



December 1st, 2023

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 4th December 2023** at **6:00 pm** in **Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre & MS Teams.**

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023

 *Action Sheet Council Meeting 2023 11 06.docx*

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Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing

4.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023

For Approval

 *Council Minutes 2023 11 06.pdf*

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5.0 Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 30 October 2023

For Approval

 *Special Council Minutes - 2023 10 30.pdf*

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6.0 Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023

For Approval

 *Special Council Minutes 2023 11 06.pdf*

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Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption

7.0 Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 13 November 2023

For Approval

 *Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Minutes 2023-11-13.pdf*

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8.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 November 2023

For Approval

 *Strategy Policy Resources Meeting Minutes 2023-11-16.pdf*

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

8.1 SPR/166/2023: Appendix 1 - Newry City Park - Contract for Funding

This item is 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 and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

[Appendix 1 Newry City Park- Contract for Funding.pdf](#)

Not included

Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption

9.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2023

For Approval

[Active and Healthy Communities Minutes 2023 11 20.pdf](#)

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10.0 Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 22 November 2023

[Minutes -Sustainability and Environment Minutes 2023.11.22.pdf](#)

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11.0 Planning Section

There were no issues arising.

Correspondence

12.0 Letter regarding Notice of Motion: Reprioritisation of the A1

For Information

Letters dated 13 October 2023 from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council attached.

Letters dated 29 November 2023 from Department for Infrastructure & Northern Ireland Office attached.

[Reprioritisation of A1 - ABC Council.pdf](#)

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[Reprioritisation of A1 - LCC Council.pdf](#)

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[Reprioritisation of A1 - DfI Response.pdf](#)

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[Reprioritisation of A1 - NIO Response.pdf](#)

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13.0 Letter from Ards and North Down Borough Council regarding: Lifelong Learning Campaign

Letter dated 20 November 2023 attached.

 *Ards and North Down Borough Council Lifelong Learning Campaign.pdf*

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14.0 Correspondence relating to Barclays, Newry Branch

 *Reasons-For-Closure-Newry Barclays.pdf*

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Notices of Motion

15.0 Notice of Motion - Flood Defences

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Enright:

"Recent flooding has exposed the clear inadequacy of flood defences within the District. To address this, and in the absence of a functioning Stormont Executive to swiftly invest in flood defence infrastructure, council will work with Louth County council, the Irish Government and relevant Stormont Departments to submit a funding application to the Shared Island unit for upgrades to relevant flood defence systems in the district. In particular this work will consider: The ongoing Newry Flood Alleviation projects; The Shimna and Burren River Flood Alleviation Schemes in Newcastle; The lack of capital investment in Downpatrick with particular reference to water flow at the New Belfast Road Bridge and the lack of capacity and ability of the Quoile Barrier to release enough water between high tides; To seek a replacement for the Quoile Barrier in a similar manner to the Lagan River Barrier with a design suitable for the next 100 years; Examine the outcome of work undertaken in the past in areas like Rostrevor, Flurry Bridge and other areas to assess the effectiveness of investment and any future plans; Seek an update on the adequacy of the schedule of rivers maintenance work across the District".

16.0 Notice of Motion - Flood Preparedness

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Truesdale:

"That this Council explores the Purchasing and storing of sand-less sandbags and flood barriers and exploration of other forms of more environmentally conscious flood defences suitable for a range of flooding incidents and sewage protection;Writes to the NIEA calling for the immediate implementation of a flood warning system in line with England, Scotland and Wales, and fully implement the creation of

Community Flood Plans such as those used by the Environment Agency; Meets with the Drainage and Flooding Council and Rivers Agency to explore the adequacy and performance of their flood-defence capital investments in the District; Examines the maintenance schedules in NM&D District for shores, road sheughs , gullies and major drains like the plank or Saul drains in Downpatrick between the different agencies."

17.0 Notice of Motion - Utilising Green Spaces

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Campbell:

"This Council recognises the importance of utilising green spaces and enhancing them for the benefit of our local communities; Council notes the positive impact that green spaces can have on people's mental health and well-being; Council further notes The Woodland Trusts assessment that trees can act as a natural flood mitigation measure; Council therefore will look at options to deliver a native tree planting scheme in Dunleath park which will not only enhance civic greenspace for the local community but will also assist with potential future flooding incidents."

18.0 Notice of Motion - Emotional Health and Wellbeing of Young People

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Galbraith:

"This Council notes that young people experiencing emotional problems may find it difficult to engage with the education process to reach their full potential, especially those aged 16 – 18, and may require sustained contact with a qualified adult who is not directly involved with their education or training and can provide necessary therapies; welcomes the work undertaken by the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) as well as the support in further education to support the emotional health and wellbeing of young people, supports the need for schools, colleges and other youth providers to bring in external agencies with necessary expertise when there is limited access to support and will write to all schools, colleges and youth providers in the District to ascertain the challenges they are facing in obtaining these resources, and commits to revisit this matter once responses have been received to determine if additional financial support may be required."

19.0 Notice of Motion - Supporting Fair Pay for Workers

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Hanlon:

"This Council extends solidarity to education workers who recently took part in strike action; Acknowledges that these workers are vital to running our schools with school transport, school meals, special educational needs support, hygiene and other important support services; Supports them in their campaign for fair pay and conditions; And calls on the Department of Education, the Education Authority and the British Government to work together to deliver fair pay for these public sector workers."

20.0 Notice of Motion - Town & City Gift Cards

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Lee-Surginor:

"To support traders in the wake of recent flooding and help stimulate spending in the local economy, Council will explore setting up a local gift card or voucher scheme and, subject to committee approval, support the initial set up costs of such a scheme. This would be similar to the gift card programmes that have been highly successful in Enniskillen, Ballymena, Mid Ulster and elsewhere, which are easily facilitated via a subscription service with a third party provider. The intention would be to trial this scheme in Downpatrick initially, with potential for expansion to other parts of the District."

21.0 Notice of motion - Bank Closures and Euro ATMs

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Mathers

"This Council notes its concern with Ulster Banks decision to close another ten of its branches resulting in the loss of 21 jobs and removal of access to cash and face to face services; acknowledges that the move towards increased digitalisation will make it harder for small businesses to access finance and for people to access cash, advice and ATM services; recognises the worrying trend that 52 branches across various banks have closed in the last three years; and calls on this Council to invite the Financial Services Unions (FSU) to make a presentation to the chamber regarding its

campaign calling for Ulster Bank to reverse these closures, protect jobs and maintain its branch network; and supports efforts that would protect our local communities and prevent further branch closures in the next few years. The Council recognises that a considerable number of workers travel across the border to work in our local economy in Newry and surrounding areas; We acknowledge the frustration that these workers have with there being only one ATM in Newry that dispenses their wages in Euros; This Council will write to the main banks and ATM providers to request that additional euro dispensing ATMs are provided in the city and further calls on an incoming Executive to set up a banking forum to look at the wider issue of access to cash and banking services."

22.0 Notice of Motion - Cystic Fibrosis Medication

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Andrews:

"That this Council notes with extreme concern proposals by NICE to remove its NHS recommendation for Kaftrio due to rising costs; calls upon NICE to reconsider this proposal without hesitation to make such medication available to all in need; and will write to the Department of Health to request an assessment of the efficacy of this drug to help save lives since its introduction in January 2022; and to consider amending the minimum age for recipients of this medication to 2 so as to ensure that all those who suffer from cystic fibrosis have the best start in life."

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews
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Cllr Callum Bowsie
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Mrs Fionnuala Branagh
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Cllr Jim Brennan
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Cllr Pete Byrne
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Mr Gerard Byrne
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Cllr Philip Campbell
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Mr Andrew Cassells
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Cllr William Clarke
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Mrs Linda Cummins
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Cllr Laura Devlin
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Ms Louise Dillon
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Cllr Cadogan Enright
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Cllr Killian Feehan
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Cllr Doire Finn
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Cllr Aoife Finnegan
.....
Ms Joanne Fleming
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Cllr Conor Galbraith
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Cllr Mark Gibbons
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Cllr Oonagh Hanlon
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Cllr Glyn Hanna
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Cllr Valerie Harte
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Cllr Roisin Howell
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Ms Catherine Hughes
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Cllr Jonathan Jackson
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Cllr Geraldine Kearns
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Miss Veronica Keegan
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Mrs Josephine Kelly
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Cllr Tierna Kelly
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Mrs Sheila Kieran
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Cllr Cathal King
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Cllr Mickey Larkin
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Cllr David Lee-Surginor
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Cllr Alan Lewis
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Cllr Oonagh Magennis
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Mr Conor Mallon
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Cllr Aidan Mathers
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Cllr Declan McAteer
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Cllr Leeanne McEvoy
.....
Jonathan McGilly
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Cllr Andrew McMurray
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Catrina Miskelly
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Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston
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Cllr Declan Murphy
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Cllr Kate Murphy
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Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Cllr Áine Quinn
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Cllr Michael Rice
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Ms Alison Robb
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Mr Peter Rooney
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Donna Starkey
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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 Jill Truesdale
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Mrs Marie Ward
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ACTIONS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS

| Minute Ref | Subject | Decision | Lead Officer | Actions taken/ Progress to date | Remove from Action Sheet Y/N |
|-------------------|---|---|---------------------|--|---|
| C/178/2019 | Notice of Motion - C/131/2019: Live Animals in Circuses | At the request of Councillor McAteer it was agreed the motion remain on the action sheet. | Democratic Services | | N |
| C/084/2022 | Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 28.03.22 - with NIAS & SHSCT | It was agreed to bring forth problem solving solutions to the NIAS in all facets of their work and for this action to be retained on the Action Sheet to keep track of progress | Democratic Services | | N |

ACTION SHEET - COUNCIL MEETING - MONDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2023

| Minute Ref | Subject | Decision | Lead Officer | Actions taken/ Progress to date | Remove from Action Sheet Y/N |
|-------------------|--|---|---------------------|--|---|
| C/206/2023 | Action sheet from meeting held on 02.10.2023 | The action sheet was noted. | Democratic Services | Noted | Y |
| C/207/2023 | Minutes of Council Meeting held on 02.10.2023 | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted. | Democratic Services | Noted | Y |
| C/208/2023 | Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 25.09.23 | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, subject to agreed amendment. | Democratic Services | Noted | Y |

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|------------|---|--|---|--|---|
| C/209/2023 | <i>Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 09.10.2023</i> | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, subject to agreed amendment. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted | Y |
| C/210/2023 | <i>Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 12.10.23</i> | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, subject to agreed amendment. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted | Y |
| C/211/2023 | <i>Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting 16.10.23</i> | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, subject to agreed amendment. It was agreed at the request of Councillor Finn that Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport provide an update in relation to the learner pool within Newry Leisure Centre. | <i>Democratic Services</i> <i>P Tamati</i> | Noted | |
| C/212/2023 | <i>Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting 17.10.23</i> | The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted | Y |
| C/213/2023 | <i>Planning Section</i> | There were no issues arising. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted | Y |
| C/214/2023 | <i>Response from Department of Infrastructure - Notice of Motion</i> | It was agreed that Council will contact Department of Infrastructure outlining displeasure at the letter and reiterate that the Ballynahinch bypass needed to be delivered. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted Correspondence sent | |

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| | <i>C/173/2023 Ballynahinch bypass</i> | | | | |
| <i>C/215/2023</i> | <i>Response from Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs re Notice of motion C/177/2023 Establishment of an Independent Environmental Protection Agency</i> | The response was noted. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted | |
| <i>C/216/2023</i> | <i>Response from Department of Health re notice of motion C/193/2023 Menopause</i> | The response was noted. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted | |
| <i>C/217/2023</i> | <i>Response from Department of Health re Notice of Motion C/203/2023 Daisy Hill Hospital</i> | The response was noted. It was agreed to respond to the Department of Health in relation to the weighting attributed to change factors regarding Daisy Hill Hospital and when these were likely to be implemented. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted Correspondence sent. | |
| <i>C/218/2023</i> | <i>Response from Warrenpoint Harbour Authority re Notice of Motion C/197/2023 Foul Smell from Port</i> | The response was noted. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted | |

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| C/219/2023 | <i>Notice of Motion - Open Water Swimming</i> | The Motion was referred to the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6 | <i>Democratic Services</i> <i>C Mallon</i> | Noted | |
| C/220/2023 | <i>Notice of Motion - Childcare Strategy</i> | The Motion was referred to the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6 | <i>Democratic Services</i> <i>C Mallon</i> | Noted | |
| C/221/2023 | <i>Notice of Motion - A1 prioritisation</i> | It was agreed that Council recognises the urgent need for A1 infrastructure upgrades and the strong public support for improvements. This Council commits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure urging a reprioritisation of the A1, an inclusion in tier one Infrastructure projects and budget reallocation to achieve Phase 2. • Writing to the Executive and Minister for Infrastructure, when the Assembly is restored, to prioritise the A1 and urgently redirect budget to the upgrades. • Writing to the Secretary of State, urging prioritisation of the project and to engage with The Department for Infrastructure to ensure the improvements are a Tier 1 priority • That the Department for Infrastructure be instructed to commence work on proposals for the next stage from Loughbrickland to Newry. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted Correspondence sent | |
| C/222/2023 | <i>Notice of Motion - Initiative regarding Livestock worrying</i> | The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6 | <i>Democratic Services</i> <i>A Cassells</i> | Noted | |
| C/223/2023 | <i>Notice of Motion - Prostrate Cancer Drug in</i> | It was agreed Council expresses serious concern that the latest cancer drug, Abiraterone to tackle Prostate Cancer isn't | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted Correspondence | |

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| | <i>Northern Ireland</i> | being made readily available to Northern Ireland men with early-stage tumours, whereas this drug is more widely available in Scotland and Wales. It was agreed Council writes to the Permanent Secretaries for the Department for Health and Finance, as well as the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and calls for a start date for this urgent and lifesaving change. | | sent | |
| <i>C/224/2023</i> | <i>Notice of Motion - Violence in Gaza and Southern Israel</i> | It was agreed Council condemns the horrifying violence and indiscriminate murder of civilians; expresses its solidarity with civilians in the region who face the threat of air strikes, rocket attacks, abduction and the most unthinkable forms of murder every day; calls for an immediate ceasefire; the delivery of humanitarian aid to provide relief to the civilian population in Gaza; further calls for the immediate and safe release of all hostages; supports a full International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation of potential war crimes committed; and, calls for full adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law; an international intervention with leadership brought to bear in securing dialogue, a lasting peace, and a long-term solution that ends this crisis. Furthermore, this Council writes to both the UK and Irish Governments calling for the immediate expulsion of the Israeli ambassadors. | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted Correspondence sent | |
| <i>C/225/2023</i> | <i>Notice of Motion - Southern Health and Social Care Trust Smear Test</i> | It was agreed Council expresses its support for the thousands of women who will now have their smear tests re-checked by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust; further expresses its concerns over the failings of the | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted Correspondence sent | |

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| | | <p>Southern Trust; welcomes the introduction of HPV testing in the North; calls for the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal College of Pathologists report 'We Can End Cervical Cancer'; will write to the Department of Health to reflect this motion; and request an update on the implementation of the recommendations within the 'We Can End Cervical Cancer' report.</p> <p>To include in the letter to the Department of Health to ensure sufficient funding for HPV testing in the timeframe indicated.</p> <p>It was agreed to include in the letter to the Department of Health to ensure sufficient funding for HPV testing in the timeframe indicated.</p> | | | |
| C/226/2023 | <i>Notice of Motion - Bereavement Support</i> | <p>Council acknowledges the grief and the trauma associated with the passing of a loved one, the loss of a family member or a friend can have a profound impact on an individual but in particular on a child or a young person; Council further acknowledges and commends the great work that schools do in supporting their pupils in the event of a bereavement but accepts that they are not sufficiently equipped or resourced to provide the comprehensive level of support that may be required in some circumstances</p> <p>Council will write to all the schools in the district to ascertain their views in relation to the matter in order to gain an understanding of the resources that are required to deliver the level of support our pupils require in the event of a bereavement.</p> | <i>Democratic Services</i> | Noted. Correspondence sent | |
| C/227/2023 | <i>Notice of Motion - Road Safety</i> | <p>The Motion was referred to the Active & Healthy Communities Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6</p> | <i>Democratic Services</i> <i>P Tamati</i> | Noted. | |

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| | | | <i>A Robb</i> | | |
| <i>END</i> | | | | | |

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**NMD/C/**

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 6 November 2023 at 6.00pm in Downshire Chamber

In the Chair: Councillor V Harte

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|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| In attendance in Chamber: | Councillor T Andrews | Councillor C Bowsie |
| | Councillor P Byrne | Councillor P Campbell |
| | Councillor W Clarke | Councillor L Devlin |
| | Councillor D Finn | Councillor A Finnegan |
| | Councillor C Galbraith | Councillor O Hanlon |
| | Councillor G Hanna | Councillor R Howell |
| | Councillor J Jackson | Councillor G Kearns |
| | Councillor T Kelly | Councillor C King |
| | Councillor M Larkin | Councillor D Lee-Surginor |
| | Councillor A Lewis | Councillor O Magennis |
| | Councillor A Mathers | Councillor D McAteer |
| | Councillor L McEvoy | Councillor A McMurray |
| | Councillor S O'Hare | Councillor D Murphy |
| | Councillor S Murphy | Councillor A Quinn |
| Councillor M Ruane | Councillor G Sharvin | |
| Councillor J Tinnelly | Councillor J Truesdale | |

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|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| In attendance via Teams: | Councillor M Gibbons | Councillor M Rice |
| | Councillor D Taylor | |

Officials in attendance in Chamber:

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
 Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment
 Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

Officials in attendance Via Teams:

Mr A Patterson, Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism

C/204/2023 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Brennan, Enright, K Murphy and Reilly.

