this issue.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 19.45 pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 01 March 2021.

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**Signed:** Councillor A McMurray

Chairperson of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee

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**Signed:** Mr C Mallon

Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee

**NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on  
Thursday 11 February 2021 at 6.00pm via Microsoft Teams & Downshire Civic Centre  
(Hybrid)**

**In the Chair:** Councillor G Sharvin

**In Attendance:**

|                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Councillor P Brown   | Councillor P Byrne    |
| Councillor C Enright | Councillor O Hanlon   |
| Councillor R Howell  | Councillor A Lewis    |
| Councillor H McKee   | Councillor O Magennis |
| Councillor D Murphy  | Councillor B Ó Muirí  |
| Councillor M Savage  | Councillor W Walker   |

**Also in attendance:**

|                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Councillor T Andrews | Councillor K McKevitt |
| Councillor G Stokes  | Councillor J Trainor  |

**Officials in Attendance:**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
 Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services  
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism  
 Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy  
 Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services  
 Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director of Finance  
 Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates & Capital Projects  
 Mrs L Fitzsimons, HR Manager  
 Mr A Grimshaw, Project Manager  
 Mr F O'Connor, Legal Advisor  
 Mrs C Hanvey, Personal Assistant  
 Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager  
 Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in Attendance:** Mr T Morrison, Otium Leisure Consultancy

**SPR/17/2021: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Doran and Gallagher.

**SPR/18/2021: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**SPR/19/2021: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY AND  
RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THURSDAY 14  
JANUARY 2021**

**Read:** Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 14 January 2021. **(Copy circulated)**



**SPR/185/2020 – Trade Union Dispute/Terms and Conditions of Employment**

In response to a query from Councillor Brown, Mrs Carville advised the matter was still with the legal teams and Councillors should hopefully be briefed in the forthcoming weeks.

**SPR/005/2021 – Northern Ireland 100 years**

Councillor Lewis queried whether there was potential for groups applying for money to hold events at a later date, in light of the continuing lockdown and current long-term restrictions.

Mrs Carville confirmed that this would be considered again should the situation be more long term.

**SPR/003/2021 – Letter to Health Minister Mr Swann and contact with PHA**

Councillor Savage queried whether a response had been received to Council's request regarding a drive in and walk through testing facility in Newry, and whether there had been engagement with the PHA in relation to working with community groups who want to make their buildings available or use of Council buildings to facilitate use as public vaccination centres.

Mrs Carville confirmed a letter had been sent on the 15 January 2021 to the Health Minister Mr Robin Swann, and the Chief Executive had been in telephone contact with the PHA, however no formal response had been received as of yet. The Chief Executive and Mr Lipsett had held discussions with a regional representative from the GP collective about using council facilities and it was made known in the South Eastern Trust and Southern Trust area that we are willing to help out if required and make buildings available. Mrs Carville agreed to keep the item on the Action sheet going forward and provide an update as it happens.

Mr Quinn advised members that Newry Leisure Centre had been used that week as a vaccination centre at the request of Clanrye GP Surgery.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed that the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 14 January 2021, be approved and previous request for a drive-in and walkthrough facility in Newry to remain on Action Sheet and update provided to members as situation evolves.

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

**SPR/20/2021:** **REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION - IMPACT OF MISOGYNY AND TRANSMISOGNY.**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy regarding, Impact of misogyny and transmisogyny. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor McKeivitt thanked officers for the detailed report and members for the opportunity to present the motion paying particular thanks to the members of the 'Equality and Good Relations Reference Group' for their unanimous support of the motion. Councillor McKeivitt urged members and their parties to support the 'Raise Your Voice Campaign' and welcomed the increase in the amount of women that now hold higher positions in management and government throughout the world.

Councillors Brown, Lewis and Magennis spoke in support of the motion, thanking Councillor McKevitt for bringing the motion.

Councillor Magennis, while referring to a similar motion tabled in Mid Ulster Council where SDLP party members supported an amendment which in effect lessened the effect of the motion, asked for clarity on the overall stance of the SDLP party on why they fully support misogyny and transmisogyny becoming a hate crime in some Councils and not in others.

The Chairperson confirmed that as Chair he would remain neutral on the motion, adding that Councillor McKevitt's motion, the Newry Mourne and Down SDLP group and Minister Mallon had clearly shown what their view and stance was, however the SDLP party would review and reaffirm what their stance was in view of the amendment made to a similar motion at Mid Ulster Council.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Brown, that Council agree to the following recommendations:

1. Council to write to the Minister of Justice for Northern Ireland highlighting Council's support of the Motion and the Raise Your Voice Campaign;
2. Council to raise awareness of the Raise Your Voice Campaign through:
  - Placing 'Raise Your Voice' posters in Council properties;
  - Training for Elected Members and employees;
  - DEA Coordinators to undertake a community focused programme to support the Raise Your Voice Campaign.

**SPR/21/2021:** **REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND ACT**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy regarding, report on Notice of Motion – Government of Ireland Act (**Copy circulated**)

Councillor Ó Muirí highlighted the motion was an important issue for every party and nobody should feel threatened by a motion of this type coming to Council. The effort behind this motion was to find a space to have conversation and debate about looking at and dealing with our past and how this can influence the future.

Councillor Walker stated had no issue with the context of the motion and discussing referendums but made it clear the power of the referendum would lie with the Secretary of State and when that time comes the DUP party would be fully engaged.

Councillor Ó Muirí confirmed that the motion called for 'space for debate' which was teased out at the Good Relations Forum and happy that this space has now been created.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Murphy, that Council consider and agree to the following:

- The Equality and Good Relations Reference Group be the vehicle for discussion of the issues raised within the Notice of Motion and that this be included as a standing item on the

**agenda for future meetings of the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group.**

**SPR/22/2021: REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – NORTHERN MUTUAL**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director Corporate Services regarding, report on Notice of Motion – Northern Mutual **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Brown thanked officers for a detailed report, highlighting that by supporting the motion and the Northern Mutual Bank, Council would be taking clear action to indicate their support for Co-operative Banking sector and Community Wealth Building. This initiative had been championed by NICVA, Advice NI and the campaign for the Northern Mutual banks co-founders. Councillor Brown proposed the officer's recommendations, seconded by Councillor Enright.

Mr Montgomery stressed to members in terms of resource implications, once a business case is presented to Council as noted in the motion an assessment would be carried out and a report brought back to committee to consider all implications including resources.

A discussion took place and members raised the following points:

- Where was the business case as cited in the motion and who would be providing it?
- Not enough detail had been provided to make a decision on the motion.
- The motion plucked out 1 element as a stand-alone element for community wealth building.
- As a Council how would we set up a bank and where did the £20million required come from?
- Any development of a mutual bank complemented any existing community wealth building structures i.e. the Credit Union movement and also created opportunities to enhance it.
- Huge financial expectation on the Council and finer detail needed to be interrogated.
- The Minister for Communities had already awarded a Community Welfare Building programme which could form part of the wider programme.
- What was the Advisory Group and who joined it?

Councillor Savage stated he supported the ethos and spirit of the motion and proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor McKee:

'That this Council recognises the need for greater resilience and community wealth building in the council region in light of the coronavirus pandemic and future crises that will inevitably arise due to global warming; and looks to solutions beyond business-as-usual which can help build this necessary resilience and community wealth. In seeking such solutions, this council agrees to assess the financial and practical viability of the Northern Mutual bank—a bank that will be regional, ethical, complementary to our Credit Unions, and not driven by profit but by the needs of the region. This should be done as part of a wider commitment to developing a District-wide Community Wealth Building strategy. A business case will be provided to council to help carry out this assessment'

Councillor Brown responded saying the wording of the motion stated it was asking for a business case and if the Northern Mutual was financially and practically viable, Council would perhaps then choose to commit to some or all of those actions stated. He advised he was content to accept Councillor Savage's amendment.

Councillor Brown clarified the following points:



- The £20million is the total cost the bank start up right across Northern Ireland, there was a wide range of stakeholders across the voluntary, public sector and private sector that Northern Mutual would be hoping would buy in.
- Community Wealth Building strategy was welcomed and hoped it would trickle down to local level.
- Community banking is a good way to add in an additional pillar to the community wealth building strategy.

Mrs Carville asked on a point of clarity – who was providing the business case, as the motion suggested a business case would be brought to Council.

Councillor Brown confirmed it would be Council who was chiefly responsible in preparing a business case in co-operation with the Northern Mutual/Advisory Group.

Mrs Carville stated that Council would need to consider the resources required in order to complete a detailed piece of work such as the business case and asked members if the committee consider the resources required to prepare the business case in the first instance.

Councillor Savage stated he was happy to add to his amendment to include in the last line:

'Subject to a resource assessment, a business case would be provided to Council to help carry out this assessment'

The Chairperson asked members if they were content to proceed with the following amended proposal:

'That this Council recognises the need for greater resilience and community wealth building in the council region in light of the coronavirus pandemic and future crises that will inevitably arise due to global warming; and looks to solutions beyond business-as-usual which can help build this necessary resilience and community wealth. In seeking such solutions, this council agrees to assess the financial and practical viability of the Northern Mutual bank—a bank that will be regional, ethical, complementary to our Credit Unions, and not driven by profit but by the needs of the region. This should be done as part of a wider commitment to developing a District-wide Community Wealth Building strategy and officers to review the resource implications of preparing a business case'.

Councillor Byrne stated it was a huge piece of work and more clarity was required for Council officers, he suggested an initial conversation should be had with the Advisory Group in order to assess the implications for the District with regard resources.

