



February 29th, 2024

**Notice Of Meeting**

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 4th March 2024** 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 5 February 2024

*For Information*

[Action Sheet Council Meeting 2024 02 05.pdf](#)

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### *Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing*

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## 4.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 5 February 2024

*For Approval*

[Council Minutes 2024 02 05.pdf](#)

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### *Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption*

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## 5.0 Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 1 February 2024

*For Approval*

[Audit Committee Minutes 2024-02-01.pdf](#)

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## 6.0 Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 12 February 2024

*For Approval*

[Draft Economy Regeneration and Tourism Minutes 2024-02-12.pdf](#)

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## 7.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15 February 2024

*For Approval*

[Draft Strategy Policy Resources Meeting Minutes 2024-02-15.pdf](#)

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## 8.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 19 February 2024

*For Approval*

[Draft Active and Healthy Communities Minutes 2024 02 19.pdf](#)

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## 9.0 Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 February 2024

*For Approval*

[Draft Sustainability\\_and\\_Environment\\_Committee\\_Minutes\\_2024\\_02\\_21.pdf](#)

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## 10.0 Minutes of Special Audit Committee Meeting held on 26 February 2024

*For Approval*

[Special Audit Committee Minutes 2024-02-26.pdf](#)

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## 11.0 Minutes of Special Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 26 February 2024

*For Approval*

[Draft Special Strategy Policy Resources Meeting Minutes 2024-02-26.pdf](#)

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## 12.0 Planning Section

There were no issues arising.

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### *For Discussion/Decision*

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## 13.0 Letter from Department for Infrastructure regarding Appointment to Warrenpoint Harbour Authority

2 appointments to be made - one due to commence from 22 August 2024.

At least 6 Councillors to be nominated to be considered for appointment. DFI would particularly welcome nominations from under-represented groups: women; younger people; people with disabilities; and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Any Councillor who has previously served 10 years or two terms on the Board will not be eligible for interview.

Completed Application Forms to be returned to [publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk) no later than **12 noon on Friday 22 March 2024**

[Letter to Newry Mourne and Down Council inviting nominations - Trust Port - WHA \(002\).pdf](#)

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[CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET - WARRENPOINT HARBOUR AUTHORITY.pdf](#)

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[APPLICATION FORM - WARRENPOINT HARBOUR AUTHORITY \(002\).pdf](#)

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## Correspondence

### 14.0 Correspondence Report

*For Information*

 <i>Correspondence Report Council 2024 03 04.pdf</i>	<i>Page 100</i>
 <i>Appendix 1 Response from BBC Northern Ireland.pdf</i>	<i>Page 103</i>
 <i>Appendix 2 Response from Bank of Ireland re NOM Bank Closures and Euro ATMs.pdf</i>	<i>Page 105</i>
 <i>Appendix 3 Correspondence from Derry and Strabane Council re Violence in Gaza.pdf</i>	<i>Page 106</i>
 <i>Appendix 4 Correspondence from Ards and North Down Borough Council re Cystic Fibrosis Medication.pdf</i>	<i>Page 108</i>
 <i>Appendix 5 Response from from Minister for the Economy re NOM Flood Defences.pdf</i>	<i>Page 109</i>
 <i>Appendix 6 Response from Minister for Infrastructure re NOM Flood Defences.pdf</i>	<i>Page 111</i>

## Notices of Motion

### 15.0 Notice of Motion - Democratic Improvements in Council's Financial Assistance Programme

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Bowsie:

"This Council notes with concern: 1) the scale of dissatisfaction from community groups who were disallowed vital community funding from NMDDC in 2023; 2) a drop in SLA funding to community associations by 42% from the previous year, the largest decrease in this Council's history; 3) the absence of any member of the appeals panel being independent of Council; 4) the lack of a right of appeal for applicants who are rejected at Stage 1 even when the rejection is caused by a Council error; 5) the reluctance of Council to acknowledge ambiguous and flawed application questions which elicit inadequate answers; 6) The onus on Councillors to approve all community funding recommendations presented to them without any detail whatsoever on the application and the reason for its approval or rejection.

And therefore, this Council calls on senior officials to acknowledge and resolve these democratic shortcomings in its Financial Assistance programme."

### 16.0 Notice of Motion - Projected Rates Increases

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Enright:

In view of cost of living pressures on ratepayers, Council must tailor its investment plans to what the people of Newry Mourne and Down can actually afford. Current projected rates increases in our Council over the next few years are unsustainable both in the short-term and longer term. This requires a root-and-branch re-examination of proposed capital expenditure with any major non-essential projects with a negative rate of return cancelled to make rates affordable in the medium term. In particular, Council directs management to prepare a costing for Councillors of a downsized Newry Civic Centre project with suitable office accommodation for Newry-based council staff only. Alternate sites should be considered like Bagenals Castle LIDL site that only came on the market in December 2023.

This should take account of - The loss of the Civil Service as an anchor tenant; The need to avoid speculative development in line with UK Department of Finance Guidance for Councils; The collapse of the office market in Ireland and GB since Covid and since Council voted to initiate this project in August 2019; An examination of any more affordable or appropriate sites; Aim to preserve the £130,000+ pa income stream from the Abbey car-park; These costings should include an option to remove the second fully-featured Council Chamber as an unnecessary luxury.;

A cost benefit case for this project should likewise be prepared showing the annual savings from leaving current premises v's the annual cost of operating the new premises to ensure Councillors are fully informed. Council notes that no such operational cost/benefit case exists at the moment. Council request management to bring forward the above costings as soon as possible.

## **17.0 Notice of Motion - Rail Service between Belfast and Dublin including scheduled stops in Newry**

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Feehan:

"Newry Mourne and Down District Council notes the disparity between Newry and Portadown Rail Stations in morning commuter services to Belfast, welcomes the announcement by the Irish Government of €12.5m in funding for a new hourly service between Belfast and Dublin. Asks that this Council write to Department for Infrastructure and Irish Government requesting a commitment from both that the proposed new hourly rail service between Dublin and Belfast will include scheduled stops at Newry Train Station in both directions, with a particular focus on ensuring that the morning and evening commuter departure times from both Newry and Belfast should facilitate normal work starting times."

## **18.0 Notice of Motion - Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman Complaints**

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Devlin (on behalf of Party Group Leaders):

"This Council expresses its concerns at the processing time for NIPSO complaints. Noting that some investigations can take up to 4.5 years, this Council calls on the Executive Office to assess whether the staffing levels within NIPSO are adequate so that determinations can be made in a timely manner."

## **19.0 Notice of Motion - Newry Market**

Notice of Motion received from Councillor Finn:

"Newry Mourne and Down District Council embraces the historic importance of Newry as a market town and acknowledges with concern lower than expected attendance to our local market. NMDDC commits to revitalising the market through engagement with traders, the business community and other potential

stakeholders. Council officers will reach out to local councils with successful markets such as Belfast and Galway, and explore additional uses to encourage footfall, including with our arts and community groups."

# 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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Cllr Laura Devlin  
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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  
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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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Ms Marina 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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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  
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Jonathan McGilly  
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Cllr Andrew McMurray  
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Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston  
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Cllr Declan Murphy  
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Sinead 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**

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
<i>C/178/2019</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – C/131/2019: Live Animals in Circuses</i>	<i>At the request of Councillor McAteer it was agreed the motion remain on the action sheet.</i>	<i>Democratic Services</i>		<i>N</i>
<i>C/084/2022</i>	<i>Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 28.03.22 – with NIAS &amp; SHSCT</i>	<i>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</i>	<i>Democratic Services</i>		<i>N</i>

**ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2024**

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
<i>C/023/2023</i>	<i>To set a District Rate for the Financial Year 2024/25</i>	<p>It was agreed to approve the considerations and recommendations of the Strategic Finance Working Group in relation to the 2024/25 rate setting process and, having regard to the Chief Executive's statement as required by the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011:</p> <p>1. Approve an increase in the district rate for 2024-25 of 6.41% based on an estimated penny product of 2,473,259 meaning a non-domestic rate of 29.0334 pence and a domestic rate of 0.4676 pence;</p>	<i>J Kelly</i>	<b>Agreed</b>	<i>Y</i>

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
		<p>2. Approve the Medium Term Financial plan and authorise the 2024/25 expenditure included in the estimates (Appendix 1);</p> <p>3. Approve the Capital Strategy Report for 2024/25 as required by the CIPFA Prudential Code. (Appendix 3);</p> <p>4. Approve the Capital Programme (Appendix 4);</p> <p>5. Approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024/25 (Appendix 5);</p> <p>6. Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2024/25 (Appendix 6).</p> <p>7. Approve the action sheets of the Strategic Finance Working Group relating to the rate setting process. (Appendix 7: Restricted item)</p> <p>8. Recommend officers present a draft Capital Reserves policy for Members consideration.</p>			
<i>C/024/2024</i>	<i>Action Sheet arising from council meeting held on 08.01.2024</i>	It was agreed to note the action sheet.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/025/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Council meeting held on 08.01.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/026/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 15.01.2024</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	<i>Y</i>

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
<i>C/027/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Strategy, Policy &amp; Resources Committee Meeting held on 18.01.2024</i>	<p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.</p> <p>It was agreed that any discussions regarding this matter should go before the DEA Forum and that any recommendations/proposals put forward by the DEA be brought forward to the relevant Committee for approval.</p>	<p><i>Democratic Services</i></p> <p><i>J Kelly</i> <i>A Rennick</i></p>	<p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>
<i>C/028/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting 22.01.2024</i>	<p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.</p>	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
<i>C/029/2024</i>	<i>Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting 24.01.2024</i>	<p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.</p> <p>It was agreed that Council write to the Minister for Infrastructure to ensure that they comment on the maintenance schedule and also write to the Minister for Economy to encourage that the next phase of flood relief funding be top of their priority list.</p>	<p><i>Democratic Services</i></p> <p><i>Democratic Services</i></p>	<p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Correspondence sent</b></p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>
<i>C/030/2024</i>	<i>Planning Section</i>	There were no issues arising	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
<i>C/031/2024</i>	<i>Response from Department of Health re Notice of Motion C/250/2023 Cystic Fibrosis Medication</i>	It was agreed to note the correspondence.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y

<b>Minute Ref</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b>	<b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b>
<i>C/032/2024</i>	<i>Letters from Causeway Coast &amp; Glens BC and Fermanagh &amp; Omagh DC re: Notice of Motion C/250/2023 Cystic Fibrosis Medication</i>	It was agreed to note the correspondence.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
<i>C/033/2024</i>	<i>Response from AIB re: Notice of Motion C/249/2023 Euro ATMs</i>	It was agreed to note the correspondence.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
<i>C/034/2024</i>	<i>Response from Southern Health and Social Care Trust re Daisy Hill Hospital</i>	It was agreed to note the correspondence.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
<i>C/035/2024</i>	<i>Northern Ireland Environment Forum</i>	It was agreed that Councillor Enright attend the Northern Ireland Environment Forum on 18 April 2024.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
<i>C/036/2024</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – Reaffirming October 2019 Climate Change Emergency Motion</i>	The Motion not be heard in accordance with Standing Order 24.2.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Noted</b>	Y
<i>C/037/2024</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – Ethical Public Procurement</i>	The Motion was referred to the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.	<i>J Kelly</i>	<b>To be added to March SPR Committee Agenda.</b>	Y
<i>C/038/2024</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – Daisy Hill Hospital</i>	It was agreed that Newry Mourne and Down District Council strongly opposes the decision by the Department of Health's Permanent Secretary to withdraw Emergency General Surgery from Daisy	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<b>Correspondence sent</b>	Y

<i>Minute Ref</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Lead Officer</i>	<i>Actions taken/ Progress to date</i>	<i>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</i>
		Hill Hospital and will write to Health Minister Robin Swann requesting that he receives a cross-party delegation from Council to face due scrutiny on that decision. Council reaffirms its position that major decisions on the future of Daisy Hill can and should only be made by a Health Minister who is accountable to the public and calls upon Health Minister Robin Swann to reinstate emergency general surgery at Daisy Hill Hospital with immediate effect.			
<i>C/039/2024</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – Violence Against Women</i>	The Motion was referred to the Equality & Good Relations Reference Group in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.	<i>C Moffett</i>	<b><i>To be considered by Equality &amp; Good Relations Reference Group on 5 March 2024</i></b>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/040/2024</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – Peatlands</i>	The Motion was referred to the Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.	<i>C Mallon</i>	<b><i>Noted</i></b>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/041/2024</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – MMR Vaccinations</i>	It was agreed that in welcoming that between January and June 2023 that there were no cases reported of measles in the North, noting with concern the increase in measles across England and Wales, and emphasising the importance of having children up to date with MMR vaccinations, this Council affirms its support to maintain Northern Ireland as measles-free, and will undertake a public information and education campaign via print and social media to highlight to parents and guardians the importance of MMR vaccinations. It was also agreed that Council would work in conjunction with the Public Health Agency.	<i>V Keegan</i>	<b><i>The Council's Communications and Marketing team has been working in partnership with the PHA to support its public information and education campaign highlighting to parents and guardians the importance of MMR vaccinations. A post</i></b>	<i>Y</i>

<i><b>Minute Ref</b></i>	<i><b>Subject</b></i>	<i><b>Decision</b></i>	<i><b>Lead Officer</b></i>	<i><b>Actions taken/ Progress to date</b></i>	<i><b>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</b></i>
				<i><b>campaign report will be provided at a future SPRC meeting.</b></i>	
<i><b>END</b></i>					

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL****NMD/C/****Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 5 February 2024 at 6.00pm in  
Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick and  
via Microsoft Teams****In the Chair:**

Councillor V Harte

**In attendance in Chamber:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor J Brennan
Councillor P Byrne	Councillor P Campbell
Councillor W Clarke	Councillor L Devlin
Councillor C Enright	Councillor K Feehan
Councillor D Finn	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 A McMurray
Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Murphy	Councillor S Murphy
Councillor A Quinn	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Rice	Councillor M Ruane
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J Truesdale	

**In attendance via Teams:**

Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor A Finnegan
Councillor J Tinnelly	

**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  
 Mr A Patterson, Director of Sustainability and Environment  
 Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director, Finance and Performance  
 Mrs M Hughes, HR & OD Manager  
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in attendance****Via Teams:**

Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director, Capital and Procurement

**C/021/2024 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Gibbons and McEvoy.

On behalf of Council, the Chairperson extended deepest condolences and sympathy to the family and friends of Jamie Marks who tragically lost his life following a road traffic collision. Councillors Hanlon, Lee-Surginor, Devlin and Taylor paid tribute to Jamie on behalf of their parties.