The Chairperson thanked everyone involved for their help and support in the flooding emergency over the past week. She said it was time for the talking to be set aside and action to be taken as soon as possible to help everyone involved.

On behalf of Council, the Chairperson extended thoughts and prayers with the family and friends of Dylan Vallely who was critically ill after being involved in a Road Traffic Collision in Camlough two weeks ago.

The Chairperson also extended Council's thoughts and prayers to the family and friends of all those involved in the horrific accident at the Gosford/Markethill junction over the weekend.

The Chairperson along with Councillors Devlin, Hanlon, Jackson, McAteer, McMurray and Taylor on behalf of their respective parties wished former Councillor Michael Savage all the best in his new role as Chief Executive of Newry Chamber of Commerce.

Councillor Hanna asked Members to remember in their thoughts and prayers Tracey Smith from Ballymartin on her tragic passing.

Councillors Tinnelly, Gibbons and McAteer paid tribute to and expressed their condolences for the late Anthony Williamson.

C/205/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C/206/2023 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 OCTOBER 2023

Read: Action sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 2 October 2023 (copy circulated).

Agreed: The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 2 October 2023 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Finn.

C/207/2023 **COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 OCTOBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 2 October 2023 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 2 October 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Devlin.**

C/208/2023 **SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 25 September 2023 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 25 September 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Andrews subject to an amendment that Councillor Larkin was in attendance in the Chamber and not via Teams.**

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION**C/209/2023** **MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 9 October 2023 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 9 October 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, subject to an amendment with regard to Councillor Bowsie being in the chamber, on the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Hanna.**

C/210/2023 **MINUTES OF STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2023**

Read: Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 October 2023 (copy circulated).

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Tinnelly, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on item **SPR/148/2023: Report on Conacre Lettings and SPR/150/2023: Forest Park Charging** which related to exempt information by virtue of para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local /Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

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

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

SPR/148/2023: **Report on Conacre Lettings**

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Tinnelly, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed an expression of interest in respect to cutting of grass at the hay meadow at Kilbroney Park be issued and that Council enter into a conacre licence agreement for a period of 1 year rather than 4 years and that officers explore other options and bring report back to officers after 12 months.

SPR/150/2023: **Forest Park Charging**

During discussion a proposed amendment by Councillor Tinnelly, seconded by Councillor Hanna to approve a free carpark pass for any vehicle owner within the District was put to a recorded vote the results were as follows (copy appended to these minutes)

FOR: 7
AGAINST: 28
ABSTENTIONS: 0

The proposed amendment was lost.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 October 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the**

proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor McAteer, subject to the following:

- **an amendment with regard to Councillor McAteer being noted on the attendance list;**
- **SPR/148/2023: Report on Conacre Lettings : it was agreed an expression of interest in respect to cutting of grass at the hay meadow at Kilbroney Park be issued and that Council enter into a conacre licence agreement for a period of 1 year rather than 4 years and that officers explore other options and bring report back to officers after 12 months.**

C/211/2023 MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2023

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16 October 2023 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16 October 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Magennis subject to an amendment to include Councillor Lee-Surginor in attendance via Teams.**

It was agreed at the request of Councillor Finn that Mr Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport provide an update in relation to the learner pool within Newry Leisure Centre.

C/212/2023 MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2023

Read: Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 October 2023 (copy circulated).

SE/106/2023: Notice of Motion re: Review of Waste Collection Services

In response for an update on timescales regarding his Notice of Motion regarding a review of waste collection services Mr Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment confirmed that as the minutes had now been approved by Council the matter would be progressed.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 October 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Finn.**

C/213/2023 PLANNING SECTION

There were no issues arising.

CORRESPONDENCE**C/214/2023 RESPONSE FROM DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/173/2023 BALLYNAHINCH BYPASS**

Read: Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure regarding Ballynahinch Bypass dated 10 October 2023. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Andrews voiced his disappointment in the response received from the Department for Infrastructure and stated this would likely lead to further delays to the long-running proposal for the Ballynahinch Bypass.

Councillor Andrews proposed, seconded by Councillor Galbraith that Council write back to the Department for Infrastructure outlining Council's displeasure at the letter received and that the Ballynahinch Bypass needed to be delivered.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Galbraith that Council contact the Department for Infrastructure outlining the displeasure at the letter received and that the Ballynahinch Bypass needed to be delivered.

C/215/2023 RESPONSE FROM DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/177/2023 ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Read: Correspondence from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs regarding the establishment of an Independent Environmental Protection Agency dated 11 October 2023. (Copy circulated)

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the response from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs regarding Notice of Motion C/177/2023, the establishment of an Independent Environmental Protection Agency.

C/216/2023 RESPONSE FROM DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/193/2023 MENOPAUSE

Read: Correspondence from the Department of Health regarding Menopause dated 23 October 2023. (Copy circulated)

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the response from the Department of Health regarding Notice of Motion C/193/2023, Menopause.

C/217/2023 RESPONSE FROM DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/203/2023 DAISY HILL HOSPITAL

Read: Correspondence from the Department of Health regarding Daisy Hill Hospital dated 13 October 2023. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Finn proposed, seconded by Councillor Byrne that Council write back to the Department of Health in relation to the change factors being considered by the Department regarding Daisy Hill Hospital, what weighting was attributed to those factors and when they plan to implement same.

Councillor Finn stated there was huge public feeling which could clearly be seen in the volume of consultation responses that had been received and commended the SOS Daisy Hill Group for their work to date. She encouraged people to attend the public meeting that had been organised for 8 November 2023.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the response from the Department of Health regarding Notice of Motion C/203/2023, Daisy Hill Hospital.

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Byrne that Council write back to the Department of Health in relation to the weighting attributed to change factors regarding Daisy Hill Hospital and when these were likely to be implemented.

C/218/2023 RESPONSE FROM WARRENPOINT HARBOUR AUTHORITY RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/197/2023 FOUL SMELL FROM WARRENPOINT PORT

Read: Correspondence from Warrenpoint Harbour Authority regarding Foul Smell from Warrenpoint Port dated 13 October 2023. (Copy circulated)

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor McEvoy to note the response from Warrenpoint Harbour Authority regarding Notice of Motion C/197/2023, Foul Smell from Warrenpoint Port.

C/219/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – OPEN WATER SWIMMING

The following motion was received from Councillor Truesdale:

"This Council recognises the increased public interest in open water swimming and the public's strong desire for an extension of the current bathing season as documented in the DAERA 2022 review of bathing waters. Unfortunately, DAERA does not carry out water quality testing between September and May due to current regulations, leaving many swimmers unsure of the risk of bathing during these months. Council commits to testing the designated bathing sites within its district from September until DAERA testing begins again in May, and hereafter until a Minister is put in place to make the necessary amendments of the governing regulations."

The motion was seconded by Councillor McMurray.

Agreed: The Motion was referred to the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

C/220/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – CHILDCARE STRATEGY

The following motion was received from Councillor S Murphy:

*"This Council recognises that the costs of childcare in the North of Ireland are unaffordable for many and hard working families are struggling every month to meet these costs; That access to childcare in this district is an issue, with providers struggling to meet demands whilst remaining sustainable and maintaining high standards of care; That parents particularly women are being forced out of the workforce leading to a negative impact on the labour market, skills and wider economic output.
And that this Council will;
Write to the Education Department urging them to progress a comprehensive childcare strategy without delay and call on the DUP to restore the Executive urgently so that parties can work together to make childcare a priority.
That NMD Council will commit to delivering 10 new fully registered childminders in the area through their labour market partnership scheme".*

The motion was seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

Agreed: The Motion was referred to the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

C/221/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – A1 PRIORITISATION

The following motion was received from Councillor McMurray:

"This Council recognises the urgent need for A1 infrastructure upgrades and the strong public support for improvements. In order to protect lives on one of our busiest roads, this Council recognises the Phase 2 upgrades as a top priority infrastructure project and requests urgent budget reallocation to support project delivery. This Council commits to:

- Writing to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure urging a reprioritisation of the A1, an inclusion in tier one Infrastructure projects and budget reallocation to achieve Phase 2.***
- Writing to the Executive and Minister for Infrastructure, when the Assembly is restored, to prioritise the A1 and urgently redirect budget to the upgrades.***
- Writing to the Secretary of State, urging prioritisation of the project and to engage with The Department for Infrastructure to ensure the improvements are a Tier 1 priority".***

The motion was seconded by Councillor Truesdale.

In presenting the motion, Councillor McMurray said he appreciated the A1 did not directly cross his DEA however many frequently used it in order to commute. He spoke of how frightening it was to negotiate sections of the road and that in bringing forward the motion it was to not only benefit those within his DEA, but those across the district and other Council areas who had waited too long for safety upgrades to be made.

Members were advised the A1 was the main Belfast to Dublin economic corridor carrying on average 40,000 cars daily and how between 2002 and 2019 there had been 661 collisions and 41 people killed. The need for road safety improvements had never been greater.

Councillor McMurray made reference to a public inquiry held in 2020 with the Inspector of the Public Inquiry, Kevin Chambers recommending the improvement scheme be expedited as quickly as possible and how a busy roadway of such strategic importance would always be prone to the occurrence of serious accidents, but the serious and fatal accident statistics for this road had shown that the proposed improvements were an urgent requirement.

Councillor McMurray went on to say that as a result of this, in January 2021, the then Infrastructure Minister Nichola Mallon had announced that the Phase 2 road improvement should progress. 13 years later, despite a public inquiry and previous

Ministerial approval continued delays were being faced and a reprioritisation of a much needed project. This journey had been an emotional roller coaster for the those who had lost family and friends on this road and for those who passionately campaigned to improve this road safety so that no other family had to face losing a loved one.

Councillor McMurray spoke of how the economic potential of the road had not been fully explored due to lack of investment and vision. The Departments response to the Public Inquiry estimated an economic return with a Benefit to Cost Ratio of 2.1, representing a significant contribution to GVA given the high capital costs of infrastructure investment. The progression of this road would unlock economic potential and accelerate potential as a Growth Corridor with good access to the A and M1.

Members were told the benefits were clear; improved journey times, safer journeys for our residents and a direct and indirect economic boost in sectors such as logistics, construction, manufacturing and tourism.

Councillor McAteer proposed an amendment to the motion to include the following: ***"That the Department for Infrastructure be instructed to commence work on proposals for the next stage from Loughbrickland to Newry"***.

Councillor McMurray accepted Councillor McAteer's amendment.

Councillors Ruane and Taylor spoke in support of the motion and the amendment and thanked Councillor McMurray for presenting it.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McMurray, seconded by Councillor Truesdale that Council recognises the urgent need for A1 infrastructure upgrades and the strong public support for improvements. In order to protect lives on one of our busiest roads, this Council recognises the Phase 2 upgrades as a top priority infrastructure project and requests urgent budget reallocation to support project delivery. This Council commits to:**

- **Writing to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure urging a reprioritisation of the A1, an inclusion in tier one Infrastructure projects and budget reallocation to achieve Phase 2.**
- **Writing to the Executive and Minister for Infrastructure, when the Assembly is restored, to prioritise the A1 and urgently redirect budget to the upgrades.**
- **Writing to the Secretary of State, urging prioritisation of the project and to engage with The Department for Infrastructure to ensure the improvements are a Tier 1 priority**
- **That the Department for Infrastructure be instructed to commence work on proposals for the next stage from Loughbrickland to Newry.**

C/222/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – INITIATIVE REGARDING LIVESTOCK WORRYING

The following motion was received from Councillor Clarke:

***"This Council notes with concern the increasing prevalence of livestock worrying in the High Mournes;
In response, Council will seek to develop an initiative alongside relevant partners that aims to raise awareness of the impact that dogs off leads can have on livestock;
Furthermore, Council will roll out a publicity campaign in conjunction with any such initiatives in order to effectively get the message out to people in the district in relation to this important issue".***

The motion was seconded by Councillor Ruane.

Agreed: The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.

C/223/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – PROSTATE CANCER DRUG IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The following motion was received from Councillor Lee-Surginor:

"This Council expresses serious concern that the latest cancer drug, Abiraterone to tackle Prostate Cancer isn't being made readily available to Northern Ireland men with early stage tumours, whereas this drug is more widely available in Scotland and Wales. Prostate Cancer took the lives of 276 men in Northern Ireland and 519 in the Republic of Ireland last year alone. The STAMPEDE (acronym for "Systemic Therapy in Advancing or Metastatic Prostate Cancer: Evolution of Drug Efficacy) Trial medical study concluded that this drug, Abiraterone, when given during early stages could halve the risk of cancer spreading and significantly reduce the chance of death. This Council writes to the Permanent Secretaries for the Department for Health and Finance, as well as the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and calls for a start date for this urgent and lifesaving change."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Campbell.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Lee-Surginor spoke of how prostate cancer affected numerous men throughout UK & Ireland, and the good news was that it could often be effectively treated, especially when detected early. He stated however, ensuring access to cutting-edge treatments was crucial and in the absence of a dedicated Health Minister, the responsibility fell on elected representatives to advocate for the well-being of citizens.

Councillor Lee-Surginor stated action must be taken by calling upon the Permanent Secretaries mentioned in the motion, as well as the Secretary of State to expedite the availability of the new drug Abiraterone in Northern Ireland. He added as elected members it was their duty to ensure the healthcare system provided the best possible options to those facing prostate cancer, offering them the opportunity for improved outcomes and a higher quality of life.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Campbell said the reported benefits that the cancer drug Abiraterone could have on men with prostate cancer should be noted and the fact that this drug was only available on a very limited basis to patients here while much more widely available to patients on the NHS in Wales & Scotland should be challenged.

He added that at all times the health service should seek to promote and provide the best possible health outcomes for patients here in line with expert medical advice and consistent with NICE regulations.

Councillor Campbell stated that in light of new and emerging evidence and research into the drug Abiraterone and its impact on patients with prostate cancer, Council should also consider writing to the Department of Health asking them to encourage NICE to review current guidance in relation to this drug.

In speaking in support of the motion, Councillor McAteer advised the drug was available in Republic of Ireland, however in Northern Ireland it was only approved for men with very advanced stages of prostate cancer. He spoke of how early stage intervention would bring immense change to men's outlook and that it was essential that the matter be looked at as a matter of urgency.

The Motion was unanimously approved.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Campbell that Council expresses serious concern that the latest cancer drug, Abiraterone to tackle Prostate Cancer isn't being made readily available to Northern Ireland men with early stage tumours, whereas this drug is more widely available in Scotland and Wales. Prostate Cancer took the lives of 276 men in Northern Ireland and 519 in the Republic of Ireland last year alone. The STAMPEDE (acronym for "Systemic Therapy in Advancing or Metastatic Prostate Cancer: Evolution of Drug Efficacy) Trial medical study concluded that this drug, Abiraterone, when given during early stages could halve the risk of cancer spreading and significantly reduce the chance of death. This Council writes to the Permanent Secretaries for the Department for Health and Finance, as well as the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and calls for a start date for this urgent and lifesaving change.

C/224/2023

NOTICE OF MOTION – VIOLENCE IN GAZA AND SOUTHERN ISRAEL

The following motion was received from Councillors Byrne:

"This Council condemns the horrifying violence and indiscriminate murder of civilians; expresses its solidarity with civilians in the region who face the threat of air strikes, rocket attacks, abduction and the most unthinkable forms of murder every day; calls for an immediate ceasefire; the delivery of humanitarian aid to provide relief to the civilian population in Gaza; further calls for the immediate and safe release of all hostages; supports a full International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation of potential war crimes committed; and, calls for full adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law; an international intervention with leadership brought to bear in securing dialogue, a lasting peace, and a long-term solution that ends this crisis. Furthermore, this Council writes to both the UK and Irish Governments calling for the immediate expulsion of the Israeli ambassadors".