The Chief Executive highlighted the understanding and tone of the motion had changed when it was made known that Council were expected to carry out the business case and she would have concerns in supporting anything at present without knowing the full extent of any legal barriers to Council. It would be preferable if members would agree to allow officers to consider this further and bring back to the next SPR meeting.

Members discussed the matter further indicating they were broadly supportive of the motion however further investigation was required in order to proceed.

**Agreed:**

**It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Enright, to allow officers time to consider the matter, review the resource implications and the legalities of the Northern Mutual Bank and bring back to SPR for further discussion.**

## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

### **SPR/23/2021: SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mrs D Carville, Director Corporate Services regarding, Scheme of Allowances **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Byrne, that Members approve the updated Scheme of Allowances and following approval, upload of the Scheme of Allowances to Council website.

### **SPR/24/2021: SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2021/22**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mrs D Carville, Director Corporate Services regarding, Schedule of Meetings 2021/22 **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that Members consider and agree the schedule of meetings including the amendments on the following dates:

- Mock Annual Meeting – Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 2pm
- Annual Meeting – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021 at 6pm
- SPR – Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 6pm
- AHC – Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 6pm
- NS – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022 at 6pm

## FOR NOTING

### **SPR/25/2021: MINUTES OF NEWRY CCR PB MEETING – 02.02.2021**

**Read:** Minutes of Newry CCR PB Meeting – 02.02.2021. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed to note the contents of the minutes.

### **SPR/26/2021: SICKNESS ABSENCE**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mrs L Fitzsimons, HR Manager regarding, Sickness Absence. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed to note the contents of the report.

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

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

*It was agreed to take Item 18 – OBC Consultation – Public Survey Questionnaire at this point in the meeting.*

**SPR/27/2021: OBC CONSULTATION – PUBLIC SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding OBC Consultation – Public Survey Questionnaire **(Copy circulated)**

*The meeting was adjourned at 19.57pm*

*The meeting recommenced at 20.07pm*

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Murphy, that Elected Members consider the contents of the report and approve the Public Survey Questionnaire for use to include:

The features question replaced with a numeric scale 1-5 with respondents asked to rank how they view the importance of each feature.

The benefits question to be replaced by a scale of respondents ranking the extent to which they agree or disagree with each benefit.

Budget costs be inserted for each project with those grant funded identified as such.

Each of the projects to be ranked in order of preference.

The term Civic Hub to be changed to Civic Hub/Council Offices.

Responses also invited in letter form by email and post.

*Councillor Lewis left during the above discussions – 7.29pm*



**SPR/28/2021: TENDOR FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mrs L Fitzsimons, HR Manager regarding, Tender for Occupational Health Services. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to approve the request to invite tenders for Occupational Health services for a two-year period with the option to extend twice by mutual agreement for a total of 4 years at anticipated cost as outlined on the officer's report.

**SPR/29/2021: EASEMENT OVER COUNCIL LANDS AT GLEN HILL/WATSON'S RD, NEWRY**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration regarding, Easement over Council lands at Glen Hill/Watson's Rd, Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Savage that Elected Members approve the grant of an easement at Watson's Rd/Glen Hill on the following conditions:

1. Payment of the market value for the grant of the easement, as assessed by Council's appointed valuer, together with reasonable valuation and legal costs.

**SPR/30/2021: THE BOAT HOUSE, WARRENPOINT**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration regarding, The Boat House, Warrenpoint. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Magennis, that Elected Members agree to move forward with option 3 listed in the officer's report – Council renews the Lease of the Boat House with The Hall Estate for a further 5year term at a market rental value agreed by Council's valuer and then sublets The Boat House to The Carlingford Lough Curragh Club for a peppercorn rent,

subject to Departmental approval. The Carlingford Lough Curragh Club to be responsible for Council's valuation fees.

**SPR/31/2021: LEGAL ADVICE ON JUDICIAL REVIEW CHALLENGE AGAINST SE TRUST**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration regarding, Legal Advice on Judicial Review Challenge Against SE Trust. **(Copy circulated)**

In response to queries from Members, Mr O'Connor advised that Council would not have the vires to take a legal action like this and implications to that from a Local Government Auditors perspective is relevant in relation to monies expended on a legal action which isn't supported by legal advice.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, to send this detail to the Health Working Group and that Council write to the Trust highlighting the concerns as outlined in the officer's report and seeking confirmation as to the review mechanisms in place and the timescale for revisiting these decisions.

**SPR/32/2021: SURPLUS ASSET UPDATE**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates & Capital Projects regarding, Surplus Asset Update. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Savage, that Elected Members note the content of the report and attached Appendix A – D.

Members agreed to approve the following:

- 5 Ballynoe Road, Downpatrick. Having secured outline planning approval for 4No housing units, obtain an updated valuation of the asset and re-commence discussions with NIHE for the associated disposal for social housing provision.
- Lands at former Station Road Play Area, 72 Station Avenue, Castlewellan. To add to the Surplus Asset Registrar and retain the asset in Council ownership until after the review for the new Area Plan has concluded.
- Lands at the former Play Area at Latt Villas, Latt Road, Mullaghglass, Newry. To add to the Surplus Asset Registrar and commence the D1 process, subject to confirmation from our legal department that there are no

restrictions preventing its disposal. Valuation of asset to be undertaken.

- Lands at Lismore Park Playing Fields, Crossmaglen. To extend the deadline of the closure of the D1 process by 4 months to 11th June 2021 to enable the Crossmaglen Rangers/DTNI to undertake their feasibility studies and submit a Business Plan to Council.
- Town Hall, Newry St., Kilkeel. To extend the deadline of the closure of the D1 process by 1 month to 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to enable the KDA/DTNI to complete the feasibility studies and submit a Business Plan to Council.

*Councillor Enright left the meeting at this point - 20.50pm*

**SPR/33/2021: PHA COVID TESTING FACILITY AT ALBERT BASIN, NEWRY**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates & Capital Projects regarding, PHA Covid-19 Testing Facility at Albert Basin, Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed that Elected Members approve the following:

Not to trigger the termination clause within the lease agreement with PHA after the initial 3 months (31st March 2021) and that the lease remains in place for the 6 months period up until 30th June 2021.

Officers to continue to liaise with the PHA and monitor the demand for the testing facility, with a further report to SP&R Committee prior to the end of the 6-month lease period, if a further period is requested by the PHA.

**SPR/34/2021: NICTS SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION REQUEST**

**Read:** Report dated 11 February 2021 from Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates & Capital Projects regarding, NICTS Short-term Accommodation Request. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Murphy that Elected Members approve the following:

- The Sean Hollywood Arts Centre to be considered for short-term accommodation for NICTS to undertake the

- FOR NOTING**

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Ref: AHC/2020

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**Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on  
Monday 15 February 2021 at 6.00pm via Microsoft Teams**

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**Chairperson:** Councillor G O'Hare

**In attendance:** **(Councillors)**  
 Councillor T Andrews  
 Councillor A Finnegan  
 Councillor G Malone  
 Councillor McMurray  
 Councillor D Taylor  
 Councillor W Walker  
 Councillor C Casey  
 Councillor M Gibbons  
 Councillor C Mason  
 Councillor B Ó Muirí  
 Councillor J Trainor

**Officials in attendance:** Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities  
 Mr E Devlin, Assistant Director Health & Wellbeing  
 Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director Leisure and Sport  
 Mrs Sonia Burns, Head of Programmes  
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer  
 Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

**AHC/022/2021: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Gallagher, McEvoy and McKevitt.

In the absence of the Chairperson Councillor McEvoy, Vice Chairperson Councillor O'Hare assumed the Chair.

An apology was also received from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director Community Engagement.

**AHC/023/2021: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**AHC/024/2021: ACTION SHEET OF THE ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 18 JANUARY 2021**

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 18 January 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

*AHC/206/2019: Adoption of Suicide Down to Zero*

Councillor Gibbons proposed doubling the budget for the Suicide Down to Zero initiative from £10,000 to £20,000 as it would be needed more now than ever with Covid-19. Councillor Ó Muirí seconded the proposal.

Mr Devlin confirmed he would seek to add the increase to the estimates.

Members were advised dates had been confirmed for the Suicide Down to Zero training as being the 9, 18 and 25 March 2021. Members were urged to partake in the training and confirm their wish to attend with the Democratic Services Department as soon as possible.

In response to a query from Councillor Taylor regarding recent incidents of anti social behaviour on leisure centre grounds and elsewhere, Mr Tamati confirmed officers were working closely with members of the DEA, PSNI, PCSP and other Community Groups on how to move forward.

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Gibbons, seconded by Councillor Ó Muirí to double the budget for finance for the Suicide Down to Zero initiative from £10,000 to £20,000.**

**It was agreed by all to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 18 January 2021.**

**AHC/025/2021 NOTICE OF MOTION: OUTDOOR RECREATION NI**

Read: Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding a Notice of Motion on Outdoor Recreation NI. **(Copy circulated)**

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the name of Councillor McMurray:

*'In light of the increase on visitors accessing outdoor amenities which are prevalent in our district, this Council shall, within its structures, create a group regarding Outdoor Recreation within the district. The primary objectives of this group will be to Manage, Promote and Educate regarding outdoor recreation within our district. This will be a constituted group within Council. Its makeup will be representative of both statutory and voluntary sector agencies. As well as those who have a remit for development & management of outdoor recreation. Communication will be made in the first instance with National Governing Bodies and Agencies to ascertain what role Councils in other areas of Ireland, Britain and Europe have had in positively managing access and recreation with our outdoor spaces.'*



In presenting the motion Councillor McMurray highlighted the wide range of activities that made up many different aspects of outdoor recreation and how as a Council development of these could be facilitated.