The Chairperson along with Councillors Jackson, Lee-Surginor, Hanlon, Taylor and Devlin on behalf of their parties extended deepest condolences and sympathy to Cathy Mason, MLA and former Chairperson for Newry, Mourne and Down District on the passing of her brother Peter Noade.

The Chairperson and Councillor Hanlon sent condolences to the family of Walter Love, renowned broadcaster and journalist who was a popular volunteer of the local charity Good Morning Down.

The thoughts and prayers of everyone in Council were extended to the family of Aleta Quinn following her passing. The Chairperson advised that Aleta had worked in Customer Services in the Greenbank Depot and would be sadly missed by many.

The Chairperson advised she had met with Mary Cunningham from Rostrevor, one of 3 centenarians who she would have the pleasure of meeting in a week including Maureen O'Hare from Bessbrook and Molly O'Reilly from Downpatrick. She wished them all a very happy and special birthday on behalf of the Council.

The Chairperson sent congratulations to the Sacred Heart Grammar School on winning the Ulster U20 Championship, their first Ulster title in 21 years.

Councillors Jackson and Talyor sent best wishes to King Charles on the breaking news of his ill health and diagnosis and wished him well and thoughts and prayers were with him. Best wishes were conveyed to the Princess of Wales, who was also recovering from surgery.

Councillor Lee-Surginor paid tribute to former Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Watch Commander Stephen Barr who had recently passed away and spoke of how he had served Ballynahinch with distinction and valour.

Councillor Truesdale on behalf of the Alliance Party congratulated Johnny Ward originally from Kilkeel, who had made history with an incredible achievement on completing the Ultimate Explorers Grand Slam and asked that the Chairperson recognise this achievement.

**C/022/2024 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.



**C/023/2024                    TO SET A DISTRICT RATE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25**

Read:                                Report from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive and Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services regarding the District Rate 2024/25 dated 5 February 2024 **(Copy circulated)**

The Chief Executive stated, in accordance with Standing Order 21.2.a, Council was asked to agree that the paper should not be subject to call-in because it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the rate by the statutory deadline of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

**AGREED:                        The above was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, in accordance with Standing Order 21.2a.**

In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the Chief Executive, as Chief Financial Officer was required to provide assurance to Members on the robustness of the revenue estimates and the adequacy of the Council's reserves position as part of the rate setting process prior to submission to the Department of Communities (DfC).

The Chief Executive confirmed detailed estimates had been formulated, presented to and scrutinised by Members at Strategic Finance Working Group Meetings. These had taken into account out-turns from previous years, corporate pressures, planned savings and efficiencies, current spending plans and projected future investment and that adequate funding was available to protect frontline services.

As a result of this extensive process and the detailed analysis that had been undertaken, the Chief Executive confirmed she was satisfied that the estimates presented should provide adequate financial resources to support the running costs of the Council for 2024/25 and that reasonable consideration of the financial risks to the Council had been made in the preparation of the estimates. The Chief Executive put the recommendations to Council to strike a District Rate of 6.41%.

Councillor Jackson, on behalf of DUP, stated his party was committed to securing the lowest possible rate in the context of considerable external pressures and there was a need for reform of business rates, reflecting commercial realities of business and trends. He stated that parties had the responsibility to scrutinise, question and consider the decisions which directly affected the lives of residents across the district and the DUP group was confident that they had provided that scrutiny, engaged with management, reviewed and reflected on options which would have ultimately brought the rate down below last year's level.

He spoke of how for many the festival of flight was seen as one of this district's flagship events and took the opportunity to call on officers to work to restore this festival. He proposed the establishment of working group to consider the Festival of Flight. He added his party was confident that this rate protected those vital council contributions to community projects while delivering a fair and realistic rate. He stated that his Party would continue to work alongside management to ensure a full and comprehensive review of refuse services. Council must take measures to tackle the most basic of

issues from dog fouling, littering to fly-tipping and the DUP would seek to explore avenues to increase the frequency and value of fines, and consideration must be given to employment of more enforcement staff which could work to alleviate those issues.

Councillor Jackson thanked officers, staff, and colleagues who had worked, met, scrutinised and enhanced the rate proposals and were now at a figure that offered value for money.

Councillor Hanlon stated one role as elected representatives was to oversee and scrutinise the financial management of Council and Sinn Féin took this responsibility very seriously. She said her party wanted to secure a stable financial budget for the District, one which would secure funding for capital projects and continue to deliver for communities and it was imperative that Council continued to move forward with plans to regenerate the towns and the city and expand sustainable tourism for the District.

Councillor Hanlon said it would be impossible to go down any further than the suggested rate without cutting services, service level agreements and supporting community events and ensuring jobs were safe for our staff. She stated there had been challenges for local government in terms of funding for example animal welfare being levied to Council and no assurances for the Rate Support Grant and highlighted that the figures had been scrutinised, revised and debated over many months with several meetings with officers and the rate had more than halved from what was first rate presented. A rate of 6.41%, 0.42% higher than last year was the lowest Council could safely go down to.

Councillor Truesdale advised Alliance's decision on the rate setting process was due to concerns regarding the viability of capital budgets such as the Newry Civic Centre and the Mourne Gateway Project. She said Council management had not disclosed updated project costs which the Department for Economy informed Council management of in November. This came as the Council plans to spend £2 million next year on a consultancy team for the project. She advised that as a party grouping they were not comfortable with embarking on such huge capital projects with speculative costs that may hit ratepayers in the pocket for years to come. She added that despite concerns, Alliance fully supported workers receiving the pay deal they deserved after extensive negotiations and that they were pleased to see Council were funding the animal welfare grant which was cut last year.

Councillor Byrne stated the SDLP had put forward alternative proposals around the capital fund and had sought clarity on the issue that had still not been answered. He acknowledged MRP costs and loan interest were high and set to spike in three years' time, but this should be managed across that period and the information was not available to Members as to why it could not be accessed now.

Councillor Byrne spoke at length about the rate support grant and the animal welfare cuts. He said he believed Council should be fighting to get that reinstated and needed to take from reserves to cover it at circa 300K because if it was reinstated at a later date, there was nothing that could be done about at that stage. Councillor Byrne said his party had factored that in to take the rate down and move forward at risk and put it into the hands of officers to make the case to have that money restored to local government.

Councillor Byrne highlighted other points that had been raised at SFWG, one being the possibility of striking two different rates and the other being 3 year projections and an attempt to iron out increases over a number of years.

Councillor Taylor spoke of this being the most challenging period that he had experienced as a Councillor and trying to find a way of reducing the rate levels that were imposed on citizens was a result of the challenges being faced. He spoke of the role the executive had to play to take pressure off local government going forward.

The Chief Executive addressed the question of animal welfare, stating that Council had made an allowance for animal welfare within the rate, and that was at risk because it had been withdrawn by the Departments and was currently in judicial review. In relation to the Rates Support Grant it had unfortunately been reduced year on year and SOLACE had been very strong lobbying the Departments on the matter.

In relation to the use of capital reserves, the Chief Executive referred to previous discussions with Members regarding the capital programme, whereby officials would advocate the use of capital reserves when Council had actually built or started to build the bigger capital projects, therefore there was no justification to use them at this point.

The Chief Executive referred to setting the rate the previous year, and how she had cautioned around the use of any further reserves because when reserves were used for current expenditure, what happened was money had to be found this year, and that was effectively what had to be done. If reserves had not been used, which was done justifiably at that point in a managed and measured way, then the rate would be lower but reserves were used at that time and it had to be made up this year.

Mrs Ward advised there was further work to do as a Council in relation to how to manage going forward, and there were many challenges from a cost perspective and hopefully with the Executive back in place there would be more certainty on budgets in order to move forward effectively.

Mrs Ward addressed the comment made by the Alliance Party in relation to Members not being aware of costs relating to the Mourne Gateway, in that Members involved from a project board perspective were aware that the Council cost estimates of the project had not increased. She advised there were ongoing discussions about the allowance that should be built into the project budget to cover possible future construction inflation and other risks, however, that had not been agreed at this point. She added she had met with the Permanent Secretary of the Department for the Economy, and that discussions were ongoing. A report on project costs and budgets, due to be presented by cost consultants would be brought forward imminently and pointed out that this did not impact the rate this year.

The Chief Executive further addressed comments from Alliance in relation to the Civic Centre in Newry by reiterating that this was a project that had been discussed at length within the Chamber and indeed queries that had been raised were addressed through governance review a number of years ago.

The Chairperson then put the Councillor Hanlon's proposal, seconded by Councillor Jackson to approve the considerations and recommendations of the Strategic Finance Working Group (as outlined within the report) and an increase in

the district rate for 2024-25 of 6.41% to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR:	26
AGAINST:	8
ABSTENTIONS:	5

The Chairperson declared Councillor Hanlon’s proposal carried.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Jackson, to approve the considerations and recommendations of the Strategic Finance Working Group in relation to the 2024/25 rate setting process and, having regard to the Chief Executive’s statement as required by the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011:

1. Approve an increase in the district rate for 2024-25 of 6.41% based on an estimated penny product of 2,473,259 meaning a non-domestic rate of 29.0334 pence and a domestic rate of 0.4676 pence;
2. Approve the Medium Term Financial plan and authorise the 2024/25 expenditure included in the estimates (Appendix 1);
3. Approve the Capital Strategy Report for 2024/25 as required by the CIPFA Prudential Code. (Appendix 3);
4. Approve the Capital Programme (Appendix 4);
5. Approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024/25 (Appendix 5);
6. Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2024/25 (Appendix 6).
7. Approve the action sheets of the Strategic Finance Working Group relating to the rate setting process. (Appendix 7: Restricted item)
8. Recommend officers present a draft Capital Reserves policy for Members consideration.

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

**C/024/2024      ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2024**

Read: Action sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 8 January 2024 (copy circulated).

*C/224/2023 and C/014/2024: Notice of Motion – Violence in Gaza and Southern Israel*  
Councillor Byrne enquired if a response had been received from Irish Government to which Ms Taggart confirmed it had not and that Democratic Services would follow up on the matter once again.

**Agreed:** **The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 8 January 2024 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Andrews.**

**C/025/2024** **COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2024**

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 8 January 2024 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:** **The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanna.**

**COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION**

**C/026/2024** **MINUTES OF ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2024**

Read: Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 15 January 2024 (copy circulated).

**Agreed:** **The Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 15 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor.**

**C/027/2024** **MINUTES OF STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2024**

Read: Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 18 January 2024 (copy circulated).

*SPR/004/2024: Industrial Relations Update*

In response to a query from Councillor D Murphy, Mrs Ward advised the matter of future considerations detailed under recommendation 3 had been put forward in a Labour Relations Agency (LRA) proposal which was being considered by SOLACE and she was unable to give a timeframe but would raise the matter at the next SOLACE meeting and with the LRA.

*SPR/005/2024: Kilbroney Park Pitches*

Councillor Ruane voiced concern at some of the comments made that Crotlieve Councillors would be kept out of any decision making regarding a major development within their area, He questioned the impact such discussions had on Planning Committee Members and asked for clarification on Councillor Tinnelly stating that he was the sole spokesperson for the clubs going forward.

Councillor Ruane proposed that any discussions regarding this matter should go before the DEA Forum and that any recommendations/proposals put forward by the DEA be brought forward to the relevant Committee for approval. Councillor K Murphy seconded the proposal.

In relation to concerns raised about comments made during the meeting, Mrs Kelly confirmed she was happy to take that forward and examine the audio recording and pointed out there was advice given by legal representatives at that meeting.

Councillor Reilly stated the matter was discussed in an open forum and the legal advice he had heard did not deny future participation by Planning Committee Members in future meetings.

Councillor Byrne supported the proposal for motions such as this to go to DEA Forums so local issues could be discussed before presenting to Committee and Council.

**Agreed:**                                    **The Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 18 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Taylor.**

**It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor K Murphy that any discussions regarding this matter should go before the DEA Forum and that any recommendations/proposals put forward by the DEA be brought forward to the relevant Committee for approval.**

**C/028/2024                                    MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2024**

**Read:**                                        **Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 22 January 2024 (copy circulated).**

*AHC/008/2024: Multi Sports Hub Review*

Councillor Tinnelly stated the opportunity to challenge the report presented was not afforded to him at the meeting and enquired where could it be challenged and discussed if ratified by Council.

Mrs Kelly clarified that the report presented at the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting had been for noting only and that the Audit Committee was considering the matter.

**Agreed:**                                      **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 22 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Howell.**

**C/029/2024                                      MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2024**

**Read:**    Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 24 January 2024 (copy circulated).

*SE/004/2024: Report on Notice of Motion, Flood Defences*

In welcoming the proposals put forward in relation to flooding, Councillor Finn said that since those decisions were taken things had moved on politically and proposed that as well as Rivers Agency Council should be writing to the Minister for Infrastructure to ensure that they comment on the maintenance schedule and also write to the Minister for Economy to encourage that the next phase of flood relief funding be top of their priority list.

Councillor Byrne seconded the proposal.

**Agreed:**    **The Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 24 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Magennis.**

**It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Byrne that Council write to the Minister for Infrastructure to ensure that they comment on the maintenance schedule and also write to the Minister for Economy to encourage that the next phase of flood relief funding be top of their priority list.**

**C/030/2024                                      PLANNING SECTION**

There were no issues arising.