The motion was seconded by Councillor King.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor Byrne said he was sure every single person in the chamber was horrified watching the scenes of chaos and destruction engulfing Gaza over the last month with a death toll as a result of Israeli aggression since October 7th having passed 10,000, including 4,800 children and 2,550 women. The barbaric attack carried out by Hamas on October 7th had rightly been condemned by all with 1400 innocent Israeli's massacred and over 200 taken hostage.

Councillor Byrne stated it was unimaginable to think the Israel would systematically and relentlessly carpet bomb its own population if Hamas were hiding in a southern town of Israel, justifying the slaughter of their own people as a cost to defeat Hamas.

Councillor Byrne spoke of his own personal experience having spent time in Palestine, teaching children in a summer school and setting up a student scholarship fund to help Palestinian students gain entry to University and how he found them to be the most decent, people he had ever met. He stated the hardship that they had to endure was appalling yet they get on with life with a smile on their faces.

In summing up, Councillor Byrne reminded Members that there was a moral obligation upon every single person to use their voice, however small it may feel, to defend the human dignity of every innocent person trapped in this brutality. He stated Council must make their position crystal clear and call on both the UK and Irish Governments to immediately expel the Israeli ambassadors

In seconding the motion, Councillor King spoke of his time in the city of Hebron, Palestine spent in June of 2022, after travelling as part of a Human Rights and Conflict internship and how it was on this journey he felt the weight of the word 'occupation' with checkpoints, watchtowers and fortification walls, replete with heavily armed soldiers. He spoke of how upon arriving in the city of Hebron he was taken from the

chilling unease of the military occupation to the warmth of the world renowned Arab hospitality. He met with Human Rights organisations, visited refugee camps and spoke to local businesses to hear about how they coped with the harsh realities of military oppression.

Councillor King said this was happening before the eyes of the world, it needed to be confronted with unconditional ceasefires urgently required and the position of the Israeli Ambassador on this Island was now untenable.

Councillor McMurray thanked Councillors Byrne and King for presenting the motion and advised over the past few weeks there had been an outpouring of correspondence from constituents deeply affected by the atrocities in Palestine and Israel including constituents from the region and Jewish and Muslim families who were experiencing profound distress and fear. He added that as someone from Northern Ireland, he knew violence begets violence and that another family's grief was no different to his own and that every life was equal.

Councillor McMurray then proposed the following amendment to the motion to read as follows:

"That this Council ~~condemns the horrifying violence and indiscriminate murder of civilians; expresses its solidarity with civilians in the region who face the threat of air strikes, rocket attacks, abduction and the most unthinkable forms of murder every day; calls for an immediate ceasefire; mourns the loss of every innocent Palestinian and Israeli killed during the past month and urgently calls for a ceasefire. Whilst this Council recognises Israel's right to self-defence against Hamas's deplorable terrorist attacks on 7 October, we express profound concern at Israel's disproportionate response and horrifying breaches of international humanitarian law in Gaza. We further call for the delivery of humanitarian aid to provide relief to the civilian population in Gaza; further calls for the immediate and safe release of all hostages; supports a full International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation of potential war crimes committed; and calls for full adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law; an international intervention with leadership brought to bear in securing dialogue, a lasting peace and a long-term solution that ends this crisis"~~.

In not accepting the amendment, Councillor Byrne explained that he and Councillor King had been very careful not to identify one side or another and that the motion was for all rights across the region and condemned violence and murder on all civilians.

Councillor McMurray's amendment was then put to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| FOR: | 9 |
| AGAINST: | 26 |
| ABSTENTIONS: | 0 |

The amended Motion was lost.

Councillor Jackson, on behalf of DUP, condemned the barbaric and premeditated attack perpetrated by Hamas in Israel on 7 October 2023 resulting in the murder of more than 1400 people and abduction of 241 hostages including many young people and children.

He stressed there was no justification for the targeted killing of civilians, the use of civilians as human shields or the taking of civilian hostages all of whom must be urgently released, however they were not qualified to make calls for a ceasefire and therefore his Party would be abstaining from the motion. His Party believed there was a duty on all Parties and political representatives in Northern Ireland to act in a responsible way and take a clear stand on antisemitism.

Councillor Taylor said he wished to place on record his support and that of UUP for Israel to defend its borders. He added it had to be recognised there had been creation of humanitarian corridors in recent days and it was hoped that would continue and was necessary for people to get what they need to sustain themselves on a day to day basis.

Councillor Taylor advised that based on the wording of the motion UUP could not support it but hoped that the situation would arise sooner rather than later where there would be true and lasting peace for the Middle East.

Councillor Clarke spoke of attending one of the protests in Belfast at the weekend with over 10,000 people calling to end the revenge bombardment of Gaza and its people with the message that the civilian killings were wrong. Over 10,000 citizens in Gaza the vast majority civilians, including 5,000 children had lost their lives for being Palestinian since 7 October. He spoke of how Israel defence forces forced over 1 million people from their homes from North to South Gaza and the continual bombardment of citizens home, schools, hospitals etc. He stated this was a war crime that needed to end, a ceasefire must be agreed immediately and a solution implemented to end the nightmare with a political settlement a necessity.

Councillor Tinnelly thanked Councillors Byrne and King for bringing the motion forward and voiced his disappointment at the non-unity within the chamber for it. He stated there was nowhere in the motion that stated there was anything other than collective horror and objection to what had happened on 7 October and the horror inflicted on the Israeli people.

Councillor Hanna concurred the view of his party, DUP regarding the motion and voiced condemnation of the murders by Hamas.

Councillor Byrne thanked everyone who spoke in support of the motion and reiterated that the wording of the motion condemned all civilian killing right across the regions of Israel and Gaza.

Councillor Byrne's motion was then put to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| FOR: | 26 |
| AGAINST: | 5 |
| ABSTENTIONS: | 4 |

The Motion was carried.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor King "This Council condemns the horrifying violence and indiscriminate murder of civilians; expresses its solidarity with civilians in the region who face the threat of air strikes, rocket attacks, abduction and the most unthinkable forms of murder every day; calls for an immediate ceasefire; the delivery of humanitarian aid to provide relief to the civilian population in Gaza; further calls for the immediate and safe release of all hostages; supports a full International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation of potential war crimes committed; and, calls for full adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law; an international intervention with leadership brought to bear in securing dialogue, a lasting peace, and a long-term solution that ends this crisis. Furthermore, this Council writes to both the UK and Irish Governments calling for the immediate expulsion of the Israeli ambassadors".**

Councillor Gibbons and Councillor Bowsie left the meeting– 8.21pm and 8.23pm respectively.

C/225/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST SMEAR TEST

The following motion was received from Councillor Devlin:

"That this Council expresses it's support for the thousands of women who will now have their smear tests re-checked by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust; further expresses its concerns over the failings of the Southern Trust; welcomes the introduction of HPV testing in the North; calls for the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal College of Pathologists report 'We Can End Cervical Cancer'; will write to the Department of Health to reflect this motion; and request an update on the implementation of the recommendations within the 'We Can End Cervical Cancer' report."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Finn.

In presenting the motion Councillor Devlin spoke of how in the last month, the devastating news that around 17,000 women living within the Southern Trust were to have their smear tests rechecked covering a time period from 2008 to 2021. This reporting revealed the tip of a scandalous failure of screening. She stated the system was failing women in N Ireland.

Councillor Devlin said people knew women who had lost their lives to this awful disease and how quickly it could spread when undetected so to wake to this news was frightening and unacceptable. The World Health Organisation had stated that Cervical cancer was one of the most preventable and treatable forms of cancer, as long as it was detected early and managed effectively and was not what a proportion of women in the Southern Trust had experienced over a period of 13 years.

Councillor Devlin stated she like many others in the chamber, spend a lot of time promoting the importance of screening and encouraging uptake but in respect of this issue these women had been severely let down.

Members were reminded they been told that rescreening was a precautionary measure however the Royal College of Pathologists in their damning report did not call for tests to be reviewed, they recommended recalling those women most at risk for a new test. The Southern Trust were not doing this.

In conclusion, Councillor Devlin pointed out the importance of still encouraging everyone, when called for screening, whatever type of screening to go as it does save lives.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Finn thanked Councillor Devlin for bringing the motion and spoke of how concerning it was and suggested if Council could find a way to share information regarding screening.

Councillor Truesdale supported the motion and spoke of how being recalled had to be extremely traumatic and the findings of the October report from Southern Health and Social Care Trust were unacceptable.

Councillor Truesdale proposed the following amendment be added to the motion:
"To include in the letter to the Department of Health to ensure sufficient funding for HPV testing in the timeframe indicated".

Councillor Devlin accepted Councillor Truesdale's amendment.

On behalf of Sinn Fein, Councillor Finnegan offered support to those women that will have their smear test rechecked by the Southern Trust. She stated the review has caused great anxiety amongst the women affected and that they must have full access to all information about the process from start to finish so they know what is happening and why. She added this stressed the fact that the Assembly needs to be restored now and all parties working together to ensure this is delivered and support these women further. The Executive needs to be restored to deliver a Women's Health Strategy which begins to address health inequalities facing women today.

Councillor Hanna voiced support for the motion on behalf of DUP and thanked Councillor Devlin for bringing it forward.

Councillor Taylor acknowledged support for the motion and the serious concern it had accused and the numbers of women affected by it. He also highlighted flaws and faults in the system including the length of time to get results and the recent announcement

added to that. Councillor Taylor stated he hoped the Trust will address an that further measures are taken to ensure that nothing like this ever happened again.

The Motion was unanimously approved.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Finn that Council expresses it's support for the thousands of women who will now have their smear tests re-checked by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust; further expresses its concerns over the failings of the Southern Trust; welcomes the introduction of HPV testing in the North; calls for the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal College of Pathologists report 'We Can End Cervical Cancer'; will write to the Department of Health to reflect this motion; and request an update on the implementation of the recommendations within the 'We Can End Cervical Cancer' report. To include in the letter to the Department of Health to ensure sufficient funding for HPV testing in the timeframe indicated.**

C/226/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

The following motion was received from Councillor Howell:

"This Council acknowledges the grief and the trauma associated with the passing of a loved one, the loss of a family member or a friend can have a profound impact on an individual but in particular on a child or a young person; Council further acknowledges and commends the great work that schools do in supporting their pupils in the event of a bereavement but accepts that they are not sufficiently equipped or resourced to provide the comprehensive level of support that may be required in some circumstances; Council will write to schools in the District to ascertain their views in relation to the matter in order to gain an understanding of the resources that are required to deliver the level of support our pupils require in the event of a bereavement."

The motion was seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Howell spoke of how suffering the loss of a parent or significant family member could have a huge impact on the mental wellbeing of children and how taboo around death, dying and bereavement could be a huge barrier and it was vital that young people got the support they needed.

Councillor Howell said schools in many ways were a child's second home and if additional support could be provided to teaching and non-teaching staff, the impact and support for young people in the school environment would be a huge comfort to those who were worried about them at home.

Councillor Howell wished to put on record her huge admiration for the fantastic job teachers and non-teaching staff did in schools to support children. She believed there wasn't a member of school staff who wouldn't be keen to up-skill themselves to feel they were able to deal with these issues. She said it was important staff were equipped with knowledge of how to comfort and address feelings of grief to make a huge impact on a child's experience.

Members were informed Marie Curie and Cruse Bereavement had worked together to roll out bereavement training with schools across the north this summer. The training covered a wide variety of issues and helped school staff understand the different ages and stages of bereavement grief and how children and young people react.

As the motion urged Council to write to schools to get their views on this important matter, the example of what Marie Curie does, information from schools on what was successful and engagement with Marie Curie on the findings should be examined. It would also be important to engage with relevant officials from the Department of Education to explore this further to see what practical changes could be implemented that could potentially make a huge difference.

Councillor McEvoy in seconding the motion spoke of how support for young people during difficult times such as bereavement was essential. She added that whilst Councillor Howell referred to in school counsellors who provided great support to young people, demand was unfortunately outstripping supply and there could be a 6 month waiting time in some schools. It was therefore vitally important Council do what it could to support young people and schools.

Councillor Galbraith voiced his full support for the motion and proposed the following amendment:

"This Council acknowledges the grief and the trauma associated with the passing of a loved one, the loss of a family member or a friend can have a profound impact on an individual but in particular on a child or a young person; Council further acknowledges and commends the great work that schools do in supporting their pupils in the event of a bereavement, (insert) consequently, this Council agrees to note that pupils experiencing emotional problems may find it difficult to engage with the education process to reach their full potential and may require sustained contact with an adult who is not directly involved with their education; welcomes the work undertaken by the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) to support the emotional health and wellbeing of young people, supports the need for schools to bring in external agencies when there is limited access to ICSS and will write to all schools in the District to ascertain the challenges they are facing in obtaining these resources, and commits to revisit this matter once responses have been received to determine if additional financial support may be required."

Councillor Kelly voiced support for the motion on behalf of the Alliance party. She spoke of how the loss of a loved one for a young person was incredibly difficult and how in the last six months counselling services were another victim of cuts across NI schools which was a detrimental blow to the mental health of young people.

Councillors Hanna and Taylor voiced support for the motion on behalf of their respective parties.

Councillor Howell commended Councillor Galbraith for the amendment however she felt it needed to be a separate motion.

Councillor Galbraith agreed to withdraw his amendment.

The Motion was unanimously approved.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor McEvoy that Council acknowledges the grief and the trauma associated with the passing of a loved one, the loss of a family member or a friend can have a profound impact on an individual but in particular on a child or a young person; Council further acknowledges and commends the great work that schools do in supporting their pupils in the event of a bereavement but accepts that they are not sufficiently equipped or resourced to provide the comprehensive level of support that may be required in some circumstances; Council will write to schools in the District to ascertain their views in relation to the matter in order to gain an understanding of the resources that are required to deliver the level of support our pupils require in the event of a bereavement.**

C/227/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – ROAD SAFETY

The following motion was received from Councillor Andrews:

"Noting with concern findings that Newry Mourne and Down District has the highest rate of casualties in which someone was killed or seriously injured on our roads, this Council will commit to a prioritisation of Road Safety across the district; will review what funding is made available to the Police Community and Safety Partnership to consider future provision of Speed Indicator Devices and will undertake a public messaging campaign throughout the winter advising road users of the importance of road safety and the responsibility of all road users for Road Safety."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Galbraith.

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

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.45pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 December 2023.

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 6th November 2023

VENUE: Downshire Civic Centre

MEETING: Council

SUBJECT OF VOTE: **SPR/150/2023 – Forest Park Charging – Amendment from Cllr Tinnelly**

| COUNCILLOR | FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAIN | ABSENT |
|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| T Andrews | | 1 | | |
| C Bowsie | 1 | | | |
| J Brennan | | | | 1 |
| P Byrne | | 2 | | |
| P Campbell | | 3 | | |
| W Clarke | | 4 | | |
| L Devlin | | 5 | | |
| C Enright | | | | 2 |
| D Finn | | 6 | | |
| A Finnegan | | 7 | | |
| C Galbraith | | 8 | | |
| M Gibbons | 2 | | | |
| O Hanlon | | 9 | | |
| G Hanna | 3 | | | |
| V Harte | | 10 | | |
| R Howell | | 11 | | |
| J Jackson | 4 | | | |
| G Kearns | | 12 | | |
| T Kelly | | 13 | | |
| C King | | 14 | | |
| M Larkin | | 15 | | |
| D Lee-Surginor | | 16 | | |
| A Lewis | 5 | | | |
| O Magennis | | 17 | | |
| A Mathers | | 18 | | |
| D McAteer | | 19 | | |
| L McEvoy | | 20 | | |
| A McMurray | | 21 | | |
| D Murphy | | 22 | | |
| K Murphy | | | | 3 |
| S Murphy | | 23 | | |
| S O'Hare | | 24 | | |
| A Quinn | | 25 | | |
| H Reilly | | | | 4 |
| M Rice | | | | 5 |
| M Ruane | | 26 | | |
| G Sharvin | | 27 | | |
| D Taylor | 6 | | | |
| J Tinnelly | 7 | | | |
| J Truesdale | | 28 | | |
| TOTALS | 7 | 28 | 0 | 5 |

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMC/SC

Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 30 October 2023 at 6.00pm in Downshire Chamber and via Microsoft Teams

In the Chair: Councillor G Sharvin (via Teams)**In attendance in Chamber:** Councillor T Andrews Councillor C Enright**In attendance via Teams:**
Councillor C Bowsie Councillor P Byrne
Councillor P Campbell Councillor W Clarke
Councillor O Hanlon Councillor G Hanna
Councillor R Howell Councillor J Jackson
Councillor G Kearns Councillor T Kelly
Councillor M Larkin Councillor A Lewis
Councillor O Magennis Councillor D McAteer
Councillor L McEvoy Councillor A McMurray
Councillor S O'Hare Councillor K Murphy
Councillor H Reilly Councillor M Rice
Councillor M Ruane Councillor J Tinnelly**In attendance in Chamber: (Officials)**
Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)**Also in attendance via Teams:**
Mr M McPeak, Divisional Roads Manager
Mr S Duffy, Section Engineer
Mr C Woods, Deputy Secretary**As the Chairperson was an apology, the Deputy Chairperson assumed the Chair.****SC/020/2023 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Brennan, Devlin, Finn, Finnegan, Galbraith, Harte, Lee-Surginor, Mathers, S Murphy and Taylor.