Councillor McMurray spoke at length about the impact Covid-19 and the ensuing lockdown had had on people's connection with the outdoors and its increasing popularity. Reference was made to the statutory, voluntary and private outdoor centres and providers within the District and how Council must investigate whether schemes could be facilitated to allow people to meet while partaking in outdoor recreation to help physical and mental recovery from the pandemic.

Other key points highlighted by Councillor McMurray included that Council had a stated aim to become an 'Outdoor Capital' with MTB Trails, Community Walking Trails and a potential climbing facility at Moorhill Quarry. He commented that whilst Council organised and facilitated interagency meetings, a more permanent structure was required to deal with issues as they arose and develop solutions to problems including for example litter, erosion, contamination and work with initiatives such as Leave no Trace and DAERA Sponsored Bill regarding the environment.

Councillor McMurray urged Council to work with groups and agencies to see how best they fed into Councils decisions in order to best place Council regarding outdoor recreation within the District.

Councillor Ó Muirí seconded the motion.

In supporting the motion Councillor Trainor advised the only concern he had was around duplication with various aspects of Council looking at outdoor recreation and that officers should take that into consideration.

Councillors Taylor, Gibbons and Walker also spoke in support of the motion.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McMurray seconded by Councillor Ó Muirí, to note the Notice of Motion and that officers consider the Notice of Motion and table a report at the March Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting outlining the next steps.**

**In response to a query from Councillor Gibbons, Mr Lipsett agreed to contact the Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism in relation to BBQ facilities within Kilbroney Park being opened for outdoor learning by schools.**

**Mr Devlin agreed to follow up a query regarding fly tipping from Councillor Malone with Neighbourhood Services Department.**

**AHC/026/2021**

**PEACE IV LOCAL ACTION PLAN**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding Peace IV Local Action Plan. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Ó Muirí, to approve the recommendations of the PEACE IV Partnership (as agreed on 14 January 2021):

- Procure and appoint relevant facilitators to deliver Capacity Building Programmes for Community Groups in the area of Risk Assessment and Health & Safety in response to Covid-19 situation across the 7 DEAs. Estimated Cost £35,000.
- Additionally, it was agreed by the Partnership on 10 September to withdraw project I.8 (Ballyhornan) due to time and budget constraints, and to re-allocate budget to I.12 (BMX Track) if no additional funding became available.

As no additional funding has become available, approval is requested:

- To re-allocate £50,957 from I.8 (Ballyhornan) to I.12 (BMX Track) (subject to SEUPB approval).

**AHC/027/2021**

**HIRE CHARGES FOR COMMUNITY CENTRES**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding hire charges for community centres. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to maintain the hire charge pricing that had been adopted for the 2020/21 financial year for a further year and to adopt the tiered insurance level approach to hirers for, the next two financial years.

**AHC/028/2021**

**SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE AND SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL COLLEGE**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding a service level agreement with Southern Regional College and South Eastern Regional College. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to develop a three-year service level agreement with both the Southern Regional College and South Eastern Regional College to progress & manage recreational/accredited training programmes to be facilitated in Council Community Facilities.

**AHC/029/2021**

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES STRATEGY**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding the Community Facilities Strategy. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to agree to postpone further development of the Draft Community Facility Strategy in order to explore and incorporate strategic priorities as a result of lessons learned from Covid 19.

**AHC/030/2021**

**COMMUNITY COORDINATION HUB**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding the Community Coordination Hub. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McMurray, to note the report and approve the actions in the Action Sheet for the Community Coordination Hub (CCH) Meeting held on Wednesday 27 January 2021.

**AHC/031/2021**

**DFC 3<sup>rd</sup> TRANCHE COVID-19 COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUNDING**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding DfC 3<sup>rd</sup> Tranche Covid-19 Community Support Funding. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, to note the report and agree to the following:

- Approval to the Council's COVID-19 Community Coordination Hub (CCH) to distribute, allocate or award £213,916.85 of the 3rd Tranche of DfC COVID-19 Community Support Funding of £225,175.63, provided by the Department for Communities (DfC), in keeping with the purposes of and conditions of the funding.
- Council using up to a maximum of 5% (£11,258.78) of the funding of £225,175.63 to fund internal council costs, such as staffing and overheads.

**AHC/032/2021**

**DEA FORUMS UPDATE REPORT**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding DEA Forums Update Report. **(Copy circulated)**

- Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to note the report and approve the actions in the Action Sheets attached for:
- Mournes DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Wednesday 27 January 2021.
  - Downpatrick DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Tuesday 2 February 2021.

## LEISURE AND SPORTS

### AHC/033/2021 PLAY STRATEGY UPDATE

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director Leisure and Sports, regarding the Play Strategy Update.

Members discussed the report at length and the recommendations contained within were welcomed. The following points were clarified by Mr Tamati:

- Any additions to the current Play Strategy would require Council to review the Strategy as it was coming to end of the final year.
- Concerns over consolidation projects and the provision of appropriate disabled equipment in place - There was an independent consultation process carried out by Playboard and everyone's voices must be heard as part of that consultation process. Results of the consultation process would come back to Active and Healthy Committee for approval.
- Members were reminded that ongoing issues with the maintenance and repairing of current playparks was the responsibility of the Maintenance Department.

At the request of Councillor Finnegan who referred to an underspend by DAERA, Mr Lipsett confirmed he would write to DAERA to request additional funding to allow enhancement of Councils Play Strategy and open up opportunities for more rural areas to be added to the Strategy.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Andrews, to agree the following Play Strategy Projects and budget to be progressed in 2021/22:

- **New Builds**

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Mullagh Close, Ballymartin  | £140,000 |
| Darragh Cross, Barnamaghery | £140,000 |
| Teconnaught, Kilmore        | £140,000 |
| Martin's Lane, Newry        | £220,000 |
| Downs Road, Newcastle       | £180,000 |
- **Upgrades**

|                       |         |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Kitty's Road, Kilkeel | £50,000 |
|-----------------------|---------|
- **Consolidations**

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Bessbrook, 4 to 2 Charlemont, College, Fr Cullen and Pond field | £80,000  |
| Rowallane, 2 to 1 Hillfoot 1 & Hillfoot 2                       | £80,000  |
| Newry, 2 to 1 Windmill and Heather Park                         | £100,000 |

Newry, 2 to 1 Springhill and Shandon Park    £80,000  
 Annalong, 2 to 1 Cornmill and Mona View    £100,000

It was agreed to write to DAERA to request additional funding to allow enhancement of Council's Play Strategy and open up opportunities for more rural areas to be added to the Strategy.

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

### AHC/034/2021      DAERA CLIMATE BILL CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Read:                      Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr Eoin Devlin Assistant Director Health and Wellbeing, regarding the DAERA Climate Bill Consultation Response. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed:                      It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor McMurray, to return the Consultation response as presented. The response had been returned by the required date on the proviso that it would be subject to Council Approval.

### AHC/035/2021      CONSULTATION ON CLEAN AIR STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Read:                      Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr Eoin Devlin Assistant Director Health and Wellbeing, regarding the consultation on Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed:                      It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Trainor, to return the Consultation response as presented.

### AHC/036/2021      MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING IN RELATION TO FOOD FRAUD

Read:                      Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr Eoin Devlin Assistant Director Health and Wellbeing, regarding a Memorandum of Understanding with National Food Crime Unit in relation to Food Fraud. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed:                      It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Casey, seconded by Councillor McMurray, that the Chief Executive sign the attached Memorandum of Understanding with the National Food Crime Unit in relation to Food Fraud.

**AHC/037/2021**

**CONSULTATION ON ORGAN DONATION**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr Eoin Devlin Assistant Director Health and Wellbeing, regarding a consultation on Organ Donation. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by O'Hare, to return the Consultation response as presented supporting the proposed statutory opt-out system of organ donation.

**FOR NOTING**

**AHC/038/2021**

**POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (PCSP) REPORT**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding a PCSP Report. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed to note the report and Minutes of the PCSP & Policing Committee Meeting held on Thursday 26 November 2020, approved at the PCSP & Policing Committee Meeting on Tuesday 19 January 2021.

**AHC/039/2021**

**NEWRY NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PARTNERSHIP (NRP) REPORT**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Report. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed to note the Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Report.

**AHC/040/2021**

**SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND (SIF) UPDATE**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding Social Investment Fund (SIF) Update. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed to note the report and minutes as presented.



**AHC/041/2021**

**NEWRY LEISURE CENTRE DISABLED PARKING UPDATE**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport, regarding Newry Leisure Centre Disabled Car Parking Upgrade. **(Copy circulated)**

In response to a query from Councillor Taylor regarding enforcement, Mr Tamati confirmed it was a matter that had been given consideration and confirmed there would be significant signage in the car parks and an implementation period to allow customers to get used to the new provision.

**Agreed:** It was agreed to note the planned upgrades works for NLC Disabled Car Parking as per appendix 1 of the report and the securing of £29,925 of funding from the DFC Access and Inclusion Fund.

It was agreed to carry out a 6-month review once the Disabled Car Parking upgrade was completed.

Councillor Casey left the meeting at this point – 7.06pm

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

**AHC/042/2021**

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McMurray, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the next matters 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.