In response to a query about a planning application called in for Killyleagh, Mrs Ward advised she had responded to Councillors on the matter and would respond to Councillor Hanna directly after the meeting.

Following on from the recent Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting, Councillor Reilly enquired whether there had been any improvement or ideas on how planning applications could be dealt with and reiterated that it needed to be resolved.

Mr Mallon advised officers shared Councillor's concerns and offered reassurance that processes were up to date and robust, however the key challenge being faced was in attracting the numbers of staff within the Planning Department required to deal with

the volume of work. He added that since the meeting a further recruitment exercise had been initiated, the tenth exercise carried out in 12 months, and with 5 vacancies within the department, resource was the key challenge being faced.

Mr Mallon advised he had met with Senior Planners, there was a plan in place and that it should be noted that Newry Mourne and Down District Council received the highest number of planning applications across the 11 Councils.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### **C/031/2024                    RESPONSE FROM DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/250/2023, CYSTIC FIBROSIS MEDICATION**

**Read:**                               Correspondence from Department of Health dated 22 January 2024. (Copy circulated)

**Agreed:**                               **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the correspondence.**

### **C/032/2024                    LETTERS FROM CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS BOROUGH COUNCIL AND FERMANAGH & OMAGH DISTRICT COUNCIL RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/250/2023, CYSTIC FIBROSIS MEDICATION**

**Read:**                               Correspondence from the Councils dated 18 January and 22 January 2024 respectively. (Copy circulated)

**Agreed:**                               **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the correspondence.**

### **C/033/2024                    RESPONSE FROM AIB RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/249/2023, EURO ATMS**

**Read:**                               Correspondence from AIB dated 17 January 2024. (Copy circulated)

**Agreed:**                               **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the correspondence.**

### **C/034/2024                    RESPONSES FROM SOUTHERN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST AND PERMANENT SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RE DAISY HILL HOSPITAL.**



**Read:** Correspondence from Southern Health and Social Care Trust dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 and the Permanent Secretary, Department of Health re: Daisy Hill Hospital. **(copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the correspondence.**

**C/035/2024**      **RESPONSE FROM EDUCATION AUTHORITY RE: NOTICE OF MOTION C/226/2023 BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT**

**Read:** Correspondence from Education Authority dated 1 February 2024. **(copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the correspondence.**

**C/036/2024**      **RESPONSE FROM PERMANENT SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RE: NOTICE OF MOTION ERT/154/2023 CHILDCARE STRATEGY**

**Read:** Correspondence from Education Authority dated 2 February 2024. **(copy circulated)**

Councillor Devlin welcomed the Executive being formed at long last and made reference to comments made by the Assembly in terms of the urgent need for reform and investment in the childcare sector and that she hoped there would be a positive announcement sooner rather than later.

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Quinn, it was agreed to note the correspondence.**

**C/037/2024**      **CONFERENCE – NORTHERN IRELAND ENVIRONMENT FORUM 2024**

**Read:** Invitation from AgendaNI regarding a Conference on 18 April 2024 (Copy circulated)

Ms Taggart reminded Members that in line with Council policy in relation to attending conferences a report would need to be tabled by Councillor Enright and a template would be forwarded by Democratic Services for completion.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor that Councillor Enright attend the Northern Ireland Environment Forum on 18 April 2024.**

Councillor Reilly left the meeting at this point – 7.13pm.

**C/038/2024                    NOTICE OF MOTION – RE-AFFIRMING OCTOBER 2019  
CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY MOTION**

The following motion was received from Councillor Enright:

*“Council re-affirms its climate change emergency motion passed unanimously in October of 2019 and desires concrete actions to arise from this motion in Newry Mourne and Down Council. In particular to implement Councils 2019 direction to the SMT that “Every plan or target that Council produces needs to have concrete measures to reflect this emergency”*

As a result:

*Council directs that a ‘Climate Emergency Response Plan’ be brought forward within 6 months based on the October 2019 motion similar to English Councils like Durham, East Sussex, Cambridgeshire or Worcester and many others. That the 2024-2027 Corporate Plan not be issued for consultation until it reflects the above plan. That the 2015 Area Development plans be amended on an emergency basis to reflect a Council policy of ‘Climate Change Emergency’ and ensure that ‘the energy transition’ is given serious weight in all current planning applications, following the example of English Councils like South Lakeland’s Interim planning statement, or Cornwall’s emergency amendment of its 2016 Development plan, or other English Councils who have both amended their existing Area Plans and modified their proposed development plans with the purpose of “Fast-tracking the energy transition and slashing emissions before 2030s” (United Nations)*

*That Council Management bring a significant financial target to Council within 3 months based on;*

- a) An ambitious energy savings program like Counties Louth or Cavan who have already achieved over E300,000 pa,*
- b) generating and using or selling its own renewables like South Suffolk or Warrington and*
- c) expanding the rates base by £5 million per annum by 2030 by attracting renewable projects to our District on a similar scale to what Fermanagh & Omagh Council had already achieved by 2020. This may require the ERT Directive and Planning Team to work with NIE to upgrade the District’s electricity grid.”*

**Agreed:                    The Chairperson advised the Motion would not be heard in accordance with Standing Order 24.2.**

**C/039/2024                    NOTICE OF MOTION – ETHICAL PUBLIC PROCUREMENT**

The following motion was received from Councillor Hanlon:

*“Newry, Mourne and Down Council deplores those corporations that profit from protracted armed conflict and systematic violations of human rights, particularly in the context of Israel’s continuing brutal assault on the people of Gaza and escalating settler terrorism in the West Bank; Russia’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine; and other conflicts around the world. With this motion, the Council encourages companies to*

meet their obligations to avoid contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities, and to prevent or mitigate human rights abuses linked to their operations.

The Council is aware of the crucial role of local authorities and their public procurement procedures in ensuring respect for human rights by companies, as well as their obligations under widely accepted business and human rights norms - as laid down in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Global Sullivan Principles (1999) - to promote respect for human rights by companies with which they do business.

The Council affirms that every endeavour is made to ensure that Council's tender processes are consistent with the above principles, including under the Fourth Geneva convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and under customary international humanitarian law, prohibiting the importation or sale of goods or services originating in occupied territories.

This Council resolves to adopt a rights-based Ethical Procurement Policy (EPP) that takes fully into account existing obligations and standards. The EPP will incorporate widely accepted and precisely formulated international standards and explain clearly how the policy will be implemented. The primary aim of the EPP is to ensure that human rights obligations are properly acknowledged, observed and respected at all stages of the procurement process."

The motion was seconded by Councillor King.

**Agreed:                    The Motion was referred to the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.**

#### **C/040/2024                    NOTICE OF MOTION – DAISY HILL HOSPITAL**

Councillor Feehan advised that given the Assembly had now been restored and the Health Minister was now in post, proposed that the motion be amended to read as follows:

*"Newry Mourne and Down District Council strongly opposes the decision by the Department of Health's Permanent Secretary to withdraw Emergency General Surgery from Daisy Hill Hospital and will write to Health Minister Robin Swann requesting that he receives a cross-party delegation from Council to face due scrutiny on that decision. Council reaffirms its position that major decisions on the future of Daisy Hill can and should only be made by a Health Minister who is accountable to the public and calls upon Health Minister Robin Swann to reinstate emergency general surgery at Daisy Hill Hospital with immediate effect".*

The motion was seconded by Councillor McAteer.

Councillor Feehan advised he had brought the motion forward because he was alarmed that a civil servant, the Permanent Secretary at the Department of Health, had made the decision to permanently withdraw a critical service from Daisy Hill Hospital, emergency general surgery. He said it was more important than ever for everyone, as a Council, to present strong and united opposition to that decision.

Councillor Feehan asked for support from across the Chamber in requesting that the new Health Minister agreed to receive a cross-party delegation from Council to bring

the voice of local people directly to the new Health Minister, and to urge him to reverse the decision made by the Permanent Secretary last month.

In response for clarity on what a cross party delegation was from Councillor Hanlon, the Chief Executive advised there was precedent for delegations of Councillors meeting with Minister on pertinent issues.

Councillors Hanna, McAteer, Finnegan and Taylor spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor McMurray advised Alliance would be abstaining from the motion as they believed this was an issue for either party aligned or independent MLAs to raise through Stormont and would not be comfortable sending a delegation or taking part in delegation from Council.

The Chairperson then put the Councillor Feehan's motion, seconded by Councillor McAteer to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR:	32
AGAINST:	0
ABSTENTIONS:	5

The Chairperson declared the motion carried.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor McAteer that Newry Mourne and Down District Council strongly opposes the decision by the Department of Health's Permanent Secretary to withdraw Emergency General Surgery from Daisy Hill Hospital and will write to Health Minister Robin Swann requesting that he receives a cross-party delegation from Council to face due scrutiny on that decision.**  
**Council reaffirms its position that major decisions on the future of Daisy Hill can and should only be made by a Health Minister who is accountable to the public and calls upon Health Minister Robin Swann to reinstate emergency general surgery at Daisy Hill Hospital with immediate effect.**

**C/041/2024**      **NOTICE OF MOTION – VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

The following motion was received from Councillor Galbraith:

*"Noting with concern findings that 98% of women in Northern Ireland have experienced at least one form of violence or abuse in their lifetime, with 50% experiencing this before they were 11 years old, this Council upholds its commitment to ending violence against women and girls; reaffirms that violence, abuse and harm against women and girls cuts across all generations and communities; calls for the delivery of a fully-funded strategy to end violence against women and girls; and commits to instituting November 25th as Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls Day across the District with a series of events to help educate, raise awareness and end this abhorrent humanitarian abuse."*

The motion was seconded by Councillor Finn.

**Agreed:                   The Motion was referred to the Equality & Good Relations Reference Group in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.**

**C/042/2024               NOTICE OF MOTION – PEATLANDS**

The following motion was received from Councillor Truesdale:

*"That this Council believes peatlands are a critical part of our ecosystems, regulating the water cycle, purifying water and supporting biodiversity; further recognises that peatlands store more carbon for long periods than any other ecosystem worldwide; and therefore resolves to protect peatlands and to end its purchase and use of peat-based compost by the end of 2024."*

The motion was seconded by Councillor Enright.

**Agreed:                   The Motion was referred to the Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6.**

**C/043/2024               NOTICE OF MOTION – MMR VACCINATIONS**

The following motion was received from Councillor Devlin:

*"Welcoming that between January and June 2023 that there were no cases reported of measles in the North, noting with concern the increase in measles across England and Wales, and emphasising the importance of having children up to date with MMR vaccinations, this Council affirms its support to maintain Northern Ireland as measles-free, and will undertake a public information and education campaign via print and social media to highlight to parents and guardians the importance of MMR vaccinations."*

The motion was seconded by Councillor Andrews.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Devlin stated the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) had declared a national incident last month in the aftermath of a surge in measles cases and low vaccine uptake. Members were advised three quarters of the cases reported in the UK were in the West Midlands and fortunately at this stage, there had been no such outbreak in Northern Ireland.

Councillor Devlin said she felt that raising awareness and the importance of vaccination in this regard was really important and that a long-term concerted effort was needed to protect individuals and prevent large measles outbreaks. She asked all members to support the call which would see Council play a further role in raising awareness and ensuring that factual information was published via social media in particular.

Councillors Andrews, Truesdale, Howell and Taylor spoke in support of the motion.

Councillor Howell proposed an amendment that the motion include working in conjunction with the Public Health Agency. Councillor Devlin welcomed and accepted the amendment.

Councillor Devlin thanked Members for their support stating that the best way for parents to protect their children from measles was the MMR vaccine.

Councillor Devlin took the opportunity to pay tribute to Dr Bready, a local GP in Newcastle who been laid to rest that day and spoke of his amazing work within the local community over his lifetime.

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Andrews that in welcoming that between January and June 2023 that there were no cases reported of measles in the North, noting with concern the increase in measles across England and Wales, and emphasising the importance of having children up to date with MMR vaccinations, this Council affirms its support to maintain Northern Ireland as measles-free, and will undertake a public information and education campaign via print and social media to highlight to parents and guardians the importance of MMR vaccinations. It was also agreed that Council would work in conjunction with the Public Health Agency.**

Councillor Lee-Surginor took the opportunity to wish every councillor and officer a very harmonious Chinese New Year.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.41pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 March 2024.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**

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

**NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Ref: AC/2024

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**Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on Thursday 1 February 2024, at 2.00pm, in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick and via Microsoft Teams.**

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<b>Chairperson:</b>	Ms B Slevin, Independent Chairperson (Chamber)	
<b>In attendance in Chamber:</b>	Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor G Sharvin
<b>In attendance via Teams:</b>	Councillor C Bowsie Councillor T Kelly Councillor A Quinn	Councillor L Devlin Councillor S O'Hare
<b>Non-Committee Members in attendance via Teams:</b>	Councillor P Campbell	Councillor J Tinnelly
<b>Officials in attendance in Chamber:</b>	Mrs J Kelly, Director Corporate Services Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director Capital and Procurements Estates and Capital Projects Ms E Cosgrove, Assistant Director of Administration (Acting) Ms C Hughes, Head of Performance and Improvement (Acting) Ms S McConville, Procurement Manager (Acting) Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting) Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer	
<b>Officials in attendance via Teams:</b>	Mr C Mallon, Director Economy, Regeneration & Tourism	
<b>Also in attendance in chamber:</b>	Ms C Hagan   ASM Mr S Wade   NIAO Ms K Doey    NIAO	
<b>Also in attendance via teams:</b>	Mr B Conway   ASM	

**AC/001/2024:       APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillor King and Marie Ward, Chief Executive.

**AC/002/2024:       DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Ms Hagan declared an interest in item 22 on the agenda.

**AC/003/2024: ACTION SHEET OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 21 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Read: Action Sheet arising from Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on Thursday 21 September 2023.  
**(Copy circulated)**

*AC/070/2023 – Audit Committee Training*

Ms Slevin referenced the training on page 1 of the action sheet, and stated she would be keen for training to happen, given the number of new members on the Audit Committee. She queried the availability of both internal and external training.