SC/021/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SC/022/2023 PRESENTATION FROM DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE, ROADS ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed the delegation from DfI Roads and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr McPeak thanked Council for the opportunity to meet and delivered a presentation on the

Roads Annual Report (copy of which is appended to these minutes). He stated the Secretary of State, in June 2023 had provided all Northern Ireland Departments with their budget allocation for the year and DFI Roads were facing an extremely challenging year with a reduction of 14% in their resource budget. He stated this was impacting on the department's ability to cover costs associated with day-to-day road maintenance work such as fixing potholes, traffic lights, road marks and gulley cleaning.

Mr McPeak advised for a number of years, the funding for roads maintenance has been far below the level required to maintain the structural integrity of the roads network and the investment gap in essential maintenance was approximately £1billion since 2014.

Mr McPeak stated due to significant staffing pressures he encouraged elected members and the public to report road defects using the online services rather than emailing as the online system logs defects directly. He advised any queries that had been submitted via the DEA clinics would be responded to in writing to Members.

The Chairperson thanked Mr McPeak for his presentation and invited questions and comments from Members.

Members asked the following questions:

- Was there any update from DFI on the provision of sandbags available to the public or even to Councillors to assist those in need? Would there be containers for members of the public to avail of sandbags?
- What would be Council's share of the £8m from the Roads Recovery Fund?
- There was no feedback when you submit any incidents online, was this something that could be investigated?
- Work had been agreed to be carried out on Milltown Crossroads and Upper Dromore Road in Warrenpoint however it does not seem to appear on the report.
- There was also to be agreed signage put in place on the Greenan Road which would require the 30mile an hour sign to be moved around 100 yards, however this had not been completed.
- Active Travel Plans did not appear in the report.
- With regard to Ballynahinch By-Pass, was there anything that could be done at Permanent Secretary level to get this scheme started?
- Concerns had been raised around Active Travel in Dundrum whereby people would need to cross the road twice. A meeting with the local DEA Councillors should be set up to discuss the issues and way forward.
- The A2 Kilkeel Road blockages were a perennial problem, had any investigations been carried out to resolved this long term issue?
- Who triggers the MOU between Council and DFI Roads with regard to winter weather gritting?
- Would DFI be replenishing grit bins and piles before the winter months set in?
- Was there advanced planning ahead of flooding that could be carried out, perhaps a better system put in place whereby people can access sandbags when in need.
- Would there be any plans put in place to alleviate the traffic congestion at the top of the town in Newcastle where traffic was being forced into a single lane?
- Had there been any engagement with National Trust regarding the active travel way given that many people park in the layby to use the beach?
- The service provided to the Mourne DEA had deteriorated since the amalgamation of the Council. Members had been unable to contact an engineer as he had not been given a mobile phone by DFI as yet.
- The gullies and storm drains need to be maintained more regularly than once a year as it had directly impacted on the level of flooding throughout the District.
- What was the total value of the 370 claims that had been paid out, as if the roads

- around Mourne area were better maintained, this figure would dramatically reduce?
- The Newcastle to Kilkeel road was beginning to get incredibly dangerous with the road surface irregular in many places.
 - There needed to be a footpath between Saintfield and Crossgar which would create a continuous footpath between Downpatrick all the way to Belfast.
 - The online reporting although very user friendly does not feedback to allow Councillors to know if something had been actioned.
 - Given the recruitment freeze had now been lifted on the Civil Service, would it be possible that some of the 900 posts to be filled would be done within DFI Roads in order to relieve some of the pressures.

The delegation responded to queries as follows:

- The flooding response had been escalated with contractors and staff being redeployed from other areas to the District due to the severity of the flooding. There were 10,000 sandbags ready to be distributed at locations where flooding was likely to occur.
- The Roads Recovery Fund was £8m across the four divisions with Southern Division receiving around £4m of that split across all Council areas. At a guess that would potentially work out around 1.2m.
- The online reporting system was very effective from the DFI Roads side as defects were collected and triaged immediately into emergencies, high priority and other limited services. There was an internal delay in processing defect and getting information back into the system however there was a lack of staff available to operate the system.
- The reason certain schemes were not in the report were due to being unable to programme into new contracts at present. A minor works contract was being procured at present which would hopefully be up and running in January however there was limited resources therefore officers would be programming as much as they could within this financial year.
- There had been a lot of work undertaken with regard to Active Travel as a result of the Climate Change Act and a strategic document was being prepared by consultants to look at strategizing the delivery of active travel across all of Northern Ireland and how to link towns and cities together. This would be sent out to consultation in early 2024.
- The Department's capital budget which is how it funded major project, this year was 792m which was around 146m short of what was needed to deliver work across roads, rivers, Northern Ireland Water and Translink. The decision to prioritise major road schemes was driven largely by the budget shortfall and lack of multi-year budgets. The list contained within the report shows what the Executive had already agreed to prioritise, however due to the lack of money the list stops before any of the major projects such as Ballynahinch Bypass. If money was to arrive, the work had been completed to be ready to commence.
- With regard active travel in Dundrum, the road was very fast and dangerous and DFI roads were looking at possibility of doing something to try to help crossings. The cycle track proposal was currently on the landside rather than seaside and there would be a crossing needed for anyone cycling who may want to go to the beach. Mr McPeak suggested a way forward may be to have a consultation meeting with residents, interested groups and Councillors to discuss what the best options would be for the safety of everybody.
- The memorandum of understanding between the Department and Council was put in place for prolonged spells i.e. extended periods of frost and ice. There were specific locations in the Council area where Council would be provided with assistance to provide salt and work with Council officials to try and organise those specific areas. The trigger would occur when the weather is prolonged. Grit piles and salt bins would have been filled beginning in October, it took 8 weeks for 8 crews to go around the

division to fill the bins and piles. The baselined budget provided did not include the £7m required to deliver winter service therefore it was bid for within the monitoring rounds at each quarter. Unfortunately due to the lack of an Executive there were no bidding rounds which was why the Department was projecting an overspend in excess of £80m. Although the Department was not required to provide a gritting service legally, they did have discretionary powers to do so.

- The A2 road issues would be picked up with the official responsible and officers would reply to Members.
- The advanced planning included engaging with Council to assist with clearing of debris and sweeping to hopefully mitigate some of the flooding. The Department was inundated with requests for sandbags and there were 10,000 in preparation to be placed where they were required. The priority areas would be where there is a risk to life or property. Councillors and members of the public should contact Floodline to request sandbags. During significant flooding resources were limited and areas had to be prioritised.
- The Department was developing a number of high level policies to decarbonise transport by 2050 as part of the requirements of the Climate Change Act. One of these proposals was to switch fuels and encourage people to use public transport or active travel where possible. In order to restrict traffic parking provision would also need to be examined to ensure that people can travel to the places they wish to go to, however consultation would need to take place to decide what interventions could be delivered over the next 20 years.
- The network development team monitor locations of high congestion and would link that to any injury or collision information to see if they can improve movement of traffic. There were no plans at present to do anything at the top of the town in Newcastle, however it could be looked into again to see if there were any improvements that could be made.
- With regard to the online reporting system, it was the same people that inspect the roads who update the system and as they would be the most familiar with the roads, they would triage the defects. The Department however had 115 posts and only 78 inspectors in post to inspect all of the roads therefore prioritisation had to take place on which roads get worked on first.
- Officials were aware of the issue with the lack of a mobile phone for an engineer and would chase this up again.
- If the department had more resource funding they would be able to remove their limited service to a normal level of maintenance service which would mean they could potentially fix defects in a more proactive way which would in turn reduce the amount of claims the department would receive. The exact figure would need to be sent out to the Member.
- In terms of the Mournes the service policy would be impacting on rural areas that had more rural roads, therefore although it may seem that some areas were being treated worse than others, the policy was used throughout the division in the same way.
- Mr McPeak agreed to investigate the possibility of extending the footpath on the A7 to establish a potential connection.
- All gullies were cleaned once a year as that was the service provision that was available, if Members felt there were areas that had been neglected they should feed these back through to the department using the online forms.
- Part of the issue with filling posts goes back to the budget and posts were not being filled when someone resigns or retires. The workload was managed by officers which doesn't help to deliver the limited service policy and the department was looking for different ways in which they would be able to justify filling vacant posts.

The Chairperson thanked the delegation for their attendance and comprehensive responses to the questions.

AGREED: It was agreed that a meeting be organised with Slieve Croob and The Mournes DEA Councillors to discuss the active travel proposals between Dundrum and Newcastle.

Mr Cassells and Mrs Kelly provided an update regarding the Council's response to the flooding. Mr Cassells advised there was an amber weather warning in place from 9pm until 9am and a decision had been taken to close Council buildings to the public from 6pm until 10am while keeping the situation under review. There were major concerns in Newry particularly due to the levels in the river and the canal and Council were maintaining close liaison with the Rivers Agency during the day. The slush gates at the canal had been opened to allow water to flow out, however there was as much water coming in as going out. He stated this was an evolving situation currently and there were ongoing yellow weather warnings for the incoming week and there would be Emergency Management Team meetings taking place in the morning to advise on what had gone on through the night and the prospects for the day ahead.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.50pm.

For adoption at next Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Signed:

Chairperson

Director

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**NMC/SC**

**Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 6 November 2023 at 5.00pm in
Downshire Chamber and via Microsoft Teams**

In the Chair: Councillor V Harte**In attendance in Chamber: (Councillors)**

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Councillor T Andrews | Councillor C Bowsie |
| Councillor P Byrne | Councillor P Campbell |
| Councillor W Clarke | Councillor L Devlin |
| Councillor C Enright | Councillor D Finn |
| Councillor A Finnegan | Councillor C Galbraith |
| Councillor O Hanlon | Councillor G Hanna |
| Councillor V Harte | Councillor R Howell |
| Councillor J Jackson | Councillor G Kearns |
| Councillor T Kelly | Councillor C King |
| Councillor M Larkin | Councillor D Lee-Surginor |
| Councillor A Lewis | Councillor O Magennis |
| Councillor A Mathers | Councillor D McAteer |
| Councillor L McEvoy | Councillor A McMurray |
| Councillor S O'Hare | Councillor D Murphy |
| Councillor S Murphy | Councillor H Reilly |
| Councillor M Ruane | Councillor G Sharvin |
| Councillor J Tinnelly | Councillor J Truesdale |

In attendance via Teams: Councillor M Gibbons Councillor M Rice
Councillor D Taylor

In attendance in Chamber: (Officials)

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

In attendance via Teams: Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director: Regeneration
Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism

SC/023/2023 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Brennan and K Murphy.

SC/024/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SC/025/2023 EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION – FLOODING INCIDENTS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting which had been arranged to discuss an emergency notice of motion regarding the recent flooding that had devastated parts of the District. She advised she had seen first-hand the devastation and impact this had in Newry and Downpatrick along with Flurrybridge Retail Park. She stated her party colleagues in the Mourne, Crotlieve and South Armagh had also relayed the catastrophic impact the floods have had on residents and businesses with homes ruined and road infrastructure collapsed. She welcomed that all Parties had come together in solidarity with all residents of the District and that Group Leaders in Sinn Féin, SDLP, DUP and Alliance Parties had signed the agreement to proceed with this emergency meeting.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Hanlon to present the motion and for Group Leaders to speak on the motion.

Councillor Hanlon presented the following motion on behalf of the Group Leaders in the Council:

"This Council acknowledges the devastation that recent floods have inflicted on our District's residents and business communities; Council commends the efforts of Council and departmental workers, community responders, the emergency services and others who assisted within local communities where unprecedented flooding took place; Council agrees that a robust and comprehensive review of its response throughout these incidents should commence immediately; Council further agrees to write to other relevant statutory agencies that were involved in the response to carry out their own reviews; Council calls on the relevant directorates to begin work immediately on an accessible recovery plan which puts the needs of those impacted the most at its core; Council should immediately write to relevant Government Departments as well as Central Government to assess what financial support can be made available to support homeowners and businesses that have been affected."

In presenting the motion, Councillor Hanlon stated this was a time when Parties should be united, working in partnership to support our communities in the wake of the nightmare that had unfolded over the past week. She wished to place on record, her Parties thanks to Council workers, emergency services, community groups and all those that had assisted since the crisis began and she commended the community spirit in solidarity which had underpinned the response to date.

Councillor Hanlon stated the public deserved transparency and needed answers from the range of agencies who had been involved as the events unfolded last week. Questions such as whether flood alleviation measures at Camlough Lake were activated, if not, why not; gully clearing in the Mourne, have these been cleaned in the last year; in Newcastle the flood alleviation scheme was heavily invested in, yet family homes had been devastated by flooding, what are the next steps here to prevent this from occurring again?

Speaking about the catastrophic flooding in Downpatrick, Councillor Hanlon queried whether every single preventative measure had been enacted to try to stop it from occurring and whether the Quoile floodgates were operating properly or if the river had been dredged, would it have prevented such serious flooding. She stated these were all questions that needed answers and those that had borne the brunt of the devastation needed to have their voices heard as part of any review.

Councillor Hanlon highlighted the impact on the local businesses across the District who are anxious about how they would pay their mortgage and are living through the trauma of what had happened to their livelihoods. She praised the resilience of the local community and hoped urged Central Government to ensure financial support and funding packages be made available to those affected by the devastating floods. She also stated that the Secretary of State needed to visit the District to witness the devastation first hand.

In finishing, Councillor Hanlon stated all representatives must work together in genuine partnership to deliver the support that was needed to families that had lost their homes and to the people that had lost their livelihoods.

Councillor McMurray stated that Council needed to understand what happened and why areas flooded as they did and ensuring this does not happen again by addressing the financial cost which would be felt by both businesses and residents alike. The joint motion puts into place avenues and forums by which these areas can be addressed.

Councillor McMurray put on record his thanks to Council officers and workers involved in the response and cleaning up with the floods. He had direct dealings with Marie Ward, Josephine Kelly, Andrew Cassels and Sarah Taggart who had consistently convened and facilitated meetings that had kept Parties informed of what was happening while also allowing Party Leaders to relay issues that were arising in affected areas. He thanked those in the other statutory agencies along with those in other Councils both in Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland as well as those that assisted from the voluntary sector such as Mourne Mountain Rescue tea.

Councillor McMurray stated that ultimately this would require a financial package, outside the scope of the Council and in order to reestablish the traders affected by the flood, it was imperative that Stormont and Westminster put a financial package together that would help those who had contributed to the financial wellbeing of the District for so long. He outlined that with climate change these types of events would become more prevalent and we must do all we can to not only mitigate against future flooding events, but also to make the District as sustainable as possible.

Councillor Devlin offered her thanks to all of those who had stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the residents and businesses that had been so badly affected with the devastating floods in Newry, Newcastle, Downpatrick, Kilkeel and right across the District. She stated the goodwill of the people in the District shone through and was appreciated by all.

Councillor Devlin stated there were questions to be asked about how did Newry canal burst its banks; how did the Burren River get to such a high level; and how did the Quoile overflow so rapidly? She stated these questions would need to be answered in the weeks and months ahead, however, focus at present should be on supporting the people in the District that had been affected and assisting those affected business to reopen. She stated that businesses within the District employ staff from the local area and are the backbone of the local

economy, most without the reserves that large multinationals would. She stated that without direct support from Central Government, it was likely that some of these businesses would not reopen.

In summing up, Councillor Devlin stated going forward those homes that had been flooded in the past in Newcastle must be prioritised and measures taken to prevent such recurrence in the future.

Councillor Jackson stated he was conscious that many of the staff were still on the ground along with those people experiencing the aftermath of the flooding and devastation of their homes and businesses. He stated that Council was with them, hear them and would do whatever to took to help all those affected. He commended Council staff, emergency services, government agencies, members of the public who came forward to offer assistance and those farmers with pumping equipment who made themselves available in Newry and Newcastle. He acknowledged the work of the senior management team in Council along with their staff for their commitment and continuous updates throughout the past week.

In summing up, Councillor Jackson stated his Party was happy to join with other Parties in supporting the motion.