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mrs J Hillen Assistant Director, Community Development presented by Mr Lipsett and Mrs S Burns regarding Financial Assistance. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor McMurray, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Ó Muirí to approve the following:

- Extension Allowances for Capital Projects  
2021-2022 Capital Projects: Council to cap the extension period for projects to no more than 12 months post letter of offer end date.

- **Existing Capital Projects**  
Capital project for the period 2019-2020 or earlier, which require an extension beyond 31st March 2021 will be provided with one further 12-month extension (in light of the negative impact on the delivery of projects due to the pandemic).  
Deed of Charge costs for projects which do not make a finance claim or decommit.  
Approval for this cost to be paid through the most appropriate cost code.
- **Call 2**  
Go out to Call 2 in line with themes above which are subject to funding.

Councillor Gibbons left the meeting during the above discussion – 7.12pm.

**AHC/043/2021**

**SCHEME OF DELEGATION REPORT**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McMurray, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the next matters 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.

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr Lipsett, Director of Active and Healthy Communities, regarding Scheme of Delegation. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor McMurray, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Ó Muirí to note the officers report and attachments regarding the Scheme of Delegation for the Director of Active and Healthy Communities.

**AHC/044/2021**

**FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR COUNCIL SOLAR FARM**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McMurray, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the next matters 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.**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2021 from Mr E Devlin, Assistant Director, Health and Wellbeing regarding a Feasibility Study for Council Solar Farm. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor McMurray, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Trainor, seconded by Councillor McMurray to approve Officers procuring a feasibility study for development of solar farm pilot on identified council land.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.21pm.

**Signed:** Councillor G O'Hare  
Chairperson

**Signed:** Michael Lipsett  
Director Active and Healthy Communities

## **NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 17 February 2021 at 6.00pm via MS Teams.**

**Chair:** Councillor O Magennis

**Deputy Chair:** Councillor T Andrews

|                 |                     |                        |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Members:</b> | Councillor C Casey  | Councillor W Clarke    |
|                 | Councillor D Curran | Councillor A Finnegan  |
|                 | Councillor G Malone | Councillor C Mason     |
|                 | Councillor H McKee  | Councillor K McKeivitt |
|                 | Councillor D Murphy | Councillor K Owen      |
|                 | Councillor G Stokes | Councillor D Taylor    |

|                               |                       |                     |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Non-Committee Members:</b> | Councillor J Tinnelly | Councillor G O'Hare |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|

**Officials in Attendance:**

- Mr J McBride, Director of Neighbourhood Services (Acting)
- Mr K Scullion, Assistant Director Facilities Management and Maintenance
- Mr L Dinsmore, Head of Waste Processing and Enforcement
- Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer
- Ms C McAteer, Democratic Services Officer

### **NS/010/2021: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Mr J Parkes, Assistant Director.

The Chair referred to an email circulated to some Members of the Committee, mostly in the Newry end of the District, in relation to an article in the "Newry Reporter" highlighting fly-tipping in the Newry DEA and the Council's lack of response. She confirmed she had discussed the issues in the article with the Acting Director who had agreed that his Directorate would review the situation to see how they could make improvements in this area.

Mr McBride confirmed an update on the status of the Neighbourhood Services Enforcement Improvement Plan would be brought to the March Committee Meeting and as part of that report Officers would identify the number of incidences reported to the Council and the corresponding response rate.

### **NS/011/2021: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"**

Councillors McKee, Owen and Clarke declared an interest in item 4 – presentation by Arc21, as Members of Arc21. However as the item was a presentation, with no decisions required, they did not withdraw from the discussion during this item.

**NS/012/2021: ACTION SHEET OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15 DECEMBER 2020**

Read: Action Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 20 January 2021. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Owen, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed the Action Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 20 January 2021 be noted and actions removed as marked.

**PRESENTATIONS**

**NS/013/2021: PRESENTATION ON ARC 21 – THE NEXT 20 YEARS**

Mr Tim Walker, CEO arc21, gave a presentation on arc21 – the next 20 years. The presentation outlined what the work arc21 did on behalf of its member Councils; what had been achieved; the Local Government residual waste problem and the proposed residual waste treatment project at Mallusk. *(Copy of presentation attached)*.

A short q & a session followed during which Mr Walker encouraged members of the Committee to visit the facilities at Duleek and Poolbeg, Dublin, to see similar sites in operation.

Mr McBride advised it had been previously agreed that members of the NS Committee would visit the facility at Duleek and this would be arranged when it was safe to do so, in line with Government guidelines.

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

**NS/014/2021: BIG DISTRICT CLEAN-UP**

Councillor Tinnelly spoke on the following Notice of Motion which he had proposed and had been referred to the NS Committee from the Council meeting of 1 February 2021:-

**"Throughout the Covid pandemic, many residents of and visitors to our district have taken the opportunity to exercise in the parks, rural roads & pathways of our towns & villages to help their physical and mental wellbeing and in so doing, many have found a renewed sense and awareness of the stunning beauty of our district. Regrettably, this increased volume of cyclists and walkers has also lead to a marked increase in the amount of rubbish that is discarded along those very roads and pathways. To that end Newry Mourne & Down Council will organise and supervise a district wide 'Big Spring Clean Up', particularly on our rural roads on a chosen Saturday morning this coming Springtime, delivered through the respective DEA's and**



**involving as many community groups, schools and residents of our district as possible, public health advice permitting.**

**Councils role will be to coordinate what is happening within each DEA and to provide logistical support like litter pickers, bags, hi-vis vests, rubbish collection points etc; on request, and to engage external groups who may wish to partner us in this project. If successful, this initiative will then become an annual event for our Council to lead, in this time of increased environmental awareness".**

Councillor Tinnelly said he would like to record his appreciation for the incredible work done by the Council's cleansing staff on daily basis and said this Motion was designed to complement this work, with its primary target being the many areas of our District that are not on a cleansing route, particularly rural roads and villages. He also acknowledged the great work carried out by many community groups in organising litter picks and other initiatives to help keep the District clean and said the Council could lead on such an initiative by creating a corporate approach and involving other agencies such as Tidy NI.

Councillor Tinnelly said he hoped such an initiative would generate and renewed and enduring civic pride within our towns and villages and that it would become an annual event. He acknowledged that with the current restrictions it might not be possible to have the event in the Spring and was therefore renaming it the "Big District Clean-Up".

Councillors Stokes, Taylor, Curran, Malone, McKee, Mason, McKevitt, Owen and Clarke welcomed the Motion and spoke in support of it.

In response to a query from Councillor McKevitt, Mr McBride said the Council would welcome the opportunity to work with community groups, including the provision of litter pickers, bags, collection points etc. but this service had been suspended due to COVID restrictions. He said this would restart once restrictions were eased by the Executive.

Councillor Clarke asked if Councillor Tinnelly would also include agreement to inviting the Council's Statutory Partners such as DfI Roads, NIHE, Forestry etc. to also get involved in such an initiative. Councillor Tinnelly confirmed he would be happy to include this in his Motion.

**Read:** Report dated 17 February 2021 from Mr J McBride regarding the above Motion. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to recommend approval to Officers to develop a scheme, similar to the "Cleaner, Greener Communities Initiative" in 2019, to be implemented later in the year. This would be subject to the easing of COVID-19 Regulations, as well as the availability of the necessary supporting resources. A report to be**



**brought back to a future meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee on the detail of the proposed scheme.**

**It was also agreed that the Council engage with external groups, including Statutory Agencies, to encourage them join in this initiative.**

## **FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

### **NS/015/2021: REVIEW OF COUNCIL BUS SHELTER POLICY**

Read: Report dated 17 February 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: review of Council Bus Shelter Policy. ***(Circulated)***.

Members welcomed measures which would speed up the involvement of Translink in the provision of bus shelters and raised the following issues: -

- Outstanding request for the provision of a bus shelter in Saintfield and Crossgar
- Details of the bus shelters in the District and if they were Council or Translink owned to be provided to Councillors
- Is there a policy for repair and replacement of bus shelters (this would form part of the Management Plan – the aim of which was to have a set of bus shelters which were well used and well maintained)
- An update given on what happens once a request for a bus shelter was received
- Outstanding request for a bus shelter in Annacloy, Orchard Grove, Downpatrick (Translink had indicated this request had met their criteria but had not given an indication as to when it might be provided)

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Owen, it was agreed to note the content of the report and that Council write to Translink seeking clarification on its programme for delivering bus shelters in this Council area and seeking confirmation that they have a budget available to undertake these works.**

### **NS/016/2021: APPLICATION FOR BUS SHELTER ON MAIN STREET, HILLTOWN**

Read: Report dated 17 February 2021 from Mr K Scullion, re: application for bus shelter on Main Street, Hilltown. The report recommended approval of the recommendation set out in Appendix 1 i.e. that a bus shelter should not be erected at this location as it did not fulfil all the criteria as per Council policy - that one third or more of

home owners/tenants in the vicinity (50m radius) confirmed in writing that they object to the shelter being located as proposed. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to defer taking a decision on this issue and that further discussions be carried out with local residents/objectors in conjunction with the PCSP and PSNI to address any potential anti social behaviour concerns.

**NS/017/2021: CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS AND CELEBRATIONS WORKING GROUP MEETING – 14 JANUARY 2021**

Read: Report dated 17 February 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: Christmas Illuminations and Celebrations Working Group Meeting held on 14 January 2021. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed to note the content of this report and the Action Sheet of the Christmas Illuminations Group Meeting held on 14th January 2021 and to approve the recommendations as set out in Section 1.2 to 1. 6 on the report.