Councillor Hanlon stressed the importance of training for Members of the Audit Committee, and urged Members to avail of training when it was provided.

Ms Kelly advised she was working closely with HR and Democratic Services and would bring recommendations to Members.

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor O’Hare, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet for Audit Committee Meeting held on 21 September 2023. It was further agreed that recommendations would be tabled at Committee regarding appropriate training for Members.**

**CORPORATE SERVICES (OPEN SESSION)**

**AC/004/2024: CORPORATE RISK REGISTER – ERT DIRECTORATE RISK REGISTER ALSO TO BE TABLED**

Read: Report dated 1 February 2024 from Ms J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding the Corporate Risk Register.  
**(Copy circulated)**

Ms Kelly presented her report, highlighting the appointment of two new Directors. She referenced the concerns regarding the Planning Department and advised there was a plan in place to address the recruitment issues, which had been tabled at a recent Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting.

Councillor Hanlon voiced her concern regarding the Planning Department and queried whether it was possible to track applications. She acknowledged the difficulties the HR Department were facing, but urged Council to take swift action to ensure that there were no further delays on planning applications.

Councillor Sharvin stressed the economic impact of planning application delays and queried the requirement for an internal audit of the number of planning application determinations that had been overturned. He further queried whether the new risk regarding recruitment should be a standing agenda item going forward.

Ms Kelly confirmed that recruitment was closely monitored and advised the matter had been added to the risk register.



Ms Hagan noted that an internal audit report had been issued to management and contained several recommendations. She stated it was currently being reviewed by legal services and would be tabled at the next Audit Committee meeting. Following a query from Councillor Devlin, she confirmed that the Report included a recommendation for a review of planning decisions overturned.

Ms Slevin concurred with the concerns raised regarding planning and requested that planning issues become a standing agenda item as proposed by Councillor Sharvin.

Mr Mallon noted the recommendation from Members was to table quarterly reports in line with NISRA statistics being issued. He queried whether Members wished these to be tabled at Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee, or the Audit Committee. Ms Slevin confirmed it should be tabled at both Committees.

**AGREED:**                    **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to approve the updates to the Corporate Risk Register highlighted within the summary at Appendix 1, and to note the revised ERT Directorate Risk Register summary at Appendix 3 and detailed at Appendix 4.**

**It was also agreed that Ms Kelly would see if a report could be brought back to Members regarding recruitment.**

**It was further agreed that the Planning Department Quarterly Report be brought to the Audit Committee.**

**AC/005/2024:                PROMPT PAYMENTS**

Read:                        Report dated 1 February 2024 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding the Prompt Payment Statistics – Quarters 2 and 3. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Kelly queried if Council could provide explanations regarding any payments that had not been processed within the specified timeframes, stating that it could help identify areas for improvement.

Mr Byrne advised that the report was presented in a format recommended by the Department for Communities and advised that any delay could be for a variety of reasons. He noted Council was trying to mitigate any delays, but they were inevitable in some cases.

Ms Slevin noted that there had been a definite improvement from previous reports, but the Committee would monitor this going forward.

**AGREED:**                    **On the proposal of Councillor Kelly, seconded by Councillor Devlin, it was agreed to note the Quarter 2 and 3 2023 – 2024 Prompt Payment Statistics.**

**AC/006/2024:                MID-YEAR ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023-24**

Read:                        Report dated 1 February 2024 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director, Finance & Performance, regarding the Mid-Year assessment of Performance Improvement Plan 2023-2024 **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor O'Hare it was agreed to note the mid-year assessment of the Performance Improvement Plan 2023-24

*Items restricted in accordance with Part 3 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014*

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on this matter which related to exempt information by virtue of Part 3 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during these items of business.

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

**CORPORATE SERVICES (CLOSED SESSION)**

**AC/007/2024:** **UPDATE ON AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS – TO INCLUDE RISK PROFILE**

**Read:** Report dated 1 February 2024 from Ms E Cosgrove, Assistant Director of Administration (Acting), regarding an update on Audit Recommendations. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Devlin, it was agreed to note the update in relation to legacy audit recommendations.

**AC/008/2024:** **DIRECT AWARD CONTRACTS**

**Read:** Report dated 1 February 2024 from Ms Shona McConville, Procurement Manager, regarding DAC/STA Register – Quarter 3. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to note the quarter three update in relation to Single Tender Actions.

**AC/009/2024:** **PROCUREMENT ACTION PLANS**

**Read:** Report dated 1 February 2024 from Ms Shona McConville, Procurement Manager, regarding procurement action plans. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to note the update in relation to the procurement plans for each Directorate.

Councillor O'Hare left the meeting at this stage – 3.02pm

**AC/010/2024:** S&E PROCUREMENT UPDATE

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to note the update provided by the Director.

Councillor O'Hare rejoined the meeting at this stage – 3.05pm

Councillor Quinn left the meeting – 3.17pm

**AC/011/2024:** KILBRONEY PITCHES

Read: Report dated 1 February 2024 from Ms J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Kilbroney Pitches. **(Copy circulated)**

On a point of clarity, Ms Slevin advised there was a potential conflict of interest with Councillor Tinnelly being present and having asked to speak on the matter. She asked for a short recess in the meeting.

**AGREED:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor O'Hare to have a short recess.

The meeting did then recess – 3.37pm

The meeting did then resume – 3.51pm

It was agreed to postpone discussion on the item until later in the meeting.

Councillor Sharvin left the meeting – 3.52pm

**AC/012/2024:** UPDATE ON FRAUD AND WHISTLEBLOWING (INCLUDING NFI)

Read: Report dated 1 February 2024 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding fraud and raising concerns update. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Devlin, it was agreed to note the following:

- The update in relation to Fraud and Raising Concerns cases which have been detailed at Appendix 1.
- The National Fraud Initiative matches testing, an update will be brought back to the April Committee in relation to the recouping the duplicate payments.
- The progress on actions arising from the NIAO Internal Fraud Risk self-assessment.

Councillor Kelly left the meeting at this stage – 3.55pm

**NIAO (CLOSED SESSION)**

**AC/013/2024:** **AUDIT AND ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023-24 – REPORT TO THE COUNCIL AND THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES UNDER SECTION 75 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2014**

Read: Audit and Assessment Report 2023-24 **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Devlin, it was agreed to note the contents of the Audit and Assessment Report 2023-24.**

**AC/014/2024:** **NMDDC REPORT TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE 2022/23**

Read: Correspondence from NIAO dated 30 January 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Bowsie, it was agreed to approve the Report to Those Charged with Governance.**

**AC/015/2024:** **NMDDC ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2022/23**

Read: Correspondence from NIAO dated 29 January 2024 regarding the Annual Audit Letter 2022/23. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the annual audit letter 2022/23.**

**INTERNAL AUDIT (CLOSED SESSION)**

**AC/016/2024:** **ASM SUMMARY REPORT**

Read: Summary Report dated 1 February 2024 regarding a Summary Report to the Audit Committee. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Devlin, it was agreed to note the ASM Summary Report.**

**AC/017/2024:** **INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023/24**

Read: Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to accept the Internal Audit Plan 2023/24.**

**AC/018/2024: RISK MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

Read: Risk Management Review. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the Risk Management Review.

**AC/019/2024: FOLLOW UP OF 2021-22 IA RECOMMENDATIONS**

Read: ASM Internal Audit Summary Report dated 21 September 023  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the follow up of 2021-22 IA Recommendations.

**AC/020/2024: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS REVIEW**

Read: Management Accounts Review. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the Management Accounts Review.

**AC/021/2024: FLOOD GRANT VERIFICATION REVIEW**

Read: Report dated 1 February 2024 detailing the Flood Grant Verification Review. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed approve the Flood Grant Verification Review.

**AC/022/2024: EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF INTERNAL AUDIT**

Read: Report dated 1 February 2024 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance, regarding the External Assessment of the Internal Audit. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the External Assessment of the Internal Audit.

At this stage of the meeting, it was agreed to resume discussions around  
**AC/011/2024: Kilbroney Pitches**

**AC/011/2024: KILBRONEY PITCHES**

Read: Report dated 1 February 2024 from Ms J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Kilbroney Pitches. **(Copy circulated)**

The Chairperson asked Councillor Tinnelly to leave the meeting at this stage due to the potential conflict of interest in the matter being discussed.

#### **Councillor Tinnelly left the meeting at 4.22pm**

A discussion was held on what and when information might come to the Audit Committee from the two external independent processes being undertaken.

**AGREED:**                   **On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to instigate an independent investigation into the complaint raised around Kilbroney Pitches as soon as possible.**

#### **CIRCULARS (OPEN SESSION)**

**Councillor Sharvin rejoined the meeting at 4.28pm**

**AC/023/2024:**           **CIRCULAR LG 25/2023 - CAPITALISATION**

**Read:**                   Circular attached. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**                   **On the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to note the circular.**

**AC/024/2024:**           **CIRCULAR LG 25/2023 – CONSOLIDATED COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES CIRCULAR**

**Read:**                   Circular attached. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:**                   **On the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to note the circular.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 4:30pm.

For consideration at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 04 March 2024.

**Signed:**                   **Ms J Kelly**  
**Director Corporate Services**

**Signed:**                   **Ms B Slevin**  
**Independent Chairperson**

**NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL****Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting  
held on Monday 12 February 2024 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, Monaghan Row, and  
remotely via Microsoft Teams****Chairperson:** Councillor M Ruane**Committee Members  
in attendance in chamber:**Councillor T Andrews                      Councillor G Kearns  
Councillor S Murphy**Committee Members  
in attendance via Teams:**Councillor C Bowsie                      Councillor P Campbell  
Councillor K Feehan                      Councillor C Galbraith  
Councillor C King                          Councillor D Lee-Surginor  
Councillor A Quinn                        Councillor J Tinnelly  
Councillor J Truesdale**Officials in attendance:** Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism  
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration  
Ms M Boyle, Head of Tourism Development and Visitor Experience  
Ms A McVeigh, Head of Tourism Development and Visitor  
Experience  
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager**Officials in attendance  
via Teams:** Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer**ERT/012/2024: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Clarke, and Ms S Burns, Head of Grants and Funding.

**ERT/013/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**ERT/014/2024: ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM  
COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 15 JANUARY 2024****Read:** Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration &  
Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 12 January 2024.  
**(Copy circulated)****AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by  
Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed to note the  
Action Sheet arising from the Economy,  
Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held**

on Monday 12 January 2024.

### **FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION**

#### **ERT/015/2024: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CALL 2**

Read: Report dated 12 February 2024 from Ms Burns, Head of Grants and Funding, regarding Financial Assistance Call 2 **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Lee-Surginor queried the impact of the changes to the online portal on applicants, and the ease of access to relevant information.

Mr Mallon confirmed that workshops had been ongoing, and reiterated that the portal was more user friendly for applicants and officers. He noted this was call 2, so feedback would be available on any issues following the processing of call 1.

Councillor Andrews queried the accessibility for those without internet access.

Mr Mallon advised that this portal was an updated version of a previous online system, but there may be opportunities already in place for those who don't have access to the internet. He advised he would revert to the Member regarding this.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to proceed with Financial Assistance Call 2 as detailed in the Officer's Report.**

### **RESTRICTED – FOR DECISION**

#### **EXEMPT INFORMATION**

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

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, 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.

#### **ERT/016/2024: LDP OPEN SPACE STRATEGY**

Read: Report dated 12 February 2024 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director: Regeneration, regarding Open Space Strategy – Planning Department. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Bowsie, it was agreed to approve the Business Case, and that Council**



**proceed to procure professional services to prepare an open space strategy to include an assessment of open space within the District.**

**FOR NOTING**

**ERT/017/2024: GRADE A TOURIST ACCOMMODATION**

Read: Report dated 12 February 2024 from Ms Burns, Head of Grants and Funding, and Mr P Jordan, Project Coordinator, regarding Tourist Accommodation Funding Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**ERT/018/2024: DFC FLOOD RECOVERY**

Read: Report dated 12 February 2024 from Michelle Boyle, Head of Tourism, Product Development and Visitor Experience regarding DFC Flood Recovery. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**ERT/019/2024: DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE CONSULTATION – REVIEW OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND BUILDING REGULATIONS.**

Read: Report dated 12 February 2024 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director: Regeneration, regarding Review of Energy Efficiency Requirements and related areas of Building Regulations – Consultation by the Department of Finance. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Galbraith, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the contents of the consultation response on behalf of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.16pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 March 2024.

**Signed: Councillor M Ruane  
Chairperson  
Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee**

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**Signed: Mr C Mallon**

## Director Economy, Regeneration & Tourism

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**NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

35

**Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 15 February 2024 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre and remotely via Microsoft Teams**

<b>In the Chair:</b>	Councillor S O'Hare	
<b>In Attendance in Chamber:</b>	Councillor J Brennan Councillor O Hanlon Councillor T Kelly Councillor D McAteer Councillor H Reilly	Councillor P Byrne Councillor R Howell Councillor A Lewis Councillor A Mathers Councillor G Sharvin
<b>In Attendance via Teams:</b>	Councillor C Enright	Councillor A Quinn
<b>Non-Committee Members in Attendance in Chamber:</b>	Councillor T Andrews	
<b>Non-Committee Members in Attendance via Teams:</b>	Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor J Truesdale
<b>Officials in Attendance In Chamber:</b>	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) Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer	

**SPR/018/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors McEvoy and Taylor

**SPR/019/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**SPR/020/2024: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THURSDAY 18 JANUARY 2024**

**Read:** Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 18 January 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor McAteer, to approve the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 18 January 2024.

## **FOR DECISION**

**SPR/021/2024**

### **MOURNE MOUNTAIN GATEWAY PROJECT – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE NATIONAL TRUST**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2024 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism, regarding a Memorandum of Understanding between Council and The National Trust. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Mallon presented the report stating the wording had been agreed on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Council and National Trust. He advised the MOU had resulted from ongoing discussions with the National Trust since October 2023.