Members discussed the issue at length making the following comments regarding the flooding incidents:

- Many sports teams, voluntary organisations and charities have also been impacted by the devastating floods and some facilities that serve the local communities will face closure for months.
- There is a palpable sense of anger across Newry at the lack of support available to the victims of flooding. Urgent financial support is required to help those businesses impacted to support their staff who in the mouth of Christmas are facing an anxious wait in relation to their jobs. A furlough type scheme should be investigated to assist businesses.
- Commend those organisations that were on the ground in Newry providing support and practical help. A lot of the businesses affected are family-run or food outlets that cannot relocate due to logistics and the nature of their operations.
- Some members in the business community in Newry had commented on the absence of senior Council officials on the ground following the floods. Businesses need answers as to how this happened and what steps must be taken to ensure it doesn't happen again. Council need to step up to take the lead in the recovery of the District and ensure proper support mechanisms were put in place.
- Questions must be asked from the Rivers Agency as to why the river flowing behind the houses in Camlough had not been cleaned on a more regular basis and why the gullies in front of the houses have not been maintained. Questions also need asked whether the lake could have been lowered to its lowest capacity to cope with the amount of rainfall.
- There were huge issues in South Armagh with being able to access sandbags and in the end the Community Association and local residents had to purchase sandbags off a local builder. This should not occur and there should be ample sandbags available for everyone.
- Homes have been destroyed in Camlough and it will take a long time for the homeowners to recover from the devastation. Lessons must be learned to ensure this does not happen to them again.
- Many residents in Newcastle were again horrified to watch helplessly as their houses flooded and some were told by Floodline to purchase their own sandbags as there

were none left. This was completely unacceptable. People are angry and frustrated and many of these residents are either unable to purchase house insurance or pay hefty premiums. Questions need asked whether the Burren River was affected by the Shimna Flood alleviation works; where was the breach in the river and why did it appear that no agency was looking for the breach?

- Perhaps Islands Park could have a store for sandbags operated by a radar key or individual codes given to the Mourne Councillors to access these as quickly as possible.
- There was no Flood Warning System that exists in Northern Ireland in the same way it does in England, Scotland and Wales. These systems outline severe flood alerts which were then issued by the government's emergency mobile phone alarm system. Northern Ireland need to have a forecasting and warning system put in place.
- Huge thanks must be given to Council staff for the work they undertook over the past week. They were working around the clock to respond to the flooding incidents alongside the local community and other agencies.
- There was huge frustration with the Floodline system and the length of time it took to report a case due to the huge amount of detail that was being requested.
- The review to take place needed to take cognisance of any flood defence measures that either were in place or needed to be installed to deal with potential future flooding incidents.
- There was an amber warning for heavy rain for South Down therefore the head of services in a lot of organisations should have organised for inspections to take place prior to the flooding. Was the pumping system in the Burren River working correctly? Why did the flood defence at the Burren River fail?
- What measures will be put in place with regards to the fall away of the road at A2 in Kilkeel which is a main arterial route?
- These flooding incidents are directly linked to the amount of public service cutbacks over the last few years.
- The Quoile barrier had not been recognised as fit for purpose as it was not letting out enough water between high tides. This along with the narrow arches under the Belfast Road Bridge at the Quoile need to be cleared to prevent the back-up of water which then caused the flooding.
- Regarding flood alleviation schemes – how many more projects were to come with the Newry scheme; was the Newcastle scheme finalised or was there to be more investment; the lack of investment and replacement of the Quoile river barrier needs to be addressed.
- Mourne was an isolated community with only three ways into the community. With the landslide in Killowen people were trapped in their houses and this cannot occur again.
- Within Kilkeel several fishing boats had been completely destroyed causing millions of pounds worth of damage.
- The perception in the days following the floods from the business community in Newry was that people felt they were not getting the information in a timely manner and that senior Council personnel were invisible on the ground. Although the work carried out following the flooding in Newry and Downpatrick needs to be acknowledged, questions also need to be asked of Council and other agencies as to what could have been done to prevent such a catastrophe.
- There used to be a sandbag store in Rostrevor prior to the flood alleviation scheme however over Covid this seemed to have been removed. It was welcome to hear the Rivers Agency personnel encouraging local representatives to highlight areas where sandbag stores could be placed.

Councillor Enright suggested inviting the Drainage & Flood Council to present to Council.

Councillor Sharvin asked for an amendment to the motion to include the following:

For all Councillors within this Council to sign a letter to the Secretary of State requesting assistance; that an Independent Review of the serious flooding incident be conducted with all agencies feeding into the review and that Council write to the Department for Communities asking for the establishment of a pop-up market at the back of the police station in Downpatrick to enable those business struggling to identify alternatives, a space to trade in the run-up to Christmas"

Councillor Hanlon agreed to the amendment.

ACTION: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor McMurray that:

"This Council acknowledges the devastation that recent floods have inflicted on our District's residents and business communities; Council commends the efforts of Council and departmental workers, community responders, the emergency services and others who assisted within local communities where unprecedented flooding took place; Council agrees that a robust and comprehensive review of its response throughout these incidents should commence immediately; Council further agrees to write to other relevant statutory agencies that were involved in the response to carry out their own reviews; Council calls on the relevant directorates to begin work immediately on an accessible recovery plan which puts the needs of those impacted the most at its core; Council should immediately write to relevant Government Departments as well as Central Government to assess what financial support can be made available to support homeowners and businesses that have been affected.

For all Councillors within this Council to sign a letter to the Secretary of State requesting assistance; that an Independent Review of the serious flooding incident be conducted with all agencies feeding into the review and that Council write to the Department for Communities asking for the establishment of a pop-up market at the back of the police station in Downpatrick to enable those business struggling to identify alternatives, a space to trade in the run-up to Christmas"

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.12pm.

For adoption at next Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting
held on Monday 13 November 2023 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, Monaghan Row,
and remotely via Microsoft Teams**

Chairperson: Councillor M Ruane (Chamber)

Deputy Chairperson: Councillor G Kearns (Chamber)

In attendance: **(Committee Members)**
Councillor T Andrews (Chamber)
Councillor C Bowsie (Chamber)
Councillor P Campbell (Teams)
Councillor W Clarke (Teams)
Councillor K Feehan (Chamber)
Councillor C Galbraith (Teams)
Councillor C King (Chamber)
Councillor D Lee-Surginor (Teams)
Councillor S Murphy (Chamber)
Councillor A Quinn (Chamber)
Councillor J Truesdale (Teams)

Officials in attendance: Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration
Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism
Mr Michael Forster, Full Fibre NI Operations Lead
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Ms S Kieran, Democratic Services Officer

ERT/141/2023: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

There were no apologies.

Councillor Ruane welcomed Councillor Killian Feehan to the meeting. Councillor Feehan is replacing Michael Savage SDLP Councillor for Newry.

ERT/142/2023: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Andrews and Truesdale declared an interest in agenda item 5 regarding Carlingford Lough Greenway Update.

Councillor Campbell declared an interest in agenda item 7 regarding St Patrick's Day Parade 2024.

**ERT/143/2023: ACTION SHEET ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION & TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 9 October 2023**

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 9 October 2023.

(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 9 October 2023.

PRESENTATIONS

ERT/144/2023 – PRESENTATION – MICHAEL FORSTER FULL FIBRE NETWORK NORTHERN IRELAND

Mr Forster, Full Fibre NI Operations Lead, Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism delivered a presentation regarding Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF). He stated this was the first of its kind cross growth deal programme for Northern Ireland and was a new funded delivery approach through local authorities. Mr Forster advised the delivery model adds value to the existing delivery mechanisms offered by Councils, colleges, universities, Invest NI and Government departments.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Forster for his presentation (copy of which is appended to these minutes).

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the presentation by Michael Forster, Full Fibre Ni Operations Lead.

Having previously declaring an interest, Councillors Andrews and Truesdale left the meeting at this stage – 6.15pm

ECONOMY GROWTH AND TOURISM

ERT/145/2023: CARLINGFORD LOUGH GREENWAY UPDATE

Read: Report dated 13 November 2023 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director: Regeneration, regarding Carlingford Lough Greenway Update.
(Copy circulated)

NOTED: The update on Planning and overall approvals process and the update on the scheme procurement were noted.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed to underwrite any spend over the approved funding envelope, subject to business case and funding approval through relevant committee.

Councillors Andrews and Truesdale re-entered the meeting at this stage – 6.17pm

EXEMPT INFORMATION

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

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

RESTRICTED – FOR DECISION

ERT/146/2023: NORTHERN IRELAND ENTERPRISE SUPPORT SERVICE (NIESS) SLA _____

Read: Report dated 13 November 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding Northern Ireland Enterprise Support Service (NIESS) Go Succeed NI **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed:-

- 1) To approve the SLAs between Council, Belfast City Council and the delivery agents.
- 2) To approve the collaboration agreement between Belfast City Council and Newry, Mourne and Down (subject to approval by Legal Services).

Having previously declaring an interest, Councillor Campbell left the meeting at this stage – 6.20pm

ERT/147/2023: ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE, DOWNPATRICK 2024

Read: Report dated 13 November 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding St. Patrick's Day Parade, Downpatrick 2024 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to approve that Council provide a grant offer to Downpatrick Town Committee in partnership with Down Community Arts to deliver elements of the St. Patrick's Day parades in Downpatrick in March 2024.

Councillor Campbell re-entered the meeting at this stage – 6.23pm

ERT/148/2023: ULSTER UNIVERSITY ECONOMIC POLICY CENTRE (UUEPC) SLA

Read: Report dated 9 October 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Service Level Agreement UUEPC **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed to approve the Service Level Agreement with University of Ulster: Economic Policy Centre as detailed in the circulated report

ERT/149/2023: ERT HISTORIC ACTION TRACKER

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

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor it was agreed to note the Historic Action Tracker Report for Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee.

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

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 December 2023.

**Signed: Councillor M Ruane
Chairperson
Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee**

**Signed: Mr C Mallon
Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism**

Digital Transformation Flexible Fund

Presentation to ERT Committee (NMDDC)
13 November 2023

The slide features a woman wearing a VR headset and a row of logos at the bottom including Northern Ireland Executive, Invest Northern Ireland, and various local authorities.

Overview

Background to DTFF

- 1st of its kind Cross Growth Deal programme for Northern Ireland.
- New funded delivery approach through local authorities (FFNI - NMDDC).
- 1st project delivered under BRCD Digital Pillar
- Delivery model adds value to the existing delivery mechanisms offered by councils, colleges, universities, Invest NI and Government departments.
- Unique 70% intervention rate – critical to stimulate Digital Innovation.

Funding Arrangements


| Capital Fund (£ 7,551,613) | Revenue Funding (£ 870,546) |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £6m City & Growth Deal Complementary Fund • £1.1m DAERA Fund • £451,613 Derry City & Strabane City Deal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTFF is a Council led project through the existing FFNI Consortium. • All 11 Local authorities collaborating and contributing to the revenue budget for delivery. |

Overview
Aims and Objectives










- Designed to enable small and micro businesses to begin their **Digital Transformation** journey.
- Removes the barrier to entry for new and emerging digital technologies.
- Not for 'digitalisation' of existing business models or operation.

Funded technologies




DTFF will enable the purchasing of capital equipment and/or resources for 'off the shelf' software solutions and/or bespoke system development, based on the following advanced digital technologies:

| | | |
|--|---|--|
|  Smart technologies |  Robotics |  Big data |
|  Immersive technologies |  Artificial intelligence |  Blockchain |

DTFF will not cover the on-going revenue costs of leasing software or any ongoing maintenance, update or training costs, which should be borne by the applicant.


What is not funded?
Ineligible investment types



DTFF will not fund capital investment in the following which could be viewed more as 'digitisation of existing operations', rather than digital innovation/transformation:


- Website and e-commerce development
- Social media strategies
- Mobile marketing, paid advertising, blogging and content creation
- Search engine optimisation
- Purchase of generic IT equipment (laptops, printers etc)
- Customer relationship management, database systems
- Non-industrial 3-D printing.

This list is not exhaustive and the DTFF Operations Team have the discretion to omit costs if deemed ineligible and/or not within scope of the project.



DTFF Expression of Interest is now OPEN

- Expression of Interests must be **completed online** via www.dtff.co.uk/apply-now.
- Deadline for submitting an Expression of Interest is **12 Noon - 06 Dec 2023**
- It is highly recommended that applicants attend the Re-briefing sessions and read the applicant guidance.



For more information contact the DTFF team: dtff@nmamdd.org
Tel: 0330 337 4052
www.dtff.co.uk



Digital Transformation Flexible Fund

Any Questions?
www.dtff.co.uk

The Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) is delivered by all local authorities in Northern Ireland under the Full Fibre Northern Ireland Consortium (FFN) and supported by Invest NI. The project is part funded by the NIE executive, UK Government, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and all local authorities in Northern Ireland.

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on
Thursday 16 November 2023 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic
Centre and remotely via Microsoft Teams**

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| In the Chair: | Councillor L McEvoy (Chamber) | |
| In Attendance in Chamber: | Councillor J Brennan Councillor O Hanlon Councillor T Kelly Councillor S O'Hare Councillor G Sharvin | Councillor C Enright Councillor R Howell Councillor A Lewis Councillor H Reilly |
| In Attendance via Teams: | Councillor P Byrne Councillor D Taylor | Councillor A Quinn |
| Non-Committee Members in Attendance in Chamber: | Councillor T Andrews | Councillor J Jackson |
| Non-Committee Members in Attendance via Teams: | Councillor C Bowsie | |
| Officials in Attendance In Chamber: | <p>Mrs J Kelly, Director: Corporate Services Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director: Capital and Procurement Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance Ms E Cosgrove, Assistant Director: Administration (Acting) Mr C Moffett, Assistant Director: Corporate Planning and Policy (Acting) Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism Ms V Keegan, Head of Communications and Marketing Ms M Hughes, HR & OD Manager Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting) Mr M McKibbin, PA: Corporate Services</p> | |
| Officials in Attendance Via Teams: | <p>Mr A Cassells, Director: Sustainability & Environment Mr C Mallon, Director: Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director: Leisure & Sport Ms G Kane, Assistant Director: Facilities Management & Maintenance (Acting) Ms A Smyth, Programme Manager, DBEC</p> | |

SPR/152/2023:

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors McAteer and Mathers.

considered as part of the 2024/25 rates estimates process.

CORPORATE PLANNING AND POLICY

SPR/156/2023: IRISH LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2024-2027

Read: Report dated 16 November 2023 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Irish Language Strategy 2024 – 2027. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Moffett advised the report had been brought back following a meeting of the Irish Language Working Group whereby additional feedback was added and the Strategy was amended. The Strategy sets out two strategic objectives to develop the Irish Language in the Council area and also to build capacity within the Irish Language community.

Councillor Reilly stated his Party had concerns regarding the Strategy and although while not having an issue with Irish Language, he said out of 220,000 who had a knowledge of Irish, only 90 in the District had used Irish to fill in their census return. He stated there should be resources made available to the Ulster Scots Society to ensure equality with other cultures in the District.

Councillor Reilly stated there would be concerns with regard equality and good relations outcomes for Council staff and members of the public who don't have a fluent use in Irish. He asked whether there would be a further 12-week consultation under section 75.

Mr Moffett advised the original draft strategy was brought last December to the SPR Committee, and had gone to a further consultation, therefore the analysis tabled was the result of that consultation. He went on to say the demand was in place for the bursary scheme with expansion each year and there were no actions within the strategy deemed to be discriminatory.

With regard to Ulster Scots, Mr Moffett advised this was one of the languages that our website would not be able to be translated into however perhaps this could be raised through the Equality and Good Relations Working Group.

Councillor Hanlon stated there were still some concerns that the Strategy remained quite aspirational however welcomed the continued efforts by Council to enable support on the development of the language. She suggested that monitoring reports from the cross-party working group could be made publicly available online to relay concerns by Irish Language groups regarding the lack of accountability.

Councillor Hanlon also suggested that members of DUP would be very welcome to come along and sit on the Irish Language Working Group as there were positions available to them to do so which would enable them to give their views on the Strategy.

Councillor Taylor raised concerns regarding the cost of the Strategy as well as the implementation of the Strategy that may impact upon employees.

Councillor Enright, as an Irish speaker, stated it was disappointing that the Irish Language had once again become a political football.

Councillor Sharvin advised that an event was being held next Wednesday by Council in partnership with the Ulster Scots Agency to celebrate Ulster Scots Language week therefore the Council was embracing both sides of the argument.

Councillor Reilly requested a recorded vote on the proposal, and although he was voting against, he wanted to clearly state that he was not opposed to the Irish Language, the people who enjoy it and want to learn it, however it was about equality. The results of the recorded vote were as follows (copy appended to the minute):

FOR: 10
AGAINST: 3
ABSTENTIONS: 0

The proposal was carried.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Howell, that Committee members approve the Irish Language Strategy 2024-2027.

SPR/157/2023: UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE – IRISH LANGUAGE STRATEGY CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP

Read: Report dated 16 November 2023 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding updated Terms of Reference – Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Quinn, that members consider and approve the updated Irish Language Strategy Cross Party Working Group Terms of Reference.