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Owen, it was agreed that Killyleagh Street, Crossgar, be added to the list for the provision of potential future Christmas lighting and that officials add this location to the list to bring back to Committee with costings.

**WASTE MANAGMENT**

**NS/018/2021: PROVISIONAL NI LOCAL AUTHORITY COLLECTED MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STATISTICS**

Read: Report dated 17 February 2021 from Mr L Dinsmore re: provisional NI Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:** It was agreed to note the content of this report and that the Waste Management Department continue to promote recycling initiatives. It was noted that this was considered essential to support household recycling efforts.

**NS/019/2021: FLEET REPLACEMENT**

Read: Report dated 17 February 2021 from Mr J McBride re: fleet replacement. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor McKeivitt, it was agreed to note the content of this report and approve the recommendation to adopt an incremental approach at this stage for transitioning the Council to fleet to alternative, greener fuels in-line with green vehicle technology and supporting infrastructure; approve the presentation of business cases for the replacement of prioritised 3,500kg – 6,500kg GVW vehicles at the Neighbourhood Services Committee in March 2021; and subject to the completion of the depot survey referred to in section 2.9, present business cases for the replacement of vehicles <3,500kg GVW prioritising the procurement of alternative, greener fuels at the Neighbourhood Services Committee in April 2021.

**FOR NOTING**

**NS/020/2021: COVID 19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE**

Read: Report dated 17 February 2021 from Mr J McBride providing the Committee with an update in relation to the ongoing COVID-19 response and recovery plan within the Neighbourhood Services Directorate. The scope of this plan related to key services within the Waste Management and Facilities Management & Maintenance Departments. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:** It was unanimously agreed to note the above report.

**NS/021/2021: Arc21 JC MEMBERS MONTHLY BULLETIN – JANUARY 2021**

Read: Arc21 JC Members Monthly Bulletin – 28 January 2021. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:** It was agreed to mark this correspondence noted.

**NS/022/2021: Arc21 JC MINUTES – 1 DECEMBER 2020**

Read: Arc21 JC Meeting Minutes held on 1 December 2020. *(Circulated)*.

**AGREED:**                **It was agreed to mark this correspondence noted.**

**NS/023/2021:**        **HISTORIC ACTIONS TRACKING SHEET**

Read:                    Historic Actions Tracking Sheet *(Circulated)*.

Issues raised

NS/070/2019 – Notice of Motion Memory Gardens

Mr Scullion advised this issue had not been progressed due to pressure on staff resources as a result of the pandemic. However it remained on the action sheet as work to be progressed.

NS/171/2020 – Bring Sites Review

Mr Dinsmore confirmed the documentation to seek tenders had been prepared and tender for removal was ready to be sought. Mr Dinsmore added that it was hoped to start to take in Bring Banks by mid-March.

NS/170-2020 – Notice of Motion Delivery of small brown food waste bins and caddy bags

Mr Dinsmore said the intent was to bring a report to Committee within the next couple of months on this issue.

**AGREED:**                **It was unanimously agreed the Historic Actions Tracking Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meetings be noted and actions removed as marked.**

**EXEMPT INFORMATION ITEMS**

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

Items 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 are deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

**On the proposal of Councillor McKevitt, seconded by Councillor Owen, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on this item.**

**NS/024/2021:**        **ARC 21 IN COMMITTEE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING**

## MINUTES – TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2021

Read: Arc 21 In Committee Joint Committee Meeting Minutes held on Tuesday 1 December 2020. *(Circulated)*.

### **NS/025/2021: MINOR WORKS MAINTENANCE ACROSS COUNCIL PLAY AREAS**

Read: Report dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: minor works maintenance across Council play areas *(Circulated)*.

### **NS/026/2021: PROPOSED EXTENSION TO MONKSHILL MUNICIPAL CEMETERY**

Read: Report dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: proposed extension to Monkshill Municipal Cemetery. *(Circulated)*.

### **NS/027/2021: PROPOSED EXTENSION TO KILBRONEY MUNICIPAL CEMETERY**

Read: Report dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: proposed extension to Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery. *(Circulated)*.

### **NS/028/2021: BUSINESS CASE FOR THE SUPPLY OF FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS**

Read: Report dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: supply of feminine hygiene products. *(Circulated)*.

### **NS/029/2021: BUSINESS CASE FOR THE PROVISION OF "AS REQUIRED" CLEANING SERVICES**

Read: Report dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 from Mr K Scullion re: business case for the provision of "as required" cleaning services. *(Circulated)*.

### **NS/030/2021: BUSINESS CASE FOR MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL PUBLIC SPACE CCTV**

Read: Report dated 17<sup>th</sup> February from Mr K Scullion re: business case for maintenance of Council public space CCTV. *(Circulated)*.

### **NS/031/2021: PROPOSED RENT REVIEW FOR BALLYKINE HRC, BALLYNAHINCH**

Read: Report dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 from Mr L Dinsmore re: proposed rent for Ballykine HRC, Ballynahinch. *(Circulated)*.



**NS/032/2021: BUSINESS CASE – SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE FOR COMPACTORS AND SKIP UNITS LOCATED AT COUNCIL HRC SITES**

Read: Report dated 17 February 2021 from Mr L Dinsmore re: business case for servicing and maintenance for compactors and skip units located at Council HRC sites. (*Circulated*).

Councillor Stokes proposed and Councillor Andrews seconded to come out of closed session.

When the Committee was out of closed session the Chairperson reported the following had been agreed:-

Item 16 – Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Minutes – Tuesday 1 December 2020

**AGREED: It was unanimously agreed to note the Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting Minutes held on Tuesday 1 December 2020.**

Item 17 – Minor works maintenance across Council play areas

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Owen, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to note the content of the report and accept the conclusion of the business case that option 3 be approved. Option 3 would see the appointment through tender of a competent contractor or contractors to undertake council wide minor works contract within Council play parks and MUGA'S (costs not exceeding the maximum value per works order as detailed in the report).**

Item 18 – Proposed extension to Monkshill Municipal Cemetery

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor McKevitt, it was agreed to note the content of the report and that Committee approve the recommendations within section 1.5 of this report**

Item 19 – Proposed extension to Kilbroney Municipal Cemetery

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McKevitt, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the content of the report and that Committee approve the recommendations within section 1.6 of this report.**

Item 20 – Business case for supply of feminine hygiene products

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Owen, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to note the content of the report and approve the findings of the business case presented in that Option three was the preferred option. Option three would see the appointment of a contractor to supply and service feminine hygiene products and similar services in Council facilities for the next 36-month period or up to a maximum value as detailed in the report.

Item 21 – Business case for the provision of “as required” cleaning services

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Owen, it was agreed to note the content of the report and approve the findings of the business case presented in that Option three was the preferred option. Option three would see the appointment of a competent cleaning contractor to provide “as required” cleaning services for the Councils 31 Public Toilets, Newry Market and Chapel of Ease, to cover any future staff shortages for the next 12-month period or up to a maximum value as detailed in the report.

Item 22 – Business case for maintenance of Council public space CCTV

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to note the content of the report; approve the findings of the business case presented for Town Centre CCTV Repairs and Maintenance and accept Option 3 - to issue a tender for 2 + 1 year to appoint competent CCTV Maintenance Contractor to provide maintenance of Council Public CCTV systems.

Item 23 – Proposed rent review for Ballykine HRC, Ballynahinch

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Owen, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the content of the report and recommend that subject to final confirmation by the Council’s Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Finance), that the rent increase as detailed in Appendix 2 applies, and Council approve that the annual rental will increase in accordance with the terms of the lease.

It was further agreed that the Assistant Director of Corporate Services (Finance) confirm no miscalculation would apply, with appropriate adjustment to be made to

**the Council's Rent Register and that the Landlord be advised that Council accepted the rental increase as per the terms of the Lease.**

Item 24 – Business case – servicing and maintenance for compactors and skip units located at Council HRC sites

**AGREED:**               **On the proposal of Councillor Stokes, seconded by Councillor McKeivitt, it was agreed to note the content of the report and recommend approval of Option Two in the business case to procure a contract for the servicing and maintenance for compactors and skip units located at Council HRC sites.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 1 March 2021.