Councillor Enright stated his Party had some governance issues with the MOU advising they would be registering their abstention from a roll call vote. He advised the following:

- There had been no sight of minutes of any Project Board meetings, including responses to ten questions levied by Councillor Truesdale as a member of the Board.
- There was no sight of the risk register which should highlight the increasing costs from £44m to much higher figures and the spending of large amounts of irrecoverable monies on a project that the MOU makes clear may not take place.
- The MOU does not guarantee formal acquisition of the land, with no alternative projects as a back-up option.
- The Department for the Economy had suggested that the Project will cost £6m more than already advised.

Councillor Kelly queried what it would take for Council to reconsider their position on the Project. She noted her Party's cost concerns and stated an estimated cost of £44m in 2019 would only increase with the cost of inflation within the construction industry. She stated the MOU did not guarantee a lease and signing off on progressing the spend on a consultancy team without any clear progression on a lease agreement was concerning.

Councillor Sharvin queried whether Councillor Kelly had an issue with the overall Project or the estimated costs, to which Councillor Kelly noted her Party was not against the Mourne Gateway Project, rather they had concerns with the gondola element of the project, particularly in relation to costs that would have to be paid, plus any inflationary increases.

The Chairperson reminded Members that the item on the agenda was relating to the MOU agreement, and not about the Project in its entirety. She asked Members to remain on the agenda.

Councillor Hanlon noted that the Alliance Party had requested a formal agreement with the National Trust in previous meetings and stated that this MOU was the result of that request. She emphasised that the costs were still an estimate, and it was therefore inappropriate to

discuss figures at this stage. She expressed her confusion at the Alliance Party's abstention from a vote on an item that it had requested.

Councillor Lewis spoke to emphasise that the MOU showed effort from both parties involved to work together and address ongoing concerns. He further urged Members to be mindful of how information was shared, especially relating to costs. He urged Members to bear in mind that they were present to discuss the wording of an MOU, not the overall project. He also expressed his confusion the Alliance Party's position on a vote.

Councillor McAteer in proposing the Officer's recommendation, commended the MOU and advised that it should provide some assurances to those with concerns about the project, as it referred to enhancing, not harming the Mournes. He stressed the MOU stated that both parties would respect each other's principles.

Councillor Brennan reiterated that the MOU was an agreement between Council and National Trust to work together to achieve common goals and stated that it was in the best interests of everyone, including the public.

Councillor Enright stated the Committee was responsible for financial decisions and noted again the estimated costs of the project to date. The Chairperson reminded the Member that the item for debate on the agenda was the wording of the MOU, which had no resource requirements noted.

Mr Mallon clarified that the MOU was not a formal commitment to enter into any future legal contract, but merely an agreement to work together in a partnership, as noted in its wording.

Councillor Sharvin requested clarity on Councillor Kelly's statement regarding a lease with the National Trust, and queried whether the Member had information regarding a lease agreement and if there was a conflict that needed to be declared.

Councillor Kelly confirmed she misspoke, and stated there was no guarantee of a lease.

Councillor Byrne noted that any discussion relating to costs were inappropriate at this stage of the Project and reminded Members of the Code of Conduct and its application. He further noted that the Alliance Party had asked for alternatives to the project and those minutes were tabled at Item 14 on the agenda. He urged Members to review their membership on the Programme Board, as its aim was to deliver the project as agreed.

Mr Mallon stated a response from the Department had been received regarding costs, which outlined the cost estimate was £44m and confirmed that the Department had been engaging with Council to establish additional allowances to be built into the project, which had yet to be finalised.

At this stage, the proposal was put to a roll call vote, with the results as follows:

FOR	11
AGAINST	0
ABSTENTION	2

The proposal was declared carried.

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to approve the**

**Memorandum of Understanding between Council  
and The National Trust as outlined in Appendix 1.**

**SPR/022/2024**

**GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2024 from Ms M Ward, Chief Executive, regarding Governance Arrangements.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve the April Council Meeting to take place on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and that the amended Committee Dates as outlined in the Officer's Report also be approved.**

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

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the 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 Brennan, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

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

**SPR/023/2024:** **INSURANCE RENEWAL 2024/25**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2024 from Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability and Environment, regarding Insurance Premiums 2024/25. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor McAteer, to approve the payment of insurance premiums for 2024/25 and subsequent additional year-end adjustments as required by Council's insurers.**

**SPR/024/2024:** **BELFAST LEGAL SERVICES – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2024 from Ms E Cosgrove, Assistant Director of Administration (Acting) regarding Belfast Legal Services SLA. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Quinn, to enter into a one-year SLA with Belfast City Council Legal Services Department from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 on a non-profit/cost recovery basis by virtue of the provision of section 105 of the Local Government (NI) act 1972 in relation to the legal services indicated at 1.4 of the Officer's Report.

**SPR/025/2024:** **MAINTENANCE OF TIME AND ATTENDANCE SYSTEMS**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2024 from Ms J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding the Maintenance of Time and Attendance System. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, to approve the payment of the maintenance fees for Time Management System for January 2024 – December 2024. It was further agreed to approve the ongoing maintenance fees for 1 year with the issue being brought back to Committee after that period of time.

**SPR/026/2024:** **ASSESSMENT CENTRE**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2024 from Ms J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Assessment Centres. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Howell, to approve the recommendation as outlined in the Officer's Report.

**SPR/027/2024:** **ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM  
RECRUITMENT REQUIREMENT**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2024 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism, regarding AONB and Geopark Environment Fund Staff Recruitment. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to approve the recommendation as outlined in the Officer's Report.

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

**SPR/028/2024: INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS UPDATE**

**Read:** Report dated 15 February 2024 from Ms J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services regarding an Industrial relations Update. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, to note the update provided by officers.**

**SPR/029/2024: STRATEGIC FINANCE WORKING GROUP ACTION SHEETS FROM MEETINGS HELD ON 16.01.2024 AND 31.01.2024**

**Read:** Action Sheets from Strategic Finance Working Group meetings held on 16.01.2024 and 31.01.2024 **(Copy circulated)**.

On a point of clarity, Councillor Enright highlighted a spelling mistake within the action sheet. The Chief Executive advised that Members should contact officers prior to meetings if they spot small errors within minutes in order that they could be amended prior to the meeting.

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to note the action sheets from SFWG meetings held on 16.01.2024 and 31.01.2024.**

**FOR NOTING**

**SPR/030/2024: MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING HELD ON 08.12.2023**

**Read:** Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held 08.12.2023 **(Copy circulated)**.

Councillor Sharvin queried whether the ICT costs were in the existing budget, or if it was to be an additional cost.

Mr Mallon confirmed that the ICT fees were brought before the Committee prior to Christmas and approved by Council. He stated regular updates were tabled at the NCCR Programme Board meetings, and any changes would be brought before the Committee to be agreed.

Councillor Byrne queried whether a meeting had been arranged between the Department and officers regarding the Grade A office accommodation fund, as it was a required element of the BCRD.

Mr Mallon confirmed that this had been tabled at a recent Programme Board meeting, and a date for the launch of the fund would be agreed and shared in due course.



In response to a query from Councillor McAteer, Mr Mallon confirmed that a meeting had taken place with some of the arts representatives, and a full stakeholder group meeting was due to be held in the next few weeks.

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the minutes of the meeting.**

**SPR/031/2024:** **MINUTES OF MOURNE MOUNTAIN GATEWAY PROJECT BOARD MEETING HELD 06.10.2023 AND 16.10.2023**

**Read:** Minutes of Mourne Mountain Gateway Project Board Meeting held 06.10.2023 and 16.10.2023 **(Copy circulated).**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the minutes.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 07.30pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 March 2024.

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

**Signed:** **Josephine Kelly**  
**Director of Corporate Services**

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Ref: AHC/2024

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**Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on  
Monday 19 February 2024 at 6.00pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic  
Centre and via Microsoft Teams**

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**Chairperson:** Councillor R Howell (Chamber)

**In attendance in Chamber:** Councillor A Finnegan                      Councillor C Galbraith  
 Councillor J Jackson    Councillor D Lee-Surginor  
 Councillor A Lewis    Councillor O Magennis  
 Councillor A Mathers     Councillor A McMurray  
 Councillor D Murphy    Councillor K Murphy  
 Councillor S O'Hare

**In attendance via Teams:** Councillor L Devlin                      Councillor D Finn**Non-Members in Chamber:** Councillor T Andrews

**Officials in Chamber:** Mr A Patterson, Director, Active and Healthy Communities,  
 Leisure and Sport  
 Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development  
 Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport  
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

**AHC/009/2024:                      APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

An apology was received from Councillor Gibbons.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Andrew Patterson to his first official meeting as Director of Active and Healthy Communities, Leisure and Sport.

**AHC/010/2024:                      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor D Murphy declared an interest in item 5, Expressions of Interest, Leasing of Council land.

**AHC/011/2024: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2024**

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 22 January 2024. **(Copy circulated)**.

*AHC/005/2024: Saintfield Community Centre*

Councillor Jackson asked for an update regarding the request for extension of land at Saintfield Community Centre and floodlighting.

Mrs Robb advised the request for land at the community centre was being processed through legal formalities in terms of the disposal of additional land and confirmed she would provide a more detailed response directly to Councillor Jackson. Councillor Lee-Surginor asked that he receive an update in relation to this matter also.

In terms of the Saintfield lighting upgrade, Mr Tamati stated this had been linked to the rates process, which had now been approved and officers would be commissioning the capital team to procure the services as soon as possible.

*AHC/083/2023: Community Trails Update*

In referring to the NMDDC Beach Access Framework, Councillor McMurray enquired how that might relate to the Changing Places Facility as there would be no beach access for some mobility issues until this was acted upon and enquired if it could be moved forward.

Mr Tamati advised a report would be brought back to Committee in due course and the changing places facility in Downs Road, Newcastle which was identified in that report was part of the public toilet strategy that was being progressed by the Sustainability and Environment Department. He stated he would follow up on the matter and come back to Councillor McMurray.

Councillor Devlin referred to the review of sea swimming at Newcastle Harbour, a task and finish group being formed and the possibility of a lifeguard at the harbour. She acknowledged that this was being dealt with by the Economic, Regeneration and Tourism Committee and enquired whether there had been much development in relation to it or if it was being referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee.

Mr Tamati confirmed it had been agreed a report would be brought back in relation to the queries raised at Active and Healthy Communities and that there had been some transition in terms of areas of responsibility with regard to Newcastle Harbour. He referred to the ongoing Newcastle Harbour Regeneration Programme and confirmed a report would be brought back for further consideration.

Councillor Devlin thanked Mr Tamati and urged for movement on the matter given the Harbour would be even more popular with the summer months approaching.

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 22 January 2024.**

**AHC/012/2023: DIGI HUB REPORT - EAST BORDER REGION APPLICATION TO 2.4 PEACEPLUS: SMART TOWNS AND VILLAGES**

Read: Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding Digi Hub. **(Copy circulated)**

In response for clarification from Councillor D Murphy as to what a Digi Hub entailed, Mrs Robb explained the purpose of a Digi Hib was to create mini ICT provision within existing community centres. She gave some examples being looked at by other Councils including the creation of hot desks where local businesses could avail of IT facilities or where a building could be furnished to run training courses with the provision of necessary computer and technology.

Mrs Robb advised it was to increase skills within the community and could be designed to meet the needs of whatever was required within local communities.

In response to a query from Councillor Lewis regarding inclusion for all of the District, Mrs Robb confirmed there was no restriction in terms of geographical area, however officers would be looking at buildings that were vacant or underutilised and identified as best fit.

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Lewis, to approve Council's inclusion as a partner organisation in the East Border Region application to Peaceplus Under Investment Area 2.4**

**AHC/013/2024: EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST – LEASING OF COUNCIL LAND**

Read: Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding expressions of interest for leasing of Council land at Playing Fields High Street, Bessbrook and at Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Lewis enquired if Council was retaining the use of changing rooms so that all clubs who were applying to use the different pitches could still use the facilities at those that were going out to lease.

Mr Tamati referred to the map attached to the report which showed the changing rooms were included in the lease arrangement. He stated the detail of that would be examined and if it did not allow other clubs to continue to utilise and book changing rooms, a report would be brought back separately in relation to playing fields at Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel.

Mr Tamati in response for clarification from Councillor McMurray provided a brief overview of the process and criteria for the leasing of Council land.

**Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Lewis, to approve to progress the playing fields at High Street, Bessbrook through the various stages of Council's Sport and Leasing Policy and that a report be brought back to Committee in relation to the playing fields at Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel.**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 11 to 14, which related to exempt information by virtue of para. Three 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 Magennis, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

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

**AHC/014/2024: PROGRAMME DELIVERY PARTNER – PUBLIC TENDER**

**Read:** Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding the annual Public Tender for a Programme Delivery Partner to assist with the delivery of both Outdoor Leisure and Indoor Leisure programme initiatives and classes ensuring service continuity.

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

- A Public Tender and appointment for up to 3 years for a Programme Delivery Partner for Leisure, subject to annual rates estimates provisions.
- The Business Case for this Public Tender as per appendix 1 and Councils Procurement Policy.

**AHC/015/2024: FITNESS EQUIPMENT – SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE**

**Read:** Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding the provision of Fitness Equipment Maintenance and Servicing.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Finn, to approve the additional spend for fitness equipment maintenance, parts, servicing and associated call out fees as outlined section 1.1 of the officer's report.

**FOR NOTING****AHC/016/2024: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE**

Read: Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the District Electoral Area Forums. **(Copy circulated)**

In response for an update from Councillor Finn regarding an item under the Newry DEA Forum Action Sheet, Mrs Robb confirmed she would contact the Member directly.