SPR/158/2023: STATUTORY REPORTING – SECTION 75 POLICY SCREENING REPORT – QUARTERLY REPORT FOR JULY – SEPTEMBER 2023

Read: Report dated 16 November 2023 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Statutory Reporting – Section 75 Policy Screening report for July – September 2023. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Howell, to note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period July – September 2023.

CORPORATE SERVICES**SPR/159/2023: MID YEAR ASSESSMENT – PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023/24**

Read: Report dated 16 November 2023 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding Mid-Year assessment relating to the Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Byrne asked how the average time for a major planning application to go through all the processes can jump by 209 weeks from last year. Mr Byrne advised that he would clarify this figure and respond to Councillor Byrne.

In relation to Performance objective 2, Councillor Enright was concerned that the Management team have not met with the National Grid Operator, given that this Council was the only one not to have the National Grid in our area. He stated this was a huge obstacle to job creation as many large companies need to generate their own electricity rather than using diesel generators. In relation to Performance objective 4, Councillor Enright felt targets were underwhelming and advised that he had proposed 2 years ago that income streams could be created through sustainability.

Councillor Sharvin advised that there was no update on Planning performance at ERT Committee meetings and asked whether the Director could give an update on how Council were addressing this. Mrs Kelly advised that she would ask to have this raised at the next ERT Committee meeting.

Councillor Hanlon concurred with Councillor Sharvin's comments and while recognising the staffing issues there had been, updates were required to give assurance that Council was doing all it could to progress planning applications.

In responding to a query from Councillor Lewis regarding the level of applications decreasing but the time taken to respond was increasing, Mr Mallon advised the income from planning applications had decreased, it wasn't the number of applications being received.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, to consider and agree the Mid-Yea Assessment of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24.**

SPR/160/2023: IMPACT OF FLOODING ON COUNCIL ESTATE

Read: Report dated 16 November 2023 from Mrs Josephine Kelly, Director, Corporate Services, regarding an update on the impact of Council Estate due to recent flooding **(Copy circulated)**.

Mrs Kelly provided an update on the impact of flooding on the Council estate and insurers had been informed there was some damage to some Council buildings. She stated this was an initial report and would remain to be updated over the next number of months.

Councillor Sharvin asked whether there was a timeline for the assessments of Downpatrick Leisure Centre following the flooding.

Mr Boyd advised that an assessment had been undertaken and there were hairline cracks in the concrete, which would be monitored over a 6-month period. In a follow-up question, Councillor Sharvin asked whether there had been any concern when building the leisure centre about flood water getting into the building. Mr Boyd advised that there had been a problem with the initial design, however an engineering solution was found and works undertaken.

Councillor O'Hare advised that there has been a history of flooding at Leitrim play park and that DFI and Council need to work with each other regarding a more suitable surface being put in place.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to note the contents of the report.**

SPR/161/2023: **NMD FLOODS COMMUNICATION PERFORMANCE**

Read: Report dated 16 November 2023 from Veronica Keegan, Head of Communications and Marketing regarding NMD Floods communication 30 October to 2 November 2023(**Copy circulated**).

Ms Keegan provided an update on the Floods Communication activities as well as providing context on the Communications Activities during emergency situations.

Councillor Hanlon welcomed the paper which gave a sense of the amount of work undertaken in the background by Council in terms of the response to the emergency and she wished to place on record again her thanks to staff across the directorates. She stated the party reps briefings were very useful to ensure communication was flowing and that it was the correct information. Councillor Hanlon stated it may be prudent to introduce a flood alert scheme which would be beneficial to businesses and homeowners alike.

Councillor Byrne emphasised the need to get information to businesses as soon as possible, rather than just relying on social media and proposed that this be included within communication plans going forward. This was seconded by Councillor Enright. Councillor Byrne also queried where the 9 community resilience groups were situated and whether they were contacted directly.

Mrs Kelly advised it had been a multi-agency response to the flooding and that there would be a review in due course. She stated she would try to establish whether contact was made by the relevant agencies and bring back an updated report regarding working in partnership with statutory agencies to outline ways in which businesses could be contacted directly in emergency situations.

Mrs Keegan advised that the broad range of media was used including newspapers, online, tv and radio along with the Council's own website.

Councillor Enright advised that Rivers Agency should have information on when floods were likely to happen and that resilience groups should be in direct contact the agency. Mrs Kelly advised that she would try to find information from Rivers Agency as to who was contacted in relation to the flooding and bring a report back on this.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to note the contents of**

the report and that officials would bring a report back with regard community resilience groups.

SPR/162/2023:

NMDDC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN REPORT & EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN REPORTS

Read:

Report dated 16 November 2023 from Caolain Boyd, Assistant Director, Capital Projects & Procurement, regarding NMDDC Emergency Management Plan & Emergency Communications Plan **(Copy circulated)**.

Mr Boyd presented the report advising that the Council Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Communications Plans had been updated to include the NI Civil Contingencies Framework (2021); updated JESIP principles; updated and streamlined internal arrangements; and hyperlinks added to relevant documentation for ease of access.

Councillor Sharvin highlighted the roles of Elected Members in emergency situations as outlined in Appendix 10, however stated it would be useful to know whether MLAs would be able to attend the resilience training as there had been some mis-information communicated during the flooding.

Councillor Byrne asked when regional emergencies are taking place, the coordination should be from the Assembly, however with the absence of the Assembly, who was responsible for coordinating?

Mr Boyd advised there was a Northern Ireland Civil Contingencies Forum at regional level that all Council emergency planning officers sit on which was chaired at SOLACE level by the Council's Chief Executive. Emergency Planning meetings were taking place every couple of hours with all agencies, which was led and facilitated by NI Civil Contingencies Forum.

In response to a query from Councillor Byrne regarding NILGA's resilience training for Elected Members on 24th November from 10.30am – 1pm, Mr Boyd advised that he would endeavour to find out whether the training could be arranged outside working hours or if a recorded version could be made available.

Councillor Reilly queried whether there were practice emergency scenarios carried out to keep officers updated and also whether locations of sandbags could be identified going forward.

Mr Boyd stated there were 4 designated sandbag containers operated by DFI in Newcastle and there actually had been an emergency planning exercise planned for last week however it was called off due to the weather warning. He stated there would be other exercises planned for the New Year.

Agreed:

On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed that all elected members note and familiarise themselves with the content of the NMDDC Emergency Management Plan and NMDDC Emergency Communications Plan and their roles and responsibilities in relation to emergencies and response of the Council.

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 O'Hare, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

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

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

SPR/163/2023: **NMDDC EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN SEPTEMBER 2023 PROCEDURES**

Read: Emergency Communications Plan – Procedures and Appendices **(Copy circulated)**.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to note the NMDDC Emergency Communications Plan and Procedures.

SPR/164/2023: **DUBLIN BELFAST ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (DBEC): COLLOBARATION AND FUNDING AGREEMENT**

Read: Report dated 16 November 2023 from Conor Mallon, Director of Economy, Place and Tourism regarding DBEC Collaboration and Funding Agreement **(Copy circulated)**.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed to approve the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council sign the DBEC Collaboration and Funding Agreement, accepting NMDDC as the current lead Council on behalf of the collaborating Council's and Universities, under the terms and conditions as outlined in the agreement.

SPR/165/2023: **STA – SUN SYSTEM**

Read: Report dated 16 November 2023 from Gerard Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance regarding the Finance System STA **(Copy circulated)**.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve the STA to SYCSO Software to ensure continuity of financial systems. Cost is already included within the Council's Revenue Budgets.

SPR/166/2023:**NEWRY CITY PARK – CONTRACT FOR FUNDNG****Read:**

Report dated 16 November 2023 from Mr Paul Tamati, Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport regarding Newry City Park – Funding Agreement (**Copy circulated**).

Agreed:

On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve both the funding agreement as per appendix 1 of the officer's report and the signing of the funding agreement between NMDDC and the Department for Communities in respect of the Newry City Park Project.

SPR/167/2023:**CONSOLATORY PAYMENTS****Read:**

Report dated 16 November 2023 from Mrs Josephine Kelly, Director of Corporate Services regarding the Consolatory payment. (**Copy circulated**).

Agreed:

On the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the consolatory payment of £2000

SPR/168/2023:**CASTLEWELLAN PARK UPDATE****Read:**

Report dated 16 November 2023 from Andy Patterson, Assistant Director Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Castlewellan Heritage Landscape & Historic Demesne Restoration Project (**Copy circulated**).

Agreed:

On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to approve the appointment of the preferred contractor to deliver the Castlewellan Landscape & Historic Demesne Restoration Project, and to approve the inclusion of the required budget in the Council's Capital Programme to deliver the project to the agreed timescales.

SPR/169/2023:**DUMDRUM PLAYING FIELDS CHANGING PAVILION****Read:**

Report dated 16 November 2023 from Paul Tamati, Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport regarding Dundrum Playing Fields, Changing Pavilion (**Copy circulated**).

Agreed:

On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed to replace the changing pavilion at Dundrum Playing Fields as per the costs outlined in section 4.1 of the officer's report, and to approve the business case as per appendix 1 of the report.

SPR/170/2023: SAINTFIELD HOCKEY PITCH – FLOODLIGHTING UPGRADE**Read:** Report dated 16 November 2023 from Paul Tamati, Assistant Director: Leisure and Sport regarding Saintfield Hockey Pitch Floodlighting Upgrade. **(Copy circulated).****Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Kelly, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to approve flood lighting upgrade works at Saintfield hockey pitch at a cost as outlined in section 4.1 of the officer's report, and to approve the Business Case as per Appendix 1 of the report.****SPR/171/2023: SPECIFIC DELEGATED FUNCTION****Read:** Report dated 16 November 2023 from Marie Ward, Chief Executive regarding Specific Delegated Function. **(Copy circulated).****Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to defer the report to be re-presented at a future SPR Committee Meeting.****SPR/172/2023: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS****Read:** Report dated 16 November 2023 from Gerard Byrne, assistant Director of Finance & Performance regarding Quarter 2 Management Accounts and Treasury Management Update. **(Copy circulated).****Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the Q2 2023-24 Management Accounts and the Q1 Treasury Management update.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 8.30pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 December 2023.

**Signed: Councillor Leanne McEvoy
Chairperson****Signed: Josephine Kelly
Director of Corporate Services**

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 16/11/23 VENUE: Downshire & Teams MEETING: SPR Committee

SUBJECT OF VOTE: SPR/156/2023 – Irish Language Strategy 2024-2027

| COUNCILLOR | FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAIN | ABSENT |
|-------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| J Brennan | X | | | |
| P Byrne | X | | | |
| C Enright | X | | | |
| O Hanlon | X | | | |
| R Howell | X | | | |
| T Kelly | X | | | |
| A Lewis | | X | | |
| D McAteer | | | | X |
| L McEvoy | X | | | |
| A Mathers | | | | X |
| S O’Hare | X | | | |
| A Quinn | X | | | |
| H Reilly | | X | | |
| G Sharvin | X | | | |
| D Taylor | | X | | |
| TOTALS | 10 | 3 | | 2 |

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AHC/2023

**Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on
Monday 20 November 2023 at 6.00pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic
Centre and via Microsoft Teams**

Chairperson: Councillor R Howell (Chamber)

In attendance in Chamber: Councillor L Devlin
Councillor A Finnegan
Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor A Mathers
Councillor A McMurray
Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Murphy

In attendance via Teams: Councillor D Finn
Councillor A Lewis
Councillor O Magennis
Councillor S O'Hare

Non-Members in Chamber: Councillor O Hanlon

Non-Members via Teams: Councillor J Brennan

**Officials in attendance
in Chamber:**

Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

AHC/125/2023: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Jackson.

AHC/126/2023: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor McMurray declared an interest in item 7: Service Level Agreement with Education Authority.

AHC/127/2023: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2023

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 16 October 2023. **(Copy circulated)**.

In referring to Department for Communities Living High Street Funding, Councillor McMurray enquired whether consideration had been given as to how the site at the Newcastle Centre would be used including pedestrian access to the back to enable connection with Newcastle. He also enquired about the business case for the leisure centre.

Mr Tamati explained the Living High Street funding referred to flexible space and part of that funding was about linkages.

Mr Tamati advised confirmation of funding had not yet been received, that there was a process to go through and improving pedestrian access to the back and a range of options would be explored.

Mr Tamati advised the outline business case for the Newcastle Centre was being reviewed to ensure process was followed and it was hoped it would be brought forward in the new year.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 16 October 2023.

AHC/128/2023: NOTICE OF MOTION – LEISURE CENTRES

Read: Report dated 20 November 2023 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding a Notice of Motion in relation to Leisure Centres. **(Copy Circulated)**

Councillor Hanlon spoke of the Motion she presented to Council in July 2023 in which Council recognised that in the aftermath of COVID, local leisure facilities and services across the District were experiencing a number of significant challenges.

Councillor Hanlon explained the reason the Motion had been presented to Council was due to feedback Members were getting from service users and residents across the District regarding issues relating to classes being cancelled last minute and the vitality pool having to be closed for a length of time for changeover of water.

Councillor Hanlon thanked officers for the detailed report.

Mr Tamati provided an overview of the report giving a robust view of the service currently and moving forward. He spoke of a key challenge being staffing and delivery whilst working to ensure a level of service delivery that was acceptable to the public and management particularly in relation to lifeguarding.

Members were advised 5 National Pool Lifeguard Qualification courses had been completed in the last six months and a recent recruitment had offered a number of appointments, however of those very few were interested in permanent roles with a lot of interest in casual roles, and this was reflective of the workforce at the moment.

Mr Tamati assured members that officers were working through the challenges and outlined work undertaken to date.

Members were provided with an overview of the challenges faced in terms of vitality suite in Down Leisure Centre. Water Quality Management best practices requires spa pools to be drained, refilled, and reheated in line with industry standards to ensure legislative compliance with closures on a Monday facilitating this practice and allow this to be adhered to. Officers were working on alternatives on how to improve that, however any alternatives needed to be water quality management approved. It was hoped this could be resolved.

In relation to classes, Mr Tamati referred to a report on a Programme Delivery Partner presented to Committee on 16 November 2023, ratified by Council on 6 November 2023 which would help with the sustainability and succession planning around coaches and delivery of classes. Members were advised that in relation to opening hours there was an opportunity to look at that however given the current situation around industrial relations with management working through that process and Members would be updated in due course.

Councillor Hanlon thanked Mr Tamati for the positive report, commenting that it was a basic need for the District to have a fully functioning leisure facility and welcomed the partnership agreements, review of summers activity plans, extension of referral schemes for people with medical conditions and the rollout of autism swimming tuition. She reiterated the importance of examining opening hours and hoped that with the system and officers work this would happen.

In response to a query from Councillor Finn regarding booking arrangements for birthday parties within Newry Leisure, Mr Tamati advised he would pick the matter up with her directly.

Agreed:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Murphy, to note the contents of the officer's report which addresses the concerns outlined in the Notice of Motion.

AHC/129/2023: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE

Read: Report dated 20 November 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the District Electoral Area Forums. **(Copy circulated)**

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

- **Slieve Croob DEA Forum Special Meeting held on Wednesday 8 November 2023.**
- **Crotlieve DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Tuesday 14 November 2023.**

AHC/130/2023 COMMUNITY COORDINATION HUB (CCH) UPDATE REPORT

Read: Report dated 20 November 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the Community Coordination Hub. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Robb referred to a public drop-in session that had taken place in Newcastle following recent flooding and how people who had attended were interested in a public meeting with statutory agencies. Members were informed there was an existing Community Resilience Group within Newcastle which included membership from various statutory agencies however it appeared to have weakened in terms of the public membership. Mrs Robb confirmed she was to meet with public members of the group in the coming weeks to ascertain the current membership and look at how to bolster that and then work in conjunction with the other statutory agencies as there was a lot from a DEA perspective that could be done to link in more closely with the community and provide a link to the other statutory agencies in the event of an emergency.

Mrs Robb spoke of the importance of knowing from the people on the ground where the deficits were in information and how to better assist people to help communities as they were very often the first people to respond. She added that although in the recovery stage of flooding, there were lessons to be learned and things to improve on. It was hoped that by January 2024 there would be a more effective Community Resilience Group in the Newcastle DEA area and then this could be replicated in each of the DEA areas to improve the response to incidents going forward.

Councillor D Murphy welcomed the work of DEAs and spoke of the importance of seeing agencies such as NI Water, Rivers Agency and DfI on the ground and speaking to elected representatives to explain mitigating factors.

Councillor Devlin thanked Mrs Robb for the update and referred to a Community Flood Resilience Group that had been set up during her time as Chair of Council in 2020. She spoke of how it had been useful in bringing people affected by floods together with DfI Rivers and Council officials and that this needed to be revisited as it enabled flood alerts to be sent to phones, provision of information on sandbag locations and flood relief scheme etc.