**Signed:**               **Councillor O Magennis**  
**Chairperson of Neighbourhood Services Committee**

**Signed:**               **Mr J McBride**  
**Director of Neighbourhood Services (Acting)**

# arc21 – the next 20 years

Tim Walker  
Acting Chief Executive





# *Of & For Local Government*

- Eastern Waste Management Group (2000)
- Democratically accountable:
  - Joint Committee
  - Waste Management Plans (Council & DAERA Approved)

*arc21 works on behalf of its member councils to guide, support and help them meet their legal requirements and drive forward innovative waste management programmes including the development of infrastructure*





# *What do we do?*

- Advocacy
- Planning & Policy
- Procurement
- Compliance & Contract Management
- Outreach



# *What have we achieved together?*

- Recycling rates have risen sixfold
- £120M value of waste treated by core contracts in last 5 years
- Treated c1.7M Tonnes of council collected waste in last 5 years
  - 837K Tonnes to Landfill Contracts
  - 852K Tonnes diverted to other Treatment contracts
- £42M savings achieved by diversion compared to landfill
- Future proofed proposals to **maintain statutory obligations**
  - protect the environment & public health
  - safeguard ratepayers & council finances
  - support the Circular Economy





# *Local Government has a Residual Waste Problem*

- c.500K Tonnes of non-recyclable household waste produced annually
- Currently **landfilled** or **exported** overseas:

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Landfill:    | full capacity within the decade / 10% cap |
| Export:      | taxes rising / Brexit uncertainty         |
| Environment: | unsustainable                             |
| Value:       | paying to export green jobs & energy      |

- Decision to build essential planned waste infrastructure for councils **stalled**
- We can't keep repeating the inactivity of the past
- Living in an age of consequences



# *Residual Waste Treatment Project*

## Policy Compliant

- EU / UK / NI
- Local & Central Govt approval

## Planning & Governance

- Procurement Exercise
- Site Selection Exercise
- Planning

## Decision

- Planning approval pending
- Business Case
- Council decision
- Consenting Process

arc21



# *Residual Waste Treatment Project (Mallusk)*

111



European Best Practice

£240M private sector investment

Council asset

300 indirect & induced jobs

18 MW of renewable energy

5% increase in recycling rates

Revenue share for councils

Landfill diversion

Net Zero CO2 commitments

Financial certainty

Public health / environmental protection



# *A Catalyst for Change*

- Instead of burying the future we can use waste to power possibility
- Potential 45-acre NI Circular Economy & Eco-Energy Park
- More than a planning decision – opportunity for local government to determine the future of waste management for a generation
- A choice of setting a new precedent for local government collaboration in infrastructure investment and delivery of policy or.....
- Drift towards System Failure – a looming crisis



# *A Case of Need*

- 124KT NI residual waste infrastructure gap by 2035 even accounting for:
  - arc21 Hightown development
  - 65% recycling rates
  - COVID-19 economic impact
- Almost 400KT municipal waste currently landfilled / exported (NI) – circa 250KT from arc21 (= 15 Million black bins/annum)
- arc21: 595KT municipal waste arisings  
302KT recycled & composted (2019/20)
- Alternative, robust facilities do not exist.



# *A Case of Need*

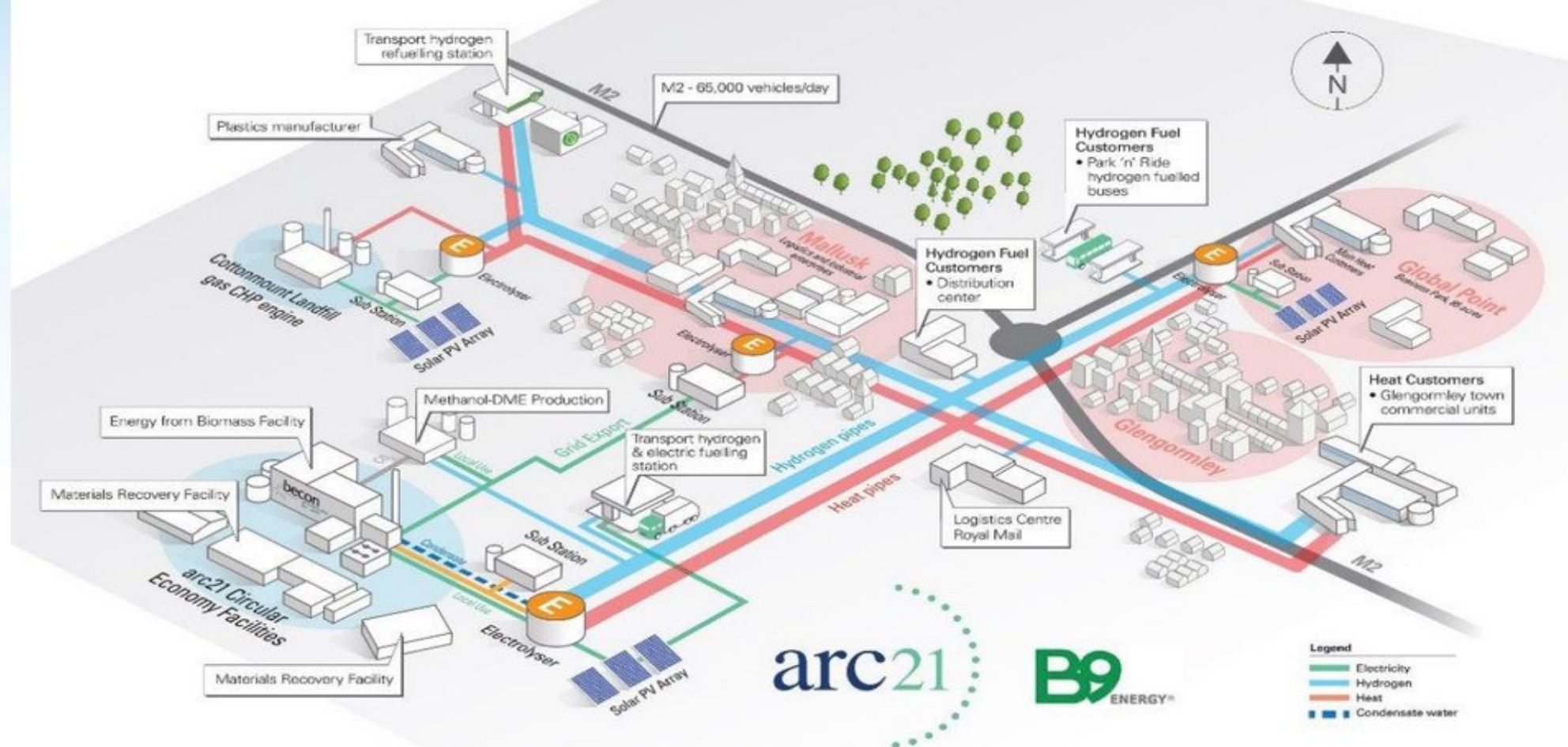
- Policy Drivers
  - Waste Hierarchy
  - Net Zero Targets
  - Circular Economy/Economic Development
  - Clean Energy production
  - Diversification of energy supplies
  - Proximity Principle
  - Waste Crime
- Imperatives
  - Public health/System resilience
  - Financial exposure
  - Time is running out.....
- Letters of Support





# Future Prootod for the Circular Economy

## Mallusk - Glengormley - Corrs Corner Decarbonisation - Enabling Clean Growth



# Questions?







## **FEBRUARY HOUSING COUNCIL BULLETIN**

The Northern Ireland Housing Council met on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 10.30 am via Conference Call.

For Information, a report of the attendance is undernoted:-

### **Present by Video Conferencing**

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Tommy Nicholl         | Mid & East Antrim Borough (Chair)          |
| Anne-Marie Fitzgerald | Fermanagh & Omagh District (Vice Chair)    |
| Mark Cooper           | Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough              |
| Nick Mathison         | Ards & North Down Borough                  |
| Jim Speers            | Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough |
| Michelle Kelly        | Belfast City                               |
| Allan Bresland        | Derry City & Strabane District             |
| Mickey Ruane          | Newry, Mourne & Down District              |
| Catherine Elattar     | Mid Ulster Borough Council                 |

### **Members Apologies**

|               |                                |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| John Finlay   | Causeway Coast & Glens Borough |
| Amanda Grehan | Lisburn & Castlereagh City     |

Discussions on the undernoted matters took place as follows:-

The Housing Executive's Chief Executive, Clark Bailie gave a verbal update on **Housing Executive's Business from the December/January Board Meeting**, which included the following items:-

The Board held a (Special Meeting) in December to discuss the Housing Executive's new Board Committee Structure and the long-term future of the Housing Executive.

At the Board Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January, the Department of Communities' Permanent Secretary, Tracy Meharg, joined the Board Meeting to share a brief summary on several issues.

Papers considered at the meeting were as follows:-

1. Tower Block Action Plan Update
2. Demolition of Monkscoole House Tower Block
3. Homelessness Response to Covid-19 & Homelessness Funding
4. Homelessness Funding Update 2020/21

5. Housing Executive Response to NIAO report on Homelessness
6. Welfare Reform Project Update
7. Approval to award a contract for Provision of an Occupational Therapist Service ECM Ardgart Place, Avonlea Gardens, Inniscarn Drive etc
8. Housing Services Customer Service Excellence Re-accreditation 2020/21
9. Response to NIRHC Out of Sight out of Mind – Travellers' Accommodation in Northern Ireland Report
10. Compliance Health & Safety Update January 2021
11. Settlement of Terminal Schedule of Dilapidations on Former NIHE Office
12. Housing Services Customer Service Excellence Re-accreditation 2020/21
13. Corporate Quarterly Report as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021
14. Land Acquisitions and Disposals Quarterly Update
15. Supporting People Programme Update

It had been agreed that this meeting should concentrate solely on Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations Consultation Outcome Report by the Department for Communities and an in-depth discussion took place.

Once the minutes of the meeting are ratified at the March Meeting, they can be accessed on the Housing Council website: [www.nihousingcouncil.org](http://www.nihousingcouncil.org)

The next Housing Council Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30 am via conference call.

Should you require any further information or have any questions regarding the content.