Mrs Robb informed Members that with the appointment of the new Director, officers intended to meet with all DEA Councillors in order to address any specific issues they wished to raise and discuss utilising the DEA forum.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, to note the officer's report and the update on recent DEA activity and planned activity to be undertaken by the DEAs. It was also agreed to approve the actions in the Action Sheets attached for:

- The Mourne DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Tuesday 23 January 2024.
- Newry DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Thursday 25 January 2024.
- Slieve Gullion DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Wednesday 31 January 2024.
- Crotlieve DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Tuesday 6 February 2024.
- Rowallane DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Wednesday 7 February 2024.
- Downpatrick DEA Forum Private Meeting held on Tuesday 13 February 2024.

**AHC/017/2024: COMMUNITY COORDINATION HUB (CCH) UPDATE REPORT**

Read: Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on the Community Coordination Hub. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, to note the report and approve the actions in the action sheet for the Community Coordination Hub Meeting held on Wednesday 17 January 2024.

**AHC/018/2023: POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (PCSP) AND DOWNPATRICK NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL PARTNERSHIP (NRP) REPORTS**

**Read:** Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, regarding the Policing and Community Safety Partnership and Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership reports. **(Copy circulated)**

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

- The Minutes of the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting held on Tuesday 28 November 2023, approved at the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting on Tuesday 30 January 2024.
- The Minutes of the Downpatrick NRP Meeting held on Tuesday 14 November 2023, approved at Downpatrick NRP Meeting on Wednesday 24 January 2024.
- The Downpatrick NRP Action Plan (updated November 2023), approved at Downpatrick NRP Meeting on Tuesday 14 November 2023.

**AHC/019/2024: LIVING HIGH STREET FUNDING – DUNLEATH PARK**

**Read:** Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding DfC Living High Street Funding for Dunleath Skate Park and Pump Track Project. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillors Magennis and Galbraith voiced support for the funding that had been secured.

Councillor Galbraith enquired if there was any update in relation to access from the cinema to which Mr Tamati advised he would follow up and revert directly to him on the matter. Mr Patterson advised updates would be best made available through the Downpatrick Regeneration Working Group.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, to note the contents of this report on the progression of DfC Living High Street Funding for the Dunleath Skate Park and Pump Track project.

**AHC/020/2024: LIVING HIGH STREET FUNDING – NEWCASTLE**

**Read:** Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding Living High Street Funding, Newcastle Centre, Meanwhile Use space. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor McMurray enquired if this would have positive effect on the wider Newcastle redevelopment to which Mr Patterson and Mr Tamati reiterated that there would future DEA meetings to allow Councillors further opportunity to discuss such projects moving forward.

Mr Patterson added that as proposals and business cases were progressed they would be brought to Committee for consideration and approval with such matters discussed at DEA level in the first instance.

In welcoming the funding for Newcastle Councillor Devlin thanked officers for their work in securing such funding.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, to note the contents of this report and update in relation to DfC Living High Street Funding for the Newcastle Centre – Meanwhile Use Space project as per section 4.1 of the officer's report.

**AHC/021/2024:** **NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL SPORTS AWARDS**

**Read:** Report dated 19 February 2024 from Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director, Leisure and Sport regarding the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Sports Awards planned for 15 March 2024 in the Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, to note the contents of this report and update in relation to the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Sports Awards.

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

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 March 2024.

**Signed:** Councillor Howell  
Chairperson

**Signed:** Andrew Patterson  
Director Active and Healthy Communities, Leisure and Sport



**NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 21 February 2024 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 K Feehan
Councillor D Finn	Councillor J Jackson
Councillor G Kearns	Councillor M Larkin
Councillor O Magennis	Councillor K Murphy
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor D Taylor

**In Attendance via Teams:**

Councillor C Enright	Councillor M Rice
Councillor J Truesdale	

**Non-Committee Members in Attendance via teams:**

Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor A McMurray
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**Officials in Attendance:**

Mr A Cassells, Director Sustainability and Environment  
 Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director Environment  
 Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability  
 Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

**Officials in attendance via teams:**

Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

**SE/016/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

An apology was received from Councillor McEvoy.

**SE/017/2024: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"**

There were no declarations of interest.

**FOR DECISION****SE/018/2024: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2024**

**Read:** Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 20 January 2024. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 20 December 2023.**

**SE/019/2024: REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – CLIMATE CHANGE**

Read: Report dated 21 February 2024 from Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment, regarding a report on Notice of Motion – Climate Change. **(Copy circulated)**

On presenting his motion, Councillor McMurray noted his concern at Council being ranked 8 out of 11 on the Northern Ireland Councils on Climate action Scorecards, as compiled by Climate Emergency UK. He recognised that Council previously acknowledged that climate breakdown was real however stated that action needed to be ongoing and updated, with targets set around actions.

Councillor McMurray called for Council to act with clear demonstratable examples in areas where it had authority to take action and to further act as an enabler for external agencies and providers in areas where it did not. He called for Council to set targets by which they could track progress, and stated these targets needed to be easily understandable and accessible.

In relation to the political instability element of his motion, Councillor McMurray noted that while it did go beyond the remit of this Council, he believed it was relevant as Stormont needed to be running effectively to affect positive climate change action and should not be able to be stymied by any party.

He recommended four action points as follows:

- That Council engage with the Climate Action Scorecards and Climate Action UK to ascertain what works had been undertaken but not noted
- Identified opportunities for future improvements in areas of sustainability and the environment and placed targets upon them
- Place targets on the 9 aspects of sustainability considerations as discussed during the rates setting process
- Write to the Irish and UK Government expressing support that a review and reform of the institutions of the Good Friday Agreement commence with the objective of stabilising devolved Government from Stormont.

Councillor Reilly noted that the UK was responsible for less than 1% of greenhouse gas emissions and stated that climate change activists wanted to penalise the people of the European Union (EU) and the UK by cutting back on their quality of life for this small percentage of emissions. He stated that India and China had opened two new coal fired power stations per month, alongside the increased sale of combustion engine cars.

Councillor Reilly commended Sir Jeffrey Donaldson's actions that had resulted in an agreement with the UK Government and the EU, to obtain a better deal for the community in relation to funding and trade. He stated this motion penalised the community for no reason and advised that the DUP Party would not be supporting the motion.

Councillor Taylor noted that all Partys were involved in discussions around the recent financial package, not just the DUP. He stated that Council could not be accused of not taking climate change seriously, but noted there could be financial implications in meeting any targets that were set. He expressed his concern over to the political nature of the motion, and therefore could not support the motion as it read

Councillor Clarke stated that climate emergency had happened and that it was easy to blame other countries. In relation to Council actions, he requested a benchmark paper be brought back to Committee in relation to how Council was progressing against past actions, as well as short, medium- and long-term future targets. He referenced several actions that had been ongoing recently, such as the tree strategy, the work ongoing in relation to carbon storage and the re-wetting of peatlands.

Councillor Clarke proposed an amendment to the motion as follows:

*“That this Council acknowledges the work done to date to help address the climate emergency; reaffirms previous motions regarding the degenerating global situation; and again, reiterates that the crisis is the biggest threat posed to our constituents, our district, and our planet.*

*Further acknowledges, however, that recent data collated by Climate Emergency UK ranks NMDDC 8th out of the 11 Councils within NI; and thus, pledges to include ambitious targets in the forthcoming Sustainability and Climate Strategies and Action Plans to expedite implementation ”*

Following a request from the Chair, Councillor McMurray advised he did not accept Councillor Clarke’s amendment as above. A roll call vote was taken, and the results were as follows:

FOR:	7
AGAINST:	5
ABSTENTIONS:	2

The motion was declared carried.

Councillor Enright requested that Councillors who had knowledge of the green economy shine a light on any misinformation that had been shared. He referenced item 11 on the agenda, at which stage the Chair advised the Member that the item was in committee and was not to be discussed in open session.

Councillor Enright stated that China had recently opened the largest PV and battery farm in the world as it was building its future economy on the green economy because it provided cheaper energy prices. He stated that the green economy would provide better prices for consumers, better atmosphere for breathing, and that money would be kept local as energy would be bought from local farmers.

Councillor Finn commended the work carried out by Council to date on mitigating climate change. She encouraged Members to look at their own actions in relation to climate change and noted the impact that the instability of Government had on Members ability to take concrete action on climate change. She proposed an amendment to section 2.3 part 3 of the Officer’s Report as follows:

*“Will write to the office of The First and Deputy First Minister to ask in light of the climate emergency and the need for political stability that they will commit to not collapsing the institutions and will write to DAERA, DFI and Economy Ministers for a steer on best practice for councils to addressing the climate emergency”*

A further roll call vote was taken in relation to Councillor Finn’s amendment, which Councillor Clarke did not accept.

FOR:	5
AGAINST:	8
ABSTENTIONS:	1

The motion was lost.

Councillor Truesdale called for Members to be mindful of the information they were sharing and noted that the UK was the 5<sup>th</sup> biggest historic emitter in the world, largely due to the industrial revolution.

In summing up, Councillor McMurray noted that it was disappointing Stormont was so unstable as it had an impact on elected Members being able to deliver concrete change on combating climate change but acknowledged the accepted amendment of the motion.

Following the debate, Mr Cassells wanted to note that Sustainable Northern Ireland facilitated the interchangeability of information between Councils in relation to climate change, and the forum met quarterly with officers from every Council in attendance.

He advised that the climate action score cards referenced information taken from 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2023. He noted actions that had been taken since, such as the biodiversity action plan and a draft sustainability strategy and advised that these should have a positive impact on future score cards.

In response to a comment made by Councillor Enright, he advised that a draft paper was being prepared for March Committee meeting, and it detailed the possible use of two former landfill sites for PV farms and battery storage.

**AGREED:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed that this Council acknowledges the work done to date to help address the climate emergency; reaffirms previous motions regarding the degenerating global situation; and again, reiterates that the crisis is the biggest threat posed to our constituents, our district, and our planet.**

**Further acknowledges, however, that recent data collated by Climate Emergency UK ranks NMDDC 8th out of the 11 Councils within NI; and thus, pledges to include ambitious targets in the forthcoming Sustainability and Climate Strategies and Action Plans to expedite implementation.**

**It was also agreed that a benchmark report would be brought back to Committee regarding Council actions and progress to mitigating climate change impact.**

**Councillors McMurray and Enright left the meeting at this stage – 6.50pm**

**SE/020/2024: PRIVATE TENANCIES ACT 2022 – FIXED PENALTY NOTICES**

Read: Report dated 21 February 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Private Tenancies Act 2022 – Fixed Penalty Notices. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Murphy outlined the new legislative powers to be enforced by Council in relation to the rented private sector. She also noted that there were resource implications with the new regulations, specifically in relation to the workload that officers would have to implement without any additional funding.

Councillor Clarke stated that this would only work to make homes safer for families, and it was to be welcomed. He further noted the lead in period, which he advised would allow landlords to prepare.

Councillor Murphy also welcomed the changes and noted her own feedback and that of her constituents regarding private landlords.

In response to a query from Councillor Reilly, Ms Murphy advised that there were no fixed penalty notices regarding mould in rented accommodation but advised that the issue could be reported to environmental health, and an officer could assess the issue, and work through the regulations with the landlord and tenant.

**AGREED:**                                 **On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to note the new legislative powers to be enforced by Council's in relation to the private rented sector regarding:**

- **The Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations (NI)**
- **The Electrical Safety Standards Regulations (NI)**

**It was further agreed to approve the proposed level for the fixed penalty fine for the offence created under the Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations (NI) as outlined in section 2.5 of the officer's report.**

#### **SE/021/2024: HOME TO HOSPITAL SCHEMES**

**Read:**   Report dated 21 February 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director Environment regarding Home to Hospital Schemes for Mournes and Slieve Gullion DEAs. **(copy circulated)**

Councillor Larkin welcomed the continued support from Council to the service and queried if some aspects of the service were not well known and referenced other services available as outlined in the Officer's Report, section 2.3. He noted the cost implications on the NHS in relation to missed hospital appointments and stressed how important it was for Council help as much as possible.

Councillor Reilly welcomed the valued service and noted the difficulty some of the more vulnerable members of the community had experienced in getting to hospitals. He stressed the importance of highlighting the service, so those who needed it would know how to avail of it.

Councillor Feehan also welcomed the report and referenced the hidden cost of missed hospital appointments to the NHS. He queried the disparity in the uptake of the service between Slieve Gullion and the Mournes, and whether this was solely related to awareness of the service.

**AGREED:**   **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Rice, to approve the continued funding for Mournes and Slieve Gullion Home to Hospital Volunteer driver schemes from 1 April 2024.**  
**It was also agreed that Council seek Expressions of Interest from suitable Community/Voluntary sector organisations to administer the Schemes subject to funding being identified.**

#### **SE/022/2024: REFUSE COLLECTION AND HRC ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2024/25**

**Read:**   Report dated 21 February 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director Environment, regarding Refuse Collection and HRC arrangements for Public Holidays 2024/25. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Cassells advised Members that this proposed schedule had been agreed with the trade unions.

**AGREED:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Finn, to approve the alternative refuse collection services and opening arrangements for Household Recycling Centres on Public Holidays applying to the 2024/25 financial year.

**SE/023/2024: WASTE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CHARGES 2024/25**

Read: Report dated 21 February 2024 from Mrs S Murphy, Assistant Director: Environment, regarding Waste and Environmental Health Charges 2024/25. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Truesdale queried whether Council had considered a possible increase in illegal dumping in relation to the outlined cost increase and what plans were in place for this. She also queried the return of the blue bin recycler of the month reward.

Ms Murphy advised that Council would continue with all enforcement action and were currently engaged in an enforcement improvement strategy. She also noted that the recycling reward scheme was being addressed.

**AGREED:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Magennis, to approve the proposed Waste Management Services Scale of Charges 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 and the Ship Sanitation inspection charges in section 2.2 of the Officer's Report.