The Chairperson spoke in support of Councillor Devlin's comments on the Flood Resilience Group and the importance of replicating it across the 7 DEAs.

- Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Magennis, note the report and approve the actions in the action sheet for the:
- **Community Coordination Hub Meeting held on Wednesday 18 October 2023.**
 - **Community Coordination Hub Emergency Meeting held on Thursday 2 November 2023.**

Councillor McMurray left the meeting for the duration of the following item.

AHC/131/2023 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Read: Report dated 20 November 2023 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding a Service Level Agreement with the Education Authority. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Finnegan welcomed the Service Level Agreement with the Education Authority as detailed within the officers report and spoke of how it brought young people together to build skills and confidence and how the good uptake in recent events and workshops would allow that to continue and be expanded upon.

Councillor Galbraith concurred with Councillor Finnegan's comments, however, spoke of his concern at providing funding when the Education Authority had made cuts to funding to the voluntary sector recently.

Councillor Galbraith requested a review after 1 year to ensure that the money spent was used in the best possible manner for the best outcome for young people. He also asked that the voluntary sector be much more involved in events organised by Youth Voice.

Mrs Robb confirmed she would report back to Committee on how money was spent and undertook to examine how events were promoted and advertised and use existing community and voluntary channels to get the message out. She advised that the SLA would regulate how the money could be spent by way of assurance to members.

- Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor to issue a Service Level Agreement (multi-annual depending on budgets) through the Council's Grants and Funding Unit, verified in line with Council procedures.

Councillor McMurray rejoined the meeting at this point – 6.32pm.

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

AHC/133/2023 ACCESS AND INCLUSION FUNDING

Read: Report dated 20 November 2023 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport, regarding DfC Access and Inclusion Funding. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Devlin, to approve the following:**

- **Successful funding bids to the DfC Access and Inclusion Fund.**
- **A Public Tender and appointment to complete the works outlined in the Access and Inclusion Funding Application.**
- **To approve the Business Case for this Public Tender as per appendix 1 and Council's Procurement Policy.**

AHC/134/2023 SPORT NI COMMUNITY PLANNING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Read: Report dated 20 November 2023 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport, regarding Sport NI's District Councils Community Planning 23/24 Investment Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Finn to approve the following:**

- **The successful funding bid to Sport NI's District Councils Community Planning 23/24 Investment Programme.**
- **The revised Business Case as per appendix 1 of the officer's report.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.08pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 December 2023.

Signed: Councillor Howell
Chairperson

Signed: Paul Tamati
Assistant Director Leisure and Sport

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 22 November 2023 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, District Council Offices, Monaghan Row, Newry and via MS Teams.

Chair: Councillor T Andrews (Chamber)

In Attendance in Chamber:

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor W Clarke | Councillor C Enright |
| Councillor K Feehan | Councillor D Finn |
| Councillor M Larkin | Councillor G Kearns |
| Councillor O Magennis | Councillor L McEvoy |
| Councillor H Reilly | Councillor D Taylor |

In Attendance via Teams: Councillor M Rice Councillor J Truesdale

Officials in Attendance:

Mr A Cassells, Director Sustainability and Environment
 Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director Waste Management
 Ms G Kane, Acting Assistant Director: Facilities and Maintenance
 Mr A Mallon, Acting Assistant Director: Facilities and Maintenance
 Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

Officials via Teams: Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

SE/122/2023: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Jackson and K Murphy.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Feehan to the Committee. He also thanked Council staff, agencies and other individuals who went the extra mile to assist with the recent flooding in the District.

The Chairperson condemned the despicable vandalism of the Christmas Tree in Kilkeel.

SE/123/2023: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

Councillor Andrews declared an interest in item 13 – FASTER EV Project Update and Legal Agreement with EasyGo.

SE/124/2023: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2023

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 October 2023. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, it was agreed that the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 October 2023 be noted.**

NOTICE OF MOTION**SE/125/2023: REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION IN RELATION TO LIVESTOCK WORRYING**

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment regarding a Notice of Motion in relation to Livestock Worrying. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Clarke presented his motion was about Council working with relevant partners to raise awareness of the impact of dogs off leads, worrying livestock and perhaps being able to produce a publicity campaign about the issue in conjunction with National Trust who own part of the high Mourne, Northern Ireland Water and Mourne Heritage Trust. He stated there had been a number of attacks in the high Mourne where a number of sheep had been attacked and subsequently died.

Councillor Clarke outlined that people believe it was ok to walk through the forest in the Mourne Mountains and then release their pets however the message needed to be clear that if any livestock was nearby that dogs should be kept on leads and under control. He proposed that a meeting be organised with all the relevant agencies to discuss a way forward, sharing resources and expertise in order to make the message clear.

Councillor Truesdale queried the figure regarding 26 reported incidents as, according to DAERA tables there were only four between April 2022 and June 2023. She also stated there was an issue with the lack of resource as Newry, Mourne and Down only have four dog wardens to cover the District.

To clarify Councillor Truesdale's comment about the number of reported incidents, Mr Cassells advised the reporting period was from 14th November 2022 until 14th November 2023.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Magennis it was agreed that a meeting be organised with relevant partners to discuss a way forward to produce a publicity campaign highlighting the importance of ensuring dogs are kept under control in the Mourne Mountains.

SE/126/2023: CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON CREATING A SMOKEFREE GENERATION AND TACKLING YOUNG VAPING

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Sinead Murphy, Assistant Director Environment relating to a consultation response on creating a smoke free generation. **(Copy circulated)**

In presenting the report, Mrs Murphy advised that smoking was the single most entirely preventable cause of ill health, disability and death in the UK. She stated it was responsible for around 2200 deaths per year in Northern Ireland and in October this year, the Department of Health and Social Care published a command paper "Stopping the Start", their plan to create a smokefree generation. She advised the consultation response was contained within the officer's report and asked for approval of the Council's response.

Councillor Rice welcomed the officer's report and the consultation stating vapes were presented as an alternative to smoking, however they were made attractive to young people by the bright

colours and flavours, advertisement and ease of access to them which seemed to be counterproductive to stopping smoking.

Councillor Truesdale concurred with Councillor Rice's comments and stated there had been an article from YMCA Youth Council giving young people's views on vaping with comments such as:

- No matter how much control there is, people will always find a way to access vapes;
- There needed to be more resources to people who are addicted to these sort of things;
- The difference in marketing between cigarettes with their health warnings and vapes was stark.
- Vapes are appealing if you think of the colours and flavours, whereas on cigarette packets it says 'smoking kills'.

Councillor Truesdale stated that young people know they are being targeted so this was a crucial motion and consultation and thanked officers for bringing it forward.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Rice, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to approve the consultation response to the UK Government and devolved administrations consultation on creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping in Appendix 1.**

SE/127/2023: FLEET REPLACEMENT

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Sinead Murphy, Assistant Director Environment relating Fleet Replacement Update (**copy circulated**)

In response to a query from Councillor Enright, Mr Cassells advised that there were issues with regard to capacity at the depots for electric vehicles and a business case, looking at 'whole life costs' would be brought forward in the new year for electric mechanical sweeper vehicles.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Rice, it was agreed to note the contents of the officer's report.**

EXEMPT INFORMATION ITEMS

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).**

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

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

SE/128/2023: UPGRADE TO TOWN CENTRE CCTV AND COUNCIL FACILITIES CCTV

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Ms Gail Kane, Acting Assistant Director of Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding updating both Council Facilities and Town Centre CCTV Systems. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed that members note the content of the report and business case to be developed and brought to the Committee with a number of options for a way forward for the proposed development of a new suite of digital CCTV systems for the Council's facilities.

SE/129/2023: SUMMER PITCH MAINTENANCE 2024-2026

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Aidan Mallon, Assistant Director Facilities Management & Maintenance, regarding Tender for Annual Sports Pitch End of Season Maintenance for pitches District Wide 2024-2026. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, the Committee agreed to endorse the key pitch work principles and the commencement of the tender process for maintenance works as outlined in Section 2 of this report.

SE/130/2023: REPORT UPDATE ON CASTLEWELLAN MAY FAIR UPGRADE

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Gail Kane, Acting Assistant Director: Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding the upgrade to Castlewellan May Fair. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor McEvoy wished to place on record Councillor Howell's thanks to Council officers for the work on the May Fair.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to note the contents of the officer's report and approve the recommendations contained within it. It was also agreed to provide a revenue budget for the May 2024 Castlewellan Fair.

SE/131/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR CCTV TOWN CENTRE MAINTENANCE AND PEST CONTROL

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Gail Kane, Acting Assistant Director: Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding the renewal of 2 No. Service contracts – Town Centre CCTV Maintenance and Pest Control Services. **(Copy circulated)**

- AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to note the contents of the report and to approve the following:**
- **Business case for the maintenance of the town centre CCTV systems for a 2-year period from 1st April 2024**
 - **Business case for the continuation of the Council's pest control service for a 5-year period from 1st July 2024**

SE/132/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR BEDDING PLANTS

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Aidan Mallon, Assistant Director, Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding the Tender Supply of Summer & Winter Bedding plants for Public Spaces 2024 to 2026
(Copy circulated)

- AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to endorse the themes and the commencement of procurement for supply of bedding plants as outlined in Section 2 of the officer's report.**

SE/133/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTOR TO UNDERTAKE ASBESTOS CONTROL MEASURES ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Aidan Mallon, Assistant Director, Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding the appointment of a contractor to undertake Asbestos Control Measures on behalf of the Council. **(Copy circulated)**

- AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the officer's report and associated business case and accept the conclusion of the Business Case that Option 1 is chosen as the preferred option. Option 1 will see the appointment, through a tender process, of a competent contractor to undertake a number of duties under the Council's Asbestos Management Plan for a 3-year period.**

Councillor Rice left the meeting at this stage – 7.01pm

The Chairperson, having declared an interest, left the chamber at this stage and the Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Clarke assumed the Chair – 7.03pm

Having previously declared an interest, Councillors Larkin and Truesdale left the meeting at this stage – 7.03pm

SE/134/2023: FASTER EV PROJECT UPDATE AND LEGAL AGREEMENT WITH EASYGO

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director, Sustainability & Environment regarding the Faster EV project update and Legal Agreement with EasyGo **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to note the update on the FASTER EV project and approve the draft legal agreement which was provided as Appendix 1 to the officer's report. It was also agreed to note that a final version of the legal agreement will be provided back to Committee for noting in the event that there are further minor changes to the draft.

The Chairperson re-entered the meeting at this stage and resumed the Chair – 7.08pm

Councillors Larkin and Truesdale rejoined the meeting at this stage – 7.08pm

SE/135/2023: NFLA MEMBERSHIP

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director Sustainability & Environment regarding NFLA Membership (**Copy circulated**).

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to retain membership of the NFLA and to pay the current 2023/24 membership fees as outlined within the officer's report. It was also agreed to seek representation on the NFLA Steering Committee via Party Leaders and that as part of Council's membership we look at the possibility of hosting an event.

Councillors Feehan, Kearns and Magennis left the meeting at this stage – 7.16pm

SE/136/2023: REVISED RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMY/UTILITY REGULATOR CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON CONNECTION CHARGES

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment regarding a Call for Evidence Response – Electricity Connection Policy and Framework Review (**Copy circulated**)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to submit the revised Call for Evidence Response as contained within Appendix 1 of the officer's report.

SE/137/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR THE PURCHASE OF FORKLIFT TRUCK

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Sinead Murphy, Assistant Director: Environment regarding a business case for the purchase of a forklift truck. (**Copy circulated**)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to approve the business case for the purchase of a replacement forklift truck.

SE/138/2023: JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS BULLETIN & MINUTES

Read: Arc21 – Joint Committee Members Bulletin & Minutes 26 October 2023
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the bulletin and minutes.

SE/139/2023: JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN COMMITTEE MINUTES – THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2023

Read: Arc21 – Joint Committee Members Minutes 25 September 2023
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the minutes.

FOR NOTING**SE/140/2023: SUSTAINABLE FOOD PLACES BRONZE AWARD**

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director, Sustainability & Environment regarding Sustainable Food Places Bronze Award. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the Council's success in being awarded a SFP Bronze Award.

SE/141/2023: SUSTAINABLE FOOD PLACES BRIDGING THE GAP FUNDING APPLICATION

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment regarding Bridging the Gap funding Application (Sustainable Food Places). (Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the recent support for the above "Bridging the Gap" funding application. Committee would be advised on the outcome of the application at the earliest opportunity.

SE/142/2023: BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Read: Report dated 22 November 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment regarding Draft Biodiversity Strategy and associated Action Plan. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the draft Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, along with the attached consultation questions, and the proposed public consultation. Members to provide any further feedback through NMD Speak Service or via besustainable@nmandd.org

SE/143/2023: **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER.**

Read: ARC21 joint committee meeting minutes of Thursday 25 September 2023.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McEvoy, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the minutes of ARC21 joint Committee Meeting held 25 September

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.30pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 04 December 2023.

Signed: **Councillor Terry Andrews**
Chairperson

Signed: **Mr Andrew Cassells**
Director of Sustainability & Environment

Roger Wilson
Chief Executive



**Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon**
Borough Council



13 October 2023

Ms Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Newry Office
Monaghan Row
NEWRY
BT35 8DJ

Dear Marie

NOTICE OF MOTION – REPRIORITISATION OF THE A1

The Council at its meeting held on 25 September 2023 unanimously adopted the following Notice of Motion in relation to the Reprioritisation of the A1 Dual Carriageway –

“Between 2002 and 2019 there has been 661 collisions and 41 people killed on the A1 Dual Carriageway (Source: NISRA/DfI). Despite a Public Inquiry and previous Ministerial Approval, phase 2 of the A1 upgrade has been recently categorised as a Tier 3 project, with no commitment on completion, despite years of campaigning from the public and political representatives.

This Council recognises the urgent need for A1 infrastructure upgrades and the strong public support for improvements. In order to protect lives on one of our busiest roads, this Council recognises the Phase 2 upgrades as a top priority infrastructure project and requests urgent budget reallocation to support project delivery.

This Council commits to:

- *Writing to the Chief Executive of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council asking Council Members to support urgent reprioritisation of the A1 and budget reallocation to achieve Phase 2 upgrades.*
- *Writing to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure urging a reprioritisation of the A1, an inclusion in tier one Infrastructure projects and budget reallocation to achieve Phase 2.*
- *Writing to the Executive and Minister for Infrastructure, when the Assembly is restored, to prioritise the A1 and urgently redirect budget to the upgrades.*

Armagh Office
The Palace Demesne
Friary Road
Armagh
BT60 4EL

Banbridge Office
Civic Building
Downshire Road
Banbridge
BT32 3JY

Craigavon Office
Craigavon Civic &
Conference Centre
Lakeview Road
Craigavon

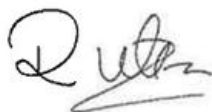
☎ 0300 0300 900

✉ info@armaghibanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk
🌐 armaghibanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

- *Writing to the Secretary of State, urging prioritisation of the project and to engage with The Department for Infrastructure to ensure the improvements are a Tier 1 priority"*

The Council would ask your Council Members to support the urgent reprioritisation of the A1 and budget reallocation to achieve Phase 2 upgrades.

Yours sincerely



Roger Wilson
Chief Executive



Civic Headquarters
Lagan Valley Island
Lisburn BT27 4RL
Tel: 028 9244 7300
www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk



Our Ref: DB/BS/wh/CE27

1 November 2023

Ms Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry Mourne & Down District Council
Downshire Civic Centre
Ardglass Road
Downpatrick BT30 6GQ
marie.ward@nmandd.org

Dear Marie

Re-Prioritisation of A1 Dual Carriageway

At a meeting of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council held on 24 October 2023 the Council passed unanimously the undernoted Notice of Motion in connection with the re-prioritisation of the A1 Dual Carriageway.

“Between 2002 and 2019 there has been 661 collisions and 41 people killed on the A1 Dual Carriageway (Source: SISRA/DfI). Despite a Public Inquiry and previous Ministerial Approval, phase 2 of the A1 upgrade has been recently categorised as a Tier 3 project, with no commitment on completion, despite years of campaigning from the public and political representatives.

This Council recognises the urgent need for A1 infrastructure upgrades and the strong public support for improvements.

This Council also recognises the significant and detrimental impact of the British Government imposed budget cuts on vital public services here and much needed infrastructure projects such as the A1, and that the British Government needs to properly fund the Executive to allow it to deliver for communities.

In order to protect lives on one of our busiest roads, this Council recognises the Phase 2 upgrades as a top priority infrastructure project and requests urgent budget reallocation to support project delivery.

Cont'd/.....