### **Contacts**

**Chair**, Alderman Tommy Nicholl MBE  
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BT2 8PB  
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Minutes of the 476<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
of the Northern Ireland Housing Council  
Conference Call via Webex  
Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 10.30 am

**Present at Meeting:**

**Present by Video Conferencing**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Tommy Nicholl  | Mid & East Antrim Borough (Chair)          |
| Mark Cooper    | Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough              |
| Jim Speers     | Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough |
| Mickey Ruane   | Newry, Mourne & Down District              |
| Nick Mathison  | Ards & North Down Borough                  |
| Michelle Kelly | Belfast City                               |
| Allan Bresland | Derry City & Strabane District             |
| Amanda Grehan  | Lisburn & Castlereagh City                 |

**In Attendance:**

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Paul Price     | Director of Social Housing Policy & Oversight (DfC) |
| David Polley   | Director of Housing Strategy & Co-ordination (DfC)  |
| Eilish O'Neill | Department for Communities                          |
| Kelly Cameron  | Secretary (Housing Executive Secretariat)           |

**Apologies**

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Anne-Marie Fitzgerald | Fermanagh & Omagh District (Vice Chair) |
| John Finlay           | Causeway Coast & Glens Borough          |
| Catherine Elattar     | Mid Ulster Borough                      |

|     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 1.0 | <b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b><br><br>None.   |  |
| 2.0 | <b><u>To adopt the Minutes of the 475<sup>th</sup> Housing Council Meeting held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020</u></b><br><br>It was proposed by Councillor Nick Mathison, seconded by Councillor Michelle Kelly and resolved, that the Minutes of the 475 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Housing Council held on Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair. |  |

Housing Council  
476<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council

|     |  |                |
|-----|--|----------------|
| 3.0 | <b><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes</u></b>   |                |
| 3.1 | <p><b>Invitation to the Minister for Communities - Carál Ní Chuilín to attend a future Housing Council meeting</b></p> <p>It was noted that a reply is still awaited.</p> <p><b>Agreed:</b> Paul Price to check if there is any progress on this invite.</p>   | <b>P Price</b> |
| 3.2 | <p><b>Queries by Members</b> responded to since the last meeting, in relation to policy issues have been included in your papers for information:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Mark Cooper – Information on the Warm, Well and Connected scheme</li> <li>• Alderman Amanda Grehan - Successful Affordable Warmth Scheme Applications by Council area</li> <li>• Alderman Jim Speers - Details of the emergency processes in place in the event of a boiler breaking down</li> </ul>  |                |
| 4.0 | <p><b><u>Housing Issues, Department for Communities</u></b></p> <p>Mr Paul Price and Mr David Polley highlighted the changes under the specific headings on the Department for Communities (DfC) Housing Issues:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Social Newbuild starts</b></li> </ul> <p>Mr Price reiterated that the Department for Communities are optimistic that the 1850 target will be met by the end of March 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Co-ownership</b></li> <li>• <b>Programme for Social Reform</b></li> <li>• <b>Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations Policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Reclassification of Northern Ireland Social Housing Providers</b></li> <li>• <b>Supporting People Delivery Strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>Homelessness Strategy</b></li> <li>• <b>Regulation of the Private Rented Sector</b></li> <li>• <b>Increasing Housing Supply</b></li> </ul> |                |



Housing Council  
476<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council

|  |   |                 |
|--|---|-----------------|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Affordable Warmth Scheme</b></li> </ul> <p>Alderman Grehan thanked the Department for the work they have done to deliver this scheme with Councils and welcomed the potential of the secured capital budget for £16m pending consultation for this scheme in 2021/22 and also the changes to the schemes eligibility which will be made in early 2021 (raising the income threshold).</p> <p>Mr Polley undertook to provide Mr Mathison with details on the Affordable Warmth Scheme budget figures for the last few years, compared to the projected £16 m requested for the coming year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NIHE Rent Increase</b></li> <li>• <b>ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014 -2020</b></li> <li>• <b>Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes Framework</b></li> <li>• <b>Options to remove historical debt from the NIHE and exclude it from having to pay Corporation Tax</b></li> <li>• <b>Long term rent trajectory</b></li> <li>• <b>Affordability of social rents</b></li> </ul> | <b>D Polley</b> |
|--|---|-----------------|

|            |   |  |
|------------|---|--|
| <b>6.0</b> | <p><b>Next Fifty Years: Working Together to Create the Future of Northern Ireland Social Housing</b></p> <p>Professor Peter Roberts, Chair of the Housing Executive gave a presentation on the Next Fifty Years: Working Together to Create the Future of Northern Ireland Social Housing. (Copies of the slides are appended to these minutes – Appendix A).</p> <p>The Chair, Alderman Tommy Nicholl thanked Professor Roberts for a very informative and encouraging presentation and gave an assurance that the Housing Council would continue to work together and enhance the relationship to ensure a positive future for social housing.</p> <p>Alderman Nicholl referred to the proposal to increase the number of new social homes built - from 1,900 per annum to 2,100 per annum in 2021/22 and to 2,300 per annum by the end of year 5 and how the infrastructure was to be managed as there were some areas have reached their capacity, and as a result NI Water</p> |  |
|------------|---|--|



Housing Council  
476<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>will not be able to permit new connections, which may result in development at locations across Northern Ireland being constrained.</p> <p>Professor Roberts explained currently if the Housing Associations deliver homes by using an existing footprint that is already serving water supply and sewage that minimises the problem, he added it is recognised that there are capacity issues, but in some situations the local service systems is not at capacity, therefore if the Housing Executive can re-provision the increase of the number of properties on certain land, then there is provision for supply without having to provide additional sewage capacity.</p> <p>Professor Roberts added the Housing Executive are exploring innovative ways, looking at affordable renewable energy in some areas of under supply of electricity, the Housing Executive can use renewables and also examining package plants to deal with sewage issues.</p> <p>It was acknowledged at a recent presentation by a representative from NI Water Service highlighted that there is significant investment needed for wastewater and water infrastructure within the Province and if under investment continues, there will be significant constraints on economic growth and damage to the environment.</p> <p>Professor Roberts explained that Package Plants are ideal for rural areas, deliver of factory constructed housing which has huge thermal insulation properties which reduces energy supply for these houses and you install a package plant, which deals with its own waste and the only service the property requires is electricity and water supply. Professor Roberts highlighted that there are several examples within the United Kingdom and the infrastructure needs supporting to enable the social housing programme to be delivered without obstruction.</p> <p>In response to Councillor Mathison question, Professor Roberts explained that Affordable Housing needs to be 'affordable' in order for people to be able to pay. Mr Polley assured Members that it is not the intention to following the UK model of affordable housing. Mr Polley also assured Members that the recommendations of the Fundamental Review of Allocations will reflect those in need of social housing and not being directed into the private rented sector.</p> |  |
|--|---|--|

Housing Council  
476<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council

|     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
|     | <p>Referring to Community Cohesion, it was agreed that social housing should not be a single identity, shared future housing should continue to be promoted for the future in Northern Ireland and the different tenures within a scheme should not be segregated.</p> <p>The Chair, Alderman Nicholl reiterated the need to working collaboratively together for the future of communities.</p>  |  |
| 7.0 | <p><b>Private Rented Sector Proposals</b></p> <p>Eilish O'Neill gave a presentation on the Review of the role and regulation of the Private Rented Sector (Copies of the Slides are appended to these minutes – Appendix B).</p> <p>Members welcomed recommendations which will include measures to improve the safety, security and quality of the Private Rented Sector and would like to see these changes implemented as soon as possible.</p> <p>In response to Councillor Mathison's question in relation to the proposed extension to the notice period given to tenants to vacate the private rented accommodation, Ms O'Neill explained that following the Consultation period in 2016, it was proposed an extension from the period of four weeks should be extended to eight weeks for landlords to give notice to quit. The Minister feels that this should be extended further and this issue is currently being addressed with the Departments Legal department.</p> <p>Mr Speers referred to the transfer the Landlords Registration Scheme to Local Councils and hoped that sufficient funds would be made available to Councils to support the scheme.</p> <p>Members recognised that there was significant work to be carried out within the private rented sector and in particular, Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's).</p> <p>The Chair thanked Ms O'Neill for a very informative and welcoming presentation.</p> |  |
| 7.0 | <p><b><u>Fundamental Review of Social Housing Allocations – Consultation Outcome Report</u></b></p> <p>Members noted the Report, which will be subject to a presentation at the February Meeting.</p>   |  |

Housing Council  
476<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council

|      |  |                    |
|------|--|--------------------|
|      | <p><b>AGREED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to give sufficient time for debate and discussion for this item, this would be the only item presented at the February agenda;</li> <li>• Members to submit any questions prior to the Presentation to the Secretary in order to be passed to the Department for Communities.</li> </ul> | <b>All Members</b> |
| 8.0  | <p><b><u>Social Housing Development Programme Housing Starts and Completions</u></b></p> <p>Members noted the report.</p>  |                    |
| 9.0  | <p><b><u>Housing Executive's Scheme Starts December 2020</u></b></p> <p>Members noted the report.</p>  |                    |
| 10.0 | <p><b><u>Date and Venue of Next Meeting – Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 10.30 am via Webex</u></b></p>   |                    |

The Meeting concluded at 12.30 pm.

Housing Council  
476<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council



## Appendix A



**Northern Ireland Housing Council Meeting**  
**14 January 2021**


**THE NEXT FIFTY YEARS:**  
**Working Together to Create the Future of**  
**Northern Ireland Social Housing**

**Professor Peter Roberts**  
**Chair of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive**

**THE BIG ISSUES**

- The undersupply of social and affordable homes: this is evident in the continuing crisis of housing stress and homelessness; the inability of some people to afford even a basic home; the inadequacy of some properties - a lack of essential services and space within and outwith the home; the capacity of the sector to meet demand for housing; and the permanent use of temporary measures.
- The condition of NIHE stock and the funding challenge - the stock is old, in some cases near to end-of-life, below modern standards and environmentally inefficient.



## **AND THE CONSEQUENCES**

Housing  
Executive

- Without action on a number of fronts our communities face:
  - growing housing stress;
  - continuing and growing homelessness;
  - increasing real costs of housing and services;
  - falling quality of Housing Executive homes;
  - a loss of Housing Executive homes;
  - and other consequences that may weaken community cohesion.