**SE/024/2024: REVISION OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT CHARGES FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25**

Read: Report dated 21 February 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability, regarding the Revision of Facilities Management charges for Financial Year 2024/25. **(Copy circulated)**

Following a query from Councillor Finn regarding the Newry Market Rates and feedback received from retailers, Mr Sage advised that he would respond to the Member directly.

**AGREED:** It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Murphy, to adopt the Facilities Management Charges as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 for the financial year 2024/25.

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Larkin, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 10 to 16, 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 Magennis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

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

**SE/025/2024: BUSINESS CASE FOR MINOR CONSTRUCTION WORKS**

**Read:** Report dated 24 January 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability, regarding a Business Case for Minor Construction Works **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Clarke, to note the content of the officer's report, and to accept the conclusion of the Business Case that the Council proceed with Option 3, which will see the appointment of 2 minor construction works contractor to complete minor works contracts across the Council for a three year period, or up to the maximum value of the overall contract. The service to be procured through tender or through the use of a suitable Framework**

**SE/026/2024: BUSINESS CASE FOR UPGRADE TO FUEL PUMPS AND VEHICLE WASH AT GREENBANK DEPOT**

**Read:** Report dated 22 February 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability, regarding a Business Case for Upgrade works at Greenbank Depot, Newry **(Copy circulated)**

On a point of clarification, Mr Cassells advised that the existing fuel pumps were no longer compliant with existing legislation, having been installed 40 years ago, and therefore were no longer fit for purpose as they posed a health and safety risk.

In relation to a statement made by Councillor Enright regarding charging facilities for electric vehicles, he noted that there was a current charger located at Greenbank depot. He stressed that the electricity infrastructure would have an impact on the availability of electric charging for vehicles.

**AGREED:** **It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Murphy, to note the content of the officer's report, and that Committee approve the recommendations contained within the attached business case.**

**SE/027/2024: SINGLE TENDER ACTION EXTENSION**

**Read:** Report dated 21 February 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director Environment, regarding Single Tender Action Extensions. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Murphy, to approve the extension of the STAs as outlined in the officer's report.

**SE/028/2024: STA FOR ADDITIONAL REPAIRS TO CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS**

Read: Report dated 21 February 2024 from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director Sustainability, regarding Remedial repairs on Christmas Illuminations 2023 – STA Extension.  
(Copy circulated)

**AGREED:** It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Larkin, to approve a second STA to cover all outstanding costs associated with Christmas Illuminations 2023.

**SE/029/2024: RECYCLING OF PAPER AT HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRES**

Read: Report dated 21 February 2024 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director Environment, regarding Recycling of Paper at Household Recycling Centres.  
(Copy circulated)

**AGREED:** It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Magennis, that Council avail of the Bring Bank Servicing contract – Lot 3: Mixed Paper via arc21 at Downpatrick, Newry, Warrenpoint, Kilkeel, Camlough, Crossmaglen and Newtownhamilton HRCs from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

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

**SE/030/2024: ACTION SHEET AND PRESENTATION FROM THE CLEANSING AND REFUSE TASK GROUP ON 24 JANUARY 2024**

Read: Action sheet and presentation from the Cleansing and Refuse Task Group Meeting held on 24 January 2024  
(Copy circulated)

**AGREED:** It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Finn, to note the action sheet and presentation from the Cleansing and Refuse Task Force.

**SE/031/2024: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2024 AND IN COMMITTEE MINUTES OF TUESDAY 5 DECEMBER 2023**

Read: ARC21 – Joint Committee Members' Monthly bulletin of meeting held 25 January 2024, and "in committee" minutes of meeting held 5 December 2023. (Copy circulated)



**AGREED:** It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Finn, to note the arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly bulletin of meeting held 25 January 2024, and "in committee" minutes of meeting held 5 December 2023.

**FOR NOTING**

**SE/032/2024:** **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY 5 DECEMBER 2023**

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting In Committee Minutes of Tuesday 5 December 2023. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** It was agreed the proposal of Councillor Truesdale, seconded by Councillor Magennis, to note the minutes of the arc21 Joint Committee meeting of Tuesday 5 December 2023.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 07.35pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 March 2024.

**Signed:** **Councillor Terry Andrews**  
**Chairperson**

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

**NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Ref: AC/2024

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**Minutes of Special Audit Committee Meeting held on Monday 26 February 2024, at 4.00pm, in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick and via Microsoft Teams.**

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**Chairperson:** Ms B Slevin, Independent Chairperson (Teams)

**In attendance in Chamber:** Councillor C Bowsie                      Councillor O Hanlon  
Councillor G Sharvin

**In attendance via Teams:** Councillor J Brennan                      Councillor L Devlin

**Officials in attendance in Chamber:** Mrs J Kelly, Director Corporate Services  
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

**Also in attendance via Teams:** Ms C Hagan    ASM  
Ms K Doey    NIAO

**AC/025/2024:                      APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Marie Ward, Chief Executive. Councillor O'Hare had advised she would attend the meeting around 4.15pm.

**AC/026/2024:                      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

***Items restricted in accordance with Part 3 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014***

**Agreed:**                      On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Brennan, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on this matter which related to exempt information by virtue of Part 5 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

**Agreed:**                      On the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Brennan, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

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

**AC/027/2024: KILBRONEY PITCHES**

Read: Report dated 26 February 2024 from Ms J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Kilbroney Pitches (**Copy circulated**)

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to approve the following recommendations:**

- **That there would be no further independent services engaged on the complaint in relation to Kilbroney Pitches at this juncture.**
- **That this recommendation supersedes the recommendation per the draft minutes of the Audit Committee held on 1 February 2024.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 4.32pm.

For consideration at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 March 2024

**Signed:** **Ms J Kelly**  
**Director Corporate Services**

**Signed:** **Ms B Slevin**  
**Independent Chairperson**

**NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of Special Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Monday 26 February 2024 at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre and remotely via Microsoft Teams**

<b>In the Chair:</b>	Councillor S O'Hare	
<b>In Attendance in Chamber:</b>	Councillor C Enright Councillor D McAteer Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor O Hanlon Councillor A Mathers
<b>In Attendance via Teams:</b>	Councillor P Byrne Councillor A Lewis Councillor H Reilly Councillor D Taylor	Councillor R Howell Councillor A Quinn Councillor M Rice
<b>Non-Committee Members in Attendance in Chamber:</b>	Councillor T Andrews Councillor G Kearns Councillor A McMurray	Councillor C Bowsie Councillor D Lee-Surginor
<b>Non-Committee Members in Attendance via Teams:</b>	Councillor P Campbell Councillor V Harte Councillor J Truesdale	Councillor D Finn Councillor M Ruane
<b>Officials in Attendance In Chamber:</b>	Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy Regeneration and Tourism Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer	
<b>Officials in Attendance via Teams:</b>	Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities	

**SPR/032/2024: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Kelly and McEvoy.

The Chairperson noted that Ms Ward, Chief Executive, had reviewed the paper and advised that the meeting was to be held in open session.

**SPR/033/2024: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**FOR DECISION****SPR/034/2024:****FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME****Read:**

Report dated 26 February 2024 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism, regarding Flood Relief Scheme. **(Copy circulated)**

It was noted that the special meeting held been called due to the receipt of a Letter of Offer for the Enhanced Flood Support Scheme from the Department of the Economy.

Councillor Lewis welcomed the report and proposed the officer's recommendations, thanking Council officers for their hard work during the flooding. He noted that traders would welcome this financial package, and queried when payments could be expected to reach them. He further queried if any funding would be made available to sports clubs and other community groups that weren't eligible for support to date.

Councillor Hanlon, in seconding the proposal, noted her thanks to Council officials and commended the resilience of the communities affected by the flooding. She called on Council to be diligent and proactive in processing the applications as efficiently as possible. She reiterated Councillor Lewis' query regarding support for sports clubs as well as for residents that were affected. She further called on Council to ensure that relevant information regarding the package was easily available and wrap around support be made available.

In response to the Members queries, Mr Mallon confirmed that the scheme was going live at midday on Tuesday 27 February 2024 and would remain open until the 22 March 2024. He advised that Council had raised queries with the Department for Communities in relation to the needs of sports clubs and community groups.

In relation to communication about the scheme, Mr Mallon noted that a press release will issue imminently with all the relevant details as provided by the Department. He further advised that information regarding workshops would be available in the coming days.

Councillor Sharvin stressed that clarity within the guidance notes was vitally important, particularly in relation to insurance payments. He further queried what supports would be made available to sports clubs and community groups, such as churches.

Ms Ward advised Members that Council would be unable to comment on specific cases as each application would need to be considered individually.

Mr Mallon confirmed that this financial package was provided by the Department for Economy and Council were administering it. He confirmed that guidance notes would be released when the scheme opened and that application forms for the hardship schemes were being developed, along with accompanying guidance notes.

Councillor McAteer noted his reservations in relation to the amount of funding available. He advised that it would be a welcome boost for some and simply not enough for others. He criticised the delay of 4 months since the flooding and the further delay of 12 weeks procurement for the appointment of a loss adjuster.

In response to Councillor McAteer's query regarding prioritisation of applications, Mr Mallon

confirmed that applications would be processed as they were received. He advised that the procurement stage was only determined when the funding package had been confirmed by the Department and would hope to have a loss adjuster in place by the time the scheme closed.

Councillor McAteer proposed that Council write to the Minister of Economy concerning the level of funding made available through the enhanced scheme, as there were significant numbers of businesses affected by the flooding that had costs exceeding the £100,000 being made available. He stated this should happen concurrently with the scheme opening. This was seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

Councillor Reilly queried the appointment process for the loss adjuster and whether Council had an estimate in relation to the amount of grant aid that would be distributed. He also requested clarity on the geographical spread in relation to the eligibility criteria, as he noted there was a number of individuals impacted within his DEA and whether there would be an appeal mechanism established.

Mr Mallon confirmed that there were no geographical limits on the eligibility criteria and each application would be reviewed as per the guidelines. He also confirmed that the procurement would follow the Crown Commercial Services framework with the Department and Council working on the specifications in relation to the tender. He confirmed that there would be an appeal process in place, and discussions were ongoing with the Department as to how this would be managed and also advised that Council could not anticipate the number of applicants at this time.

Councillor Taylor queried whether Council had engaged with other Departments such as DAERA and the Department for Communities in relation to any support forthcoming for community organisations and sporting groups that had been affected by flooding.

Mr Mallon confirmed that Council was engaging across various Departments to advise of the issues that were being raised by Members.

Councillor Bowsie requested clarity on the eligibility of applicants who had been ineligible for the first wave of funding support and asked for confirmation that those outside of Downpatrick and Newry could apply for this enhanced scheme. He also queried the definition of "non-domestic premises".

Mr Mallon confirmed that the hardship scheme was developed to try and consider those that had been ineligible for the enhanced scheme and advised Members to refer to the guidance notes as provided by the Department.

**Agreed:**

**On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, the following was agreed**

- **NMDDC accept the letter of offer from DfE to administer the Enhanced Flood Support Scheme.**
- **NMDDC accept the letter of offer from DfE to administer the 2 Hardship Schemes**
- **NMDDC Act as the lead Local Authority for the procurement and appointment of the Loss Assessor on behalf of impacted Councils as per the Business Case at Appendix 1**

- **Officers proceed with the launch of the application process on the 27 February 2024.**

**It was further agreed on the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, to write to the Minister of Economy concerning the level of funding made available through the enhanced scheme, as there were significant numbers of businesses affected by the flooding had costs exceeding the £100,000 being made available.**

**SPR/035/2024:**

**FOREST PARK CAR PARKING CHARGES**

Councillor Hanlon advised that Sinn Féin had requested the item be added to the agenda due to the feedback following a press release from Council around forest park charging. She expressed her confusion as to how the information was released and criticised the lack of clarity around the proposed charges and the use of the free pass. She proposed that the forest park car parking charges roll out was extended April to allow residents to avail of the free pass and that Council messaging was clear with any queries being addressed.

She advised that this would allow time for the collection of a free pass for a chosen park, allow time for the introduction of the changes, and for clarity to be provided by Council to the public. This was seconded by Councillor Mathers.

Councillors Ruane, McAteer and Byrne supported the proposal stating the misinformation could cause difficulty to frontline staff, better communication around the implementation of the charges was required along with the erection of the agreed signage at the parks to assist in the discharge of information to members of the public.

Councillor Sharvin requested clarity on the delay, and whether charges would be cancelled across all parks or remain as was until such time as the changes were made.

Following a lengthy discussion around the issue, Mr Mallon suggested a compromise whereby charges would not be introduced in Kilbroney or Slieve Gullion until an agreed date, but existing charges into Delamont and Castlewellan would remain. In conjunction with this delay, should a member of the public chose Delamont or Castlewellan as their park of choice, they could collect their free pass and make use of it immediately.

Councillor McAteer requested that the Frequently Asked Questions document be updated following the recent feedback.

Following a query from Councillor Lee-Surginor, Mr Mallon confirmed that the free passes would be available from the on-site offices at each park, and the delay in implementation of charges would allow time for users to collect their free passes.

**Agreed:**

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

- **Council will delay the implementation of charges at all forest parks until 22 April 2024.**

- **Council will erect signage at all forest parks detailing the charging changes, when they will be implemented and how the public can collect their free pass.**
- **Council will develop further FAQ based on feedback that had been received.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 6.05pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 March 2024.

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

**Signed:**            **Josephine Kelly**  
**Director of Corporate Services**



**Public Appointments Unit**

Ms Marie Ward  
Chief Executive  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
BELFAST

BT2 8GB

Email: [publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

Issued via email to:

[marie.ward@nmandd.org](mailto:marie.ward@nmandd.org)

Our ref:

**Date:** 30 January 2024

Dear Marie

**Appointment of Councillors to the Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority (WHA)**

I am writing to invite you to submit a number of Council nominees to be considered by the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), for appointment to the Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority.

The recruitment process will be run under the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation Etc) Act 2022. Should the Assembly return before the end of the recruitment/selection process we will write to you to provide an update of any change to this process.