1 November, 2023

This Council commits to:

- writing to the Chief Executive of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council asking Council Members to support urgent reprioritisation of the A1 and budget reallocation to achieve Phase 2 upgrades
- writing to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure urging a reprioritisation of the A1, an inclusion in tier one Infrastructure projects and budget reallocation to achieve Phase 2
- writing to the Executive and Minister for Infrastructure, when the Assembly is restored, to prioritise the A1 and urgently redirect budget to the upgrades
- writing to the Secretary of State, urging prioritisation of the project and to engage with The Department for Infrastructure to ensure the improvements are a Tier 1 priority.”

The Council asks that your Elected Members support the urgent reprioritization of the A1 and budget reallocation to achieve the Phase 2 upgrades.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Burns', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

David Burns
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

From the Deputy Secretary
Colin Woods

Your Reference: C/221/2023
Our Reference: SCORR-0481-2023

Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry Mourne & Down District Council
Oifig an Iúir
Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry
BT35 8DJ

Room 701
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Telephone (028) 9054 1175
Email: southern.sri@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Email: marie.ward@nmandd.org
fionnuala.branagh@nmandd.org

29 November 2023

Dear Marie,

RE: NOTICE OF MOTION – REPRIORITISATION OF THE A1 JUNCTIONS PHASE 2 Road Improvement Scheme

Thank you for your letter of 13 November 2023 to the Permanent Secretary. I have been asked to respond on Dr McMahon's behalf. At the heart of this issue, is what can be done on the basis of funding levels that are not sufficient to meet all of the demands and requirements which the Department faces. The only option we have is to strictly prioritise schemes on the basis of our current policy framework.

Recognising this, a decision was made under the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2022, by the Department in August 2023 to publish a list of major road schemes that will continue to be progressed. This prioritisation recognised the Department's challenging budget position. It also, however, recognised the legal requirements under the Climate Change (NI) Act 2022. This combination of factors has changed the landscape considerably, meaning delivery of the major roads programme as previously set out is no longer sustainable nor appropriate.

The road schemes to be prioritised include the closing out of projects that have been recently constructed. They also provide for the continued development of schemes that have been identified as Executive Flagship projects and those included within City and Growth Deals. (Projects on the prioritised list reflected the fact that, due to financial and resourcing pressures, the Department can only deliver with identified funding streams such as Flagship and City and Growth Deal projects.)

Four Flagship projects were listed in Tier 1 of the prioritisation with a further five in Tier 2. The A1J2 project is in Tier 3 of the prioritisation, which means that it does not have

dedicated funding; however, it remains a high priority for the Department and may be progressed subject to further resources being identified. We therefore continue to finalise the Business Case and complete the preparation of the contract documents. In addition, the Department is currently exploring options to deliver the project in phases, although this will also require additional funding. Further information is provided at **Annex 1**.

The Department welcomes NMDDC's ongoing support for the scheme. I hope that you and the local Councillors understand the Department's position and trust that the information provided demonstrates that this project continues to be a priority, subject to the confirmation of additional funding.

You have also referred in your letter to proposals for a future phase of road improvements extending from Loughbrickland towards Newry. Although the Department had previously given high level consideration to a potential future project, no formal development work has been carried out to date and a specific scheme has not yet been added to the major works programme.

The Department is currently drafting a new Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland (TSNI). It will form an overarching framework which will shape the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services up to 2035. It is expected to be published for public consultation early in the new year. The subsequent Transport Plans will prioritise further transport projects and these will be central to delivering the approach set out in the TSNI. The Transport Plans may include for potential future improvements to the A1 dual carriageway south of Loughbrickland.

I hope that you find this response helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Colin Woods', written in a cursive style.

Colin Woods
DfI Deputy Secretary
Transport and Road Asset Management

Annex 1

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On making the decision under the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2022, the former Permanent Secretary asked for a review of the Prioritisation of the Major Projects within 4 months of the publication of the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI) or when there were further developments. The Department is currently working on that review.

The ISNI methodology for prioritisation is by convention designed to reflect the Northern Ireland Executive's priorities as expressed through the Programme for Government (PfG). To prepare for an incoming Executive and Ministers, SIB is working with senior officials to capture Departments' investment priorities for the next 10 years. The final ISNI should reflect many of these priorities within the constraint of the funding that is likely to be available from all sources for investment in public infrastructure (which is a further uncertainty at this time).

A draft ISNI was published for consultation in January 2022 and a final version of the strategy is being prepared. In the absence of the Executive, timescales for publication are uncertain. Aside from restating commitment to projects that are underway or otherwise committed to, the ISNI is likely to address the strategically significant programmes and projects that will be prioritised over the next ten years. This may include the A1J2 project. The ISNI will not, however, be finalised in the absence of an Executive.

In the meantime, Flagship Projects within the Department are the Executive's priority schemes which include the A5 & A6 dual carriageways and the Transport Hub. Funding for these schemes is ring fenced and cannot be utilised for other schemes. Four Flagship Road schemes were included within Tier 1 of the prioritisation.

The implementation of City and Growth Deals has also been deemed a priority for delivery by the NI Executive. The Executive and the UK government committed £1.2bn capital funding over the next 15 years to four Northern Ireland City and Growth Deals: Belfast Region City Deal (£700m); Derry City and Strabane City Deal (£210m); Causeway Coast and Glens Growth Deal (£72m), and Mid South West Region Growth Deal (£252m). The five transport and road schemes within the City and Growth Deals are included within Tier 2 of the prioritisation.

While there are nine schemes listed within the Department's prioritisation paper as higher priority, the A1J2 project was identified within the prioritised list, under Tier 3. At this stage there is no dedicated funding identified for projects in Tier 3, but the A1J2 remains a high priority within the Department. For that reason, work will continue on the scheme, to finalise the Business Case and complete the preparation of the contract documents. Despite uncertainty as to funding therefore, the Department remains fully committed to delivering this project.

Finally, the Department is currently exploring alternative options to deliver the project in phases through smaller packaged schemes. This would increase the opportunities

for parts of the project to be delivered earlier. It is important to note, however, that these smaller discrete packages would also require confirmation of funding before they could be procured and constructed.



Northern
Ireland
Office

**Parliamentary Under-Secretary
of State
for Northern Ireland**

1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Erskine House
20-32 Chichester St
Belfast
BT1 4GF

E: correspondence@nio.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/nio
Follow us on Twitter @NIOgov

Ms Marie Ward

Chief Executive

Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

O'Hagan House

Monaghan Row

Newry BT35 8DJ

29 November 2023

Our reference: MC/23/519

Your reference: C/221/2023

Dear Ms Ward,

Thank you for your letter dated 13 November to the Secretary of State, the Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP, regarding the prioritisation of the A1 dual carriageway. The Secretary of State has asked me to reply on his behalf.

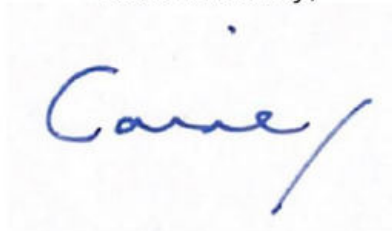
I am acutely aware that the absence of a Northern Ireland Executive is exacerbating the challenges facing all public services in Northern Ireland. Action needs to be taken to bring Northern Ireland's public finances under control and make them sustainable in future financial years. The necessary decisions have not been taken locally to ensure affordable public service transformation and that is now being felt to the detriment of people in Northern Ireland.

As the Secretary of State set out in his Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament on 27 April, the Northern Ireland Office worked intensively with the Northern Ireland departments to set a budget for Northern Ireland for the 2023-24 financial year. This year's budget allocation from the UK Government gave the Northern Ireland Department of Infrastructure a total allocation of £523 million, an increase of £2 million above the 2022-23 budget.

The upgrading and maintenance of road infrastructure is a devolved matter and, therefore, any decision regarding the prioritisation of the A1 dual carriageway is the responsibility of the Department for Infrastructure. I note that you will also be writing to its Permanent Secretary.

The Secretary of State and I remain focused on delivering for the people in Northern Ireland. A devolved power-sharing government, in line with the Belfast Agreement, is the best way to deliver good governance and prosperity in Northern Ireland and we are working tirelessly towards that end.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Caine', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**LORD CAINE
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

SR/cd/CS10.10.2023, item 9a

20 November 2023

Ms Marie Ward
Chief Executive Newry Mourne and Down Council

marie.ward@nmandd.org

Dear Ms Ward

At a recent meeting of Ards and North Down Borough Council it was discussed and unanimously agreed to put on record that the Council believes:

- Education should be accessible to all who seek it and embedding a culture of lifelong learning in our society is essential to enabling people to realise their potential.
- Part-time flexible learning is crucial to meeting the skills needed to build a modern, inclusive, and green economy.
- Part-time students are a unique demographic, they are more likely to have disabilities, come from disadvantaged backgrounds, have caring responsibilities, such as children or elderly relatives, and in general, be part of a 'hard to reach' group who missed out on full-time study.
- Lifelong learning, including non-formal education, addresses social issues, strengthens communities, and builds civic engagement. It is the most effective tool for meeting social policy objectives and creating positive social change.
- That lifelong learning must become a meaningful and developed policy area with tangible actions and outcomes, underpinned by the wealth of best practice and innovation from across the UK and Ireland.

As a result, Council agreed:

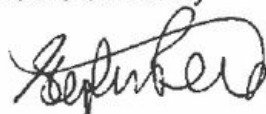
- To assist in the promotion, through the dissemination of material in support of a Lifelong Learning campaign, to inform and raise public awareness of how lifelong learning transforms lives and communities.
- Write to Strangford and North Down MLAs and MPs to prioritise funding for formal and informal part-time education when the Executive is formed.
- Encourage Strangford and North Down MLAs to form an All-Party Group on Lifelong Learning to support and evidence and best-practice informed approach to policy making, in collaboration with adult education bodies and other

stakeholders to form a voice for Lifelong Learning in the Assembly when an Executive is formed.

- To write to other Councils in Northern Ireland to take similar action and to write to MPs and MLAs for their respective areas in a similar manner.

I would be grateful if you could please consider this letter and respond accordingly.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Reid
Chief Executive



We're closing, but it's not goodbye

Newry branch closes on
Friday 16 February 2024



Why our Newry branch is closing

Back when we opened this branch, visiting us in person was one of the only ways to do your banking. Now, as there are lots of ways to manage your money without even leaving your home, we're seeing many customers choosing to bank using our app, and Online or Telephone Banking. This has had a big impact on the number of customers coming in to see us.

When deciding whether to close this branch, we looked carefully at how it's been used and how customers are banking in other ways.



90% of people who use our branch have also banked using the app, online and by phone in 2022



25 customers use this branch regularly as the only way to do their banking



4% of this branch's customers have used nearby branches in the last 12 months

We'll be working with the local community to understand the impact of closing this branch. Once we've gathered feedback, we'll publish the results in a booklet called 'Branch closure feedback', which you can get from your branch or online at home.barclays/ukbranchclosures

We'll be here for you – just in a different way

We want to reassure you that we're here to help. We'll stay in your community and you'll be able to talk to us in person. We're finalising the details of where we'll be based, and when, to support you with your banking, and we'll share the details locally once confirmed. We'll be available to help you with things like day-to-day banking queries and helping you manage your money, though there won't be access to cash at this site. We'll also add the location and opening times on our website – just search 'findbarclays'.

In the meantime, we'll be here in person until this branch closes, to answer any questions you have and help you with the move from using this branch to alternative ways to bank.

If you'd like to talk to us about this

Our local leadership teams look at how branches are used before making the decision to close a branch, which is then agreed at national level before we make it public. If you have any concerns or would like to talk to us about this closure, or you'd like some help with what to do once it's closed, please get in touch. You can call us on 03457 345345², or email Daniel Wallace, your Deputy Customer Care Director for Scotland & Northern Ireland at daniel.wallace1@barclays.com

Here are some of the many ways you can still do your banking with us. You can also check out [barclays.co.uk/ways-to-bank](https://www.barclays.co.uk/ways-to-bank) or, if you have a business account, it's [barclays.co.uk/business-banking/ways-to-bank](https://www.barclays.co.uk/business-banking/ways-to-bank)

Online Banking and the Barclays app¹

You can do most of your everyday banking safely and securely wherever you are, in our app or online, at a time that suits you. You can even pay in cheques with the app, without having to visit a branch.

We recognise that everyone has different levels of comfort using apps and computers, so if you'd like some help, we'll be happy to show you all the useful things you can do with them. Come and chat to us in your nearest Barclays location, or visit our website, where you'll find lots of helpful information and a demo of how our app works – search 'Barclays app' online.

Telephone Banking²

Check your balance and transactions, pay bills and transfer money.

Digital Eagles and Money Mentors

Our Digital Eagles are here to help you get the most out of your online experiences. We have lots of resources and tutorials to boost your confidence and help you adapt to life in an increasingly online world. Speak to a Digital Eagle in one of our branches or search 'Barclays Digital Eagles' online.

Master your Moneyverse with a little help from our Money Mentors. They're here to give free, impartial guidance on anything from better budgeting to buying a home – search 'Barclays Money Mentors'.

Cash machines

Withdraw cash, check your balance and get a receipt at most cash machines. You can also print off a mini statement at our own cash machines. All Barclays cash machines are free to use. Some others charge a fee, which they state upfront before you use them.

The Post Office

If you have a personal or business account with us, you can use your local Post Office to do your banking.

- Use your debit card and PIN to withdraw and pay in cash, and check your balance
- If you don't have a debit card and PIN, we can arrange for a cash withdrawal limit of £100 a day
- Pay cheques in – you'll need a pre-printed paying-in slip and a cheque deposit envelope, which you'll need to get from us. Ask in a branch or call us on **0800 169 3091**
- Please allow an extra two working days for cheques paid in at the Post Office to reach your account
- For business transactions, your normal charges will apply

Here's a quick look at where you can do the things you might normally do at a branch.

| | Barclays app | Online Banking | Post Office |
|--|--------------|----------------|-------------|
| Withdraw cash | | | ✓ |
| Pay in cash | | | ✓ |
| Check balance | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| View or print statements | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Pay in cheques | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Pay bills | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Manage Direct Debits and set up and manage standing orders | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Transfer money to another account | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Make a payment | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Make an international payment | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Book an appointment | ✓ | | |
| Report a card lost or stolen | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Temporarily freeze your card | ✓ | | |

You'll need an internet connection to use our online services. To check the availability and speeds in your area, visit checker.ofcom.org.uk/broadband-coverage. If you need any support, please speak to someone in one of our branches.

If you need extra support

We have a range of extra services to make sure banking is easy to access for everyone, including:

- Talking cash machines
- Audio-accessible PINsentry devices
- High-visibility debit cards
- Credit and debit card templates to make signing easier
- British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation, so you can contact us from home, in a branch, or online/in the app
- Statements in Braille or large print.

Our colleagues in branch can help, or there's more information in our leaflet 'Making banking easier' – ask for one in a branch or read it online at barclays.co.uk/accessibility

Other places you can bank

This branch may be closing, but there are other places where you can still do your banking in person.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Barclays branches</p> <p>17 Castle Place, Belfast BT1 1EL</p> <p>Cashier service ☺</p> <p>Self-service ☺</p> <p>Find opening times and the services available by searching 'findbarclays'</p> | <p>Cash machines</p> <p>AIB, 42 Hill Street, Newry BT34 1AR Danske Bank, 58 Hill Street, Newry BT34 1BD</p> <p>You can withdraw cash, check your balance and change your PIN at all Barclays cash machines and most on the LINK network.</p> <p>There might be other free cash machines nearby, as well as cash machines that charge a fee. Visit link.co.uk/consumers/locator</p> |
| <p>Barclays in your community</p> <p>Our colleagues are available to help at many locations across the UK, not just in our branches – you'll find a friendly face and a place to talk about managing your money.</p> <p>More information about our branches and where you can find us in the community can be found by searching 'findbarclays'</p> | <p>The Post Office</p> <p>45-53 Hill Street, Newry BT34 1AF 16 Sugar Island, Newry BT35 6HT</p> <p>Find opening times and other locations at postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder</p> |

For details of local transport and access arrangements, or anything else for the above locations, we can help you with this in branch.

Glossary of terms

| | |
|---|--|
| Local community | This might include your local MPs, councillors, consumer groups identified with a particular interest in the closure, or feedback received directly from personal or business customers. |
| The only way to do their banking | People who've only used the cashier service in the branch (12 times or more in the last six months) and didn't use Online or Telephone Banking, our app, or any of our other branches. |
| Branch customer | Someone who's used this branch three or more times in the last three months. |
| Cashier service | The branch has a staffed, traditional-style counter service. |
| Self-service | The branch has at least one of these: external or internal cash machine, online banking point, quick pay point/service point, or assisted service counter. |

¹You need to be 11 or over to use the app. T&Cs apply.

²Calls to 03 numbers are charged at the same rate as calls to 01 and 02 landlines, and will count towards any inclusive minutes you may have covering calls to landline numbers. Call charges from abroad may differ – please check with your local provider. To maintain a quality service, we may monitor or record phone calls.

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