[www.nihc.gov.uk](http://www.nihc.gov.uk)

## **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE**

Housing  
Executive

- The Minister's Statement offers a comprehensive programme for the much needed revitalisation of the Housing Executive and the supply of social and other homes.
- But the Housing Executive needs the tools and strong partners to tackle the issues, for example:
  - the ability to borrow;
  - the write-off of historic debt and exemption from Corporation Tax;

[www.nihc.gov.uk](http://www.nihc.gov.uk)



## WHAT MIGHT GOOD LOOK LIKE?



- An increase in the number of new social homes built - from 1,900 per annum to 2,100 per annum in 2021/22 and to 2,300 per annum by the end of year 5.
- The introduction of more cost-effective and environmentally-sound construction methods that also allow for more rapid delivery.
- An increase in the conversion of appropriate commercial, office and other buildings, including the creation of extracare and specialised supported housing units.

www.nihc.gov.uk

## FINALLY



- Within this view of the future there are choices to be made about the scale, speed and sustainability of the future supply of social and other housing, and these relate to a number of factors, such as:
  - land availability and planning status;
  - infrastructure provision - social and economic;
  - construction sector capacity and methods of supply.
- Equally, it is likely that local circumstances will vary, even within the area of a Council, and this means that a 'one size fits all' approach is not appropriate - in order to create the future housing stock it is vital for Councils to be the principal partner of the Housing Executive - together we need to engage in comprehensive conversations about how our communities can be developed and managed.

www.nihc.gov.uk

Appendix B



**NIHE Landlord – The Challenge**

- NIHE owns and needs to maintain its 85,000 homes
- These homes need investment (using 2018 figures):
  - £7.1billion over 30 years
  - £3 billion over the first 11 years
- Currently NIHE can only afford c.£160million/year

## How did this happen?

- Low rents
  - Insufficient increases in rents over last 15-20 years; and
  - A HMT-imposed rent freeze (welfare reform)
- Aging stock
- Liabilities
  - Corporation Tax
  - Historic Debt
- Inability to borrow without scoring in terms of public expenditure



## The proposed solutions

- **A comprehensive rental review**
- Ensure rents are at a level affordable for social tenants and sufficient to provide a sustainable future for the Housing Executive
- **Revitalisation of the Housing Executive Landlord**
- Changing the Landlord so that it may borrow to fund investment without this scoring against public expenditure



## Cost of 'doing nothing'

- Significant loss of NIHE homes over 5-10 years;
- Cycle of decline for entire NIHE;
- Acute territorial difficulties – how to make decline neutral in its impact?
- Negation of new social housing development;
- Negative curve on housing stress and housing supply



## Minister's Commitment

- Revitalisation of the Housing Executive Landlord so that it may borrow to fund investment with a preference for a co-operative or mutual model,
- Ensure rents are at a level affordable for tenants and able to provide a sustainable future for the Housing Executive
- Exempting NIHE liabilities from Corporation Tax and finding options for removal of legacy debts
- Get the Housing Executive building again
- Consultation on Housing Executive's House Sales scheme



## Benefits

- Turning the curve on "housing Stress";
- More good, sustainable social homes;
- Investment in Housing Executive homes
- Change but continuity for tenants



## How long would reform take, once agreement is reached?

- Years 1-3 – Implementation:
  - Rent agreement
  - Political agreement
  - Primary legislation;
  - Tenant consultation;
  - Set up new organisation
  - Secure borrowing
  - Stock and employee transfers
- Years 4-9: £350m of investment per year





Housing Council  
476<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Northern Ireland Housing Council

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Office of the Local Government  
Boundaries Commissioner  
[info@lgbc-ni.org.uk](mailto:info@lgbc-ni.org.uk)

By email:

3 February 2021

### **Local Government Boundaries Review in Northern Ireland**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Today I am writing to inform you that in my role as Local Government Boundaries Commissioner I have taken the first statutory step in my review of the 11 district council areas in Northern Ireland. The statutory basis for my appointment, the procedure that applies to the Review and my recommendations is the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972.

The independence of this review is paramount and its scope is to review the boundaries and names of the 11 local government districts, which are specified in the Local Government (Boundaries) Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, and number, boundaries and names of the wards into which each district is divided.

The Review is facilitated by a tripartite agreement between my office, the Electoral Office NI, and Ordnance Survey NI, a division of Land & Property Services in the Department of Finance. By June 2021 I plan to publish provisional recommendations and hold a public consultation.

I now invite proposals from councils, political parties, associations, organisations and individual members of the public in relation to the boundary and name of the 11 districts: and the number, boundaries and names of the wards within the 11 districts.

If you would like to submit a proposal or discuss any aspect of this please contact  
[Info@lgbc-ni.org.uk](mailto:Info@lgbc-ni.org.uk)

More information about the Review will be accessed through the website available at:  
[www.lgbc-ni.org.uk](http://www.lgbc-ni.org.uk)

Yours sincerely,



**Sarah Havlin**

**Local Government Boundaries Commissioner**

cc Jenny McGuigan, LGBC Office.



Department for  
**Infrastructure**  
An Roinn  
**Bonneagair**  
[www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

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From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure  
**Nichola Mallon MLA**

Ms Marie Ward  
Chief Executive  
Newry Mourne and Down District Council

[council@nmandd.org](mailto:council@nmandd.org)

Room 708  
Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
BELFAST  
BT2 8GB  
Telephone: (028) 9054 0540  
Email: [Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

Your reference: SC/19/2020  
Our reference: CORR-3248-2020

21 December 2020

Dear Ms Ward

**GRUGGANDOO WIND FARM (Planning Ref: P/2015/0218/F)**

Thank you for your letter of 19 November 2020 in relation to the above planning application and the Members request that the matter be referred for an Independent Public Inquiry.

I can advise that consideration of the application remains ongoing, with a small number of consultation responses still awaited. When all statutory processes are complete, officials will provide me with a detailed submission for my consideration and I will decide at that time whether to proceed by way of a Public Inquiry or Notice of Opinion to approve or refuse the application.

**NICHOLA MALLON MLA**  
Minister for Infrastructure



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

Liam Hannaway  
Chief Executive  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  
District Council Offices  
O'Hagan House, Monaghan Row  
Newry  
BT35 8DJ

19 February 2021

Dear Mr Hannaway,

**Protection from Stalking Bill**

The Protection from Stalking Bill was introduced into the Assembly on 18 January 2021. The Bill passed Second Stage on 8 February 2021 and the Committee Stage commenced on 9 February 2021.

The Committee for Justice would welcome your views/comments on the content of the Bill.

Your written submission should be structured to address specific clauses of the Bill. If appropriate, it should include any amendments you wish to propose to the text of the Bill. Information regarding the Bill can be obtained from the Assembly's website <http://nia1.me/4fm> or can be provided on request by emailing the Committee at [protectionfromstalkingbill@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:protectionfromstalkingbill@niassembly.gov.uk).

The closing date for written submissions is **16 April 2021**.

Written evidence should be submitted in Word format and preferably by email to [protectionfromstalkingbill@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:protectionfromstalkingbill@niassembly.gov.uk) or, by post, to The Committee Clerk, Room 242, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX.



Unless indicated otherwise it will be assumed that those submitting written evidence have no objection to it being made public by the Committee.

If you have any queries or require any further information please contact the Committee Clerk, Christine Darrah, on 028 9052 1629.

Yours sincerely

*Christine Darrah*

**Christine Darrah**  
**Clerk to the Committee for Justice**

# Programme

THURSDAY 15 APRIL 2021

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0900

Chairman: **David Whelan**, Deputy Editor, **agendaNi** magazine

*Housing policy update in Northern Ireland*

**Deirdre Hargey**, MLA

Minister for Communities (invited)

*Transforming the delivery of housing services*

**Grainia Long**

Incoming Chief Executive

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

1245

1345

*The impact of Covid-19 on homelessness in Northern Ireland*

**Jim Dennison**

Chief Executive, Simon Community

*Housing First in Finland and eradicating homelessness*

**Dr Saija Turunen**

Research Manager, Y Foundation, Finland

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS / PANEL DISCUSSION

1045

COMFORT BREAK

1115

**PUTTING PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE**

*Empowering communities with digital skills*

**Stef McKillop**

Digital Inclusion Officer, Supporting Communities

1445

*A whole housing approach for the survivors of domestic abuse*

**Caroline Mackechnie-Jarvis**

Whole Housing Programme Manager, **Standing Together** and **Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance**

*Effective tenant engagement during the pandemic*

**Ursula Toner**

Regional Head, Tenant & Client Services

**Choice Housing** (invited)

*The Perfect Storm: The impact of Covid-19 on private renters*

**Dr Martina McAuley**

Research and Evaluation Co-ordinator, **Housing Rights**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS / PANEL DISCUSSION

COMFORT BREAK

**PANEL DISCUSSION**

**HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS: PLANNING FOR A POST-COVID FUTURE**

**Ben Collins**

Chief Executive

**Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations**

**Professor Paddy Gray OBE**

Vice Chair, **Glasgow Housing Association**

Chair, **Connswater Homes** and

Board Member, **The Wheatley Housing Group**

**Clare McCarty**

Group Chief Executive, **Clanmil Housing Executive**

**John McLean OBE**

Chief Executive, **Radius Housing**

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY AND CONFERENCE CLOSE



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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WEB: [www.nihousing.agendani.com](http://www.nihousing.agendani.com)