These Councillor appointments are not positions of responsibility as defined under the 2014 Local Government Act, which require to be shared across the parties using d'Hondt or Saint-Lague formula of the Single Transferrable Vote method. They are appointments to be made by DfI after consultation with the Council, and in compliance with the Commissioner for Public Appointment Northern Ireland (CPANI) Code.

The Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Order (Northern Ireland) 2002, provides that a maximum of three Commissioners shall be Members of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

There are currently two Councillors in post and one vacancy. One Councillor's first appointment term covers to 28 February 2027, so his appointment is not affected by this competition. However, the other Councillor's second appointment term is due to end on 21 August 2024. Having served two terms, he cannot be reappointed beyond this date, therefore we will be recruiting for two vacancies, one from as soon as possible following an appointment decision and one due to commence from 22 August 2024.

The Non-Executive Members of the Board, together with the Chair, have corporate responsibility for ensuring that Warrenpoint Harbour Authority complies with all relevant statutory or administrative requirements including requirements in respect of the use of public funds. The role will be to work as a member of the Board to bring experience and judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance, and governance. Members should bring wide experience and critical detachment to the work of the organisation and be prepared to constructively criticise and assist executive management in the development of strategic objectives and policies.

New appointees will be expected to attend the full monthly Board meetings and other ad hoc meetings as required. Board meetings may vary in time commitment from month to month. The appointment may involve a commitment both inside and outside of normal working hours, including representing the Port at occasional evening engagements. Meetings are normally held at the Meetings are normally held at the Harbour Office, The Docks, Warrenpoint BT34 3JR.

To provide the Permanent Secretary with a choice of nominees, as required by the Commissioner for Public Appointment Northern Ireland (CPANI), the Department invites your Council to nominate at least six Councillors to be considered for appointment.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments also requires that public appointees should serve no more than two terms in the same position and no more than ten years in total. Please ensure that those who you are considering nominating have not previously served 10 years / two terms on the Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority as they will not be eligible for interview.

I enclose copies of the Information Booklet and Application and Monitoring Form for completion by each nominee to be considered for appointment. Full details of the process are set out in the Information Booklet.

The date of the new appointment will be 1 April 2024 and will last for as long as the appointee remains on the Council, up to a maximum of four years. The second appointment commencing from 22 August 2024 will also last for as long as the appointee remains on the Council and up to a maximum of four years.

Nominees should complete the short application form. They will be invited to attend an interview at a date to be confirmed. The interview panel will comprise two departmental officials and an independent assessor allocated by CPANI. The interview will explore nominees' understanding and experience of corporate governance and the role of a board member. Integrity, conflicts of interest and the time commitment involved in the appointment will also be discussed. The panel will draft a record of these discussions to be sent to the Permanent Secretary to help him decide who to appoint.

Finally, DfI wants to improve diversity on our Boards. We would particularly welcome nominations from the following under-represented groups: women; younger people; people with disabilities; and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

I should be grateful if you could arrange for the completed application form for each nominee to be returned no later than **12 noon on Friday 22 March 2024** to:

[publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

or

Jennifer Macrory  
DfI Public Appointments Unit  
Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
Belfast BT2 8GB

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**GAVIN IRWIN**  
**DfI Public Appointments Unit**



## DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

# Public Appointments Candidate Information Booklet

## NON-EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR MEMBER OF WARRENPOINT HARBOUR AUTHORITY

### NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

This information pack can be made available in other formats, such as Braille, large print, audio etc. To request this or any other information on the appointment process please contact:

**Jennifer Macrory**  
Public Appointments Unit  
Department for Infrastructure  
Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
Belfast BT2 8GB

Tel: 028 9054 1002  
Text relay service 18001 028 9054 1002  
E-mail your request to: [publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

## CONTENTS OF THIS BOOKLET

Section 1	Information about Warrenpoint Harbour Authority (WHA)
Section 2	Role Profile and Person Specification
Section 3	Application and Selection Process
Section 4	Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Complaints Procedure
Annexes	Expenses Form & Probity and Conflicts of Interest Guidance

## KEY APPOINTMENT PROCESS STAGES

Stage in Process	Timescale
Closing Date for applications	Noon Friday 22 March 2024
Interviews	Early April 2024
Date of appointments	April 2024

### Privacy Notice

The Department for Infrastructure will only process the personal data you provide us for the purpose of recruiting members to the Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority and in line with the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Code of Practice. For more information, please see our Privacy Notice at [GDPR Privacy Notices for DfI Business areas | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](#).

## Section 1

1. Applications from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council are invited for two Non-Executive Councillor Members for the Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority. One appointment will take effect as soon as possible from the appointment decision date and the other from 22 August 2024. A reserve list may be created to fill any vacancies that may arise within twelve months from the date of appointment.

### Information about Warrenpoint Harbour Authority (WHA) and Warrenpoint Port

#### Warrenpoint Port

2. Warrenpoint is a Public Trust Port. The Port was established in 1971 and in general cargo terms, is the second largest port in Northern Ireland, with 3.3 million tonnage handled by the Port in 2022. Warrenpoint is one of Northern Ireland's main commercial ports, serving a hinterland which includes the southern part of Northern Ireland and the northern part of the Republic of Ireland. The Port's geographic position constitutes a major strategic advantage located halfway on the main strategic network of the Belfast to Dublin economic corridor.
3. The published 2022 accounts for WHA showed a turnover of £6.5 million and a profit after tax of £480,379. The tangible assets of the company were valued at £25.4 million.

#### Warrenpoint Harbour Authority

4. WHA is a corporate body, having perpetual succession and was first constituted by the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Order (Northern Ireland) 1971. Its constitution is now enshrined in the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Order (Northern Ireland) 2002.
5. Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Orders of 1971 and 2002 conferred powers on the Authority to preserve, improve and manage the Port of Warrenpoint. The Authority also has the power to construct and maintain specific works, to levy dues, to deal with abandoned vessels and to make bylaws.

## Constitution of WHA

6. The constitution of the Authority is set out in the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Order (Northern Ireland) 2002. The order provides for the following:
  - The Authority shall consist of not less than eight and not more than 12 persons who shall be appointed by the Department for a period of four years or such lesser period as the Department may determine. The persons appointed will include the persons appointed as Chief Executive and the Finance Director to the Authority.
  - The Department shall designate a member of the Authority as Chairman of the Authority and may designate another member of the Authority as Deputy Chairman.
  - A maximum of three of the persons appointed to the Authority shall be members of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council appointed by the Department following consultation with the Council. Such an appointment will remain valid only while the person so appointed remains a member of the Council.
7. There are currently nine members of the Authority, including the Chair, Chief Executive, the Finance Director and two members of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

## Key Priorities

8. In April 2018, Warrenpoint Harbour Authority (WHA) published its draft Masterplan for Warrenpoint Port 2018-2043. The Masterplan sets out the port's five core objectives to address the key issues affecting the future operation of the port, these are:
  - **Improve transportation and circulation** – Including the Newry Southern Relief Road and better road access into the port.
  - **Improve Port capacity, operations and facilities** – Better access, storage facilities and better cargo handling by investment in new cranes, plant and machinery.

- **Grow a diverse customer base** – Developing better cargo handling facilities and specialist storage solutions and enhance shipping access through improved dredging scheme.
- **Develop and improve linkages with the Town** – Including redeveloping the Town Dock Office as the port's administration centre so it faces the Town Square and open up access to the Marina.
- **Develop a long term expansion strategy** – looking at long term options beyond the next 25 years for increasing dockside capacity and on and off site storage and distribution capacity.

### Governance Arrangements

9. WHA is committed to high standards of Corporate Governance consistent with the requirements of a Trust Port. This covers all financial reporting issues, the control environment and any governance matters.
10. For further information please consult the Annual Report which can be accessed by the link below:  
[Warrenpoint-Harbour-Annual-Report-2022.pdf \(warrenpointport.com\)](#)



## Section 2 – Role Profile and Person Specification

11. The Non-Executive Members of the Board, together with the WHA Chair, have corporate responsibility for ensuring that Warrenpoint Harbour Authority complies with all relevant statutory or administrative requirements including requirements in respect of the use of public funds.
12. The role will be to work as a member of the Board to bring experience and judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance and governance. Members should bring wide experience and critical detachment to the work of the organisation and be prepared to constructively criticise and assist executive management in the development of strategic objectives and policies.
13. The Board Member will be expected to:
  - Contribute to the work of the Board in embedding Warrenpoint Harbour’s Business Plan which sets out the overall strategic direction for the Port.
  - Make a full contribution to the business of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Board, including the formulation of strategy for the organisation.
  - Participate in any training or facilitated workshops relating to Board business.
  - Work to ensure that Warrenpoint Harbour complies with relevant legislation, licence and governance arrangements.
  - Respect and abide by the rules of confidentiality that apply to the business of Warrenpoint Harbour as a commercial organisation.
  - Support the Chair to challenge and scrutinise the Chief Executive and management team to ensure that Warrenpoint Harbour achieves its objectives and targets and achieves value for money and efficiency in its operations.
  - Help to improve the value and quality of service provided to customers and ensure that these are key priorities for Warrenpoint Harbour.
  - Carry out the tasks associated with membership of Committees of the Board.
  - Comply with the UK Corporate Governance Code and the “seven principles of public life”.

- Ensure appropriate representation of the views of WHA to the general public and all other stakeholders.
  - Use their judgement and experience to safeguard the public interest in relation to WHA.
14. Councillors will be expected to demonstrate at interview, an understanding of the role of a board member, a high standard of probity and integrity and an understanding of the seven principles underpinning public life.
15. Potential or perceived Conflicts of Interest will be explored at interview.
16. An understanding or experience of corporate governance will also be explored at interview.
- **Governance is about the leadership, direction and supervision of an organisation. It means making sure that the organisation is well run (or governed) and carries out the work it was set up to do.** Councillors may talk through an example/s from their community involvement or voluntary work, as well as those experiences found within the employment field. Councillors can use examples from working or personal life.

### **Period of Appointment**

17. The appointments will be for a maximum of four years from appointment date and from 1 April 2024 and 22 August 2024 respectively. The appointments will only remain valid while the persons appointed remains a member of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.
18. An offer of a second term may be possible, subject to evidence of an appropriate standard of performance having been achieved during the initial period in office and evidence of continued adherence to the seven principles of public life.

### **Training**

19. Appropriate induction training will be provided to the new appointee.

### **Time Commitment and Remuneration**

20. The remuneration is £7,807 per annum based on anticipated attendance of up to two business days per month. The new Members will be expected to attend the full monthly Board meetings and other ad hoc meetings as required. Board meetings may vary in time commitment from month to month. The appointment may involve a commitment both inside and outside of normal working hours, including representing the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority at occasional evening engagements. Meetings are normally held at the Harbour Office, The Docks, Warrenpoint BT34 3JR.

### **Expenses**

21. Following appointment, reasonable travelling expenses and subsistence will be paid to attend meetings in accordance with WHA's processes. Any additional costs associated with childcare, dependents or having a disability will also be considered to enable the Member to attend meetings. All remuneration and expenses are subject to deduction of income tax and national insurance.
22. The appointment is not pensionable.

### **Code of Practice**

23. A Code of Practice governs the activities of the Commissioners. To ensure that public service values remain at the heart of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority, Members are required, on appointment, to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies.

## Section 3 – Application and Selection Process

### Diversity in Public Appointments

24. The Department of Infrastructure is committed to the principles of public appointments based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. The Department is also committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes application forms from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of religious belief, gender, race, political opinion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not they have dependants.
25. The Department is committed to taking measures to improve the diversity of its Boards. Women, younger people, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities are currently underrepresented on the Board and applications from these groups would be particularly welcome.
26. This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPA NI) and the competition may be examined by CPA NI for compliance with the Commissioner's Code of Practice.

### Application Procedure

27. Application forms or further information about the process can be obtained from Jennifer Macrory at the address on the cover of this document or by e-mailing a request to: [publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk).
28. Hard copy or electronic versions of the application form are acceptable. You must not reformat the electronic application form. CVs, letters, or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms will not be accepted.
29. Applications should be fully completed and as clearly as possible using black ink or Arial typescript minimum font size 12. All sections of the application form should be completed.

30. Information documents and application forms can be provided in alternative formats. Any applicants who require assistance should contact Jennifer Macrory. All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of Councillors with a disability.
31. Application forms should be submitted by post, email or in person to arrive with Jennifer Macrory by **12 Noon Friday 22 March 2024** (see contact details on cover sheet).

### **Selection Process**

32. All nominees submitted by the Council will be interviewed by a selection panel comprising three members, two officers from the Department, and an Independent Member.
33. The Selection Panel will explore issues of probity, conflict of interest, time commitment and understanding or experience of corporate governance with each nominee. A written record will be made of the discussions for each nominee. An applicant summary will be prepared to provide the decision maker with information about each nominee.

**The process listed below under Presentation of Results are correct at the launch of this competition. However, it should be noted they may be subject to change. Candidates will be informed of any change.**

### **Presentation of Results to the Permanent Secretary/Minister**

34. If a Minister for the Department for Infrastructure is in place by the conclusion of the selection process they will be asked to sanction the competition and to state their preference for the presentation of the outcome of interviews, i.e. ranked or unranked list, and also if they would like to create of a reserve list to cover any unforeseen vacancies that arise within 12 months of the date of the decision to appoint
35. In the event that a Minister is not in place at the conclusion of the selection process, the Permanent Secretary will be asked how they would like the list of suitable candidates to be presented.

36. The Minister or the Permanent Secretary will then be presented with a list of appointable candidates (ranked/unranked depending on their previously declared preference) along with an applicant summary which will provide an objective analysis of each applicant's skills and experience, based on the information provided by each applicant during the appointment round and the selection panel's assessment of that applicant. If the Permanent Secretary is the decision maker, then the resulting appointments may be reviewed by an incoming Minister.

### **Timetable / Time Frame**

37. The deadline for receipt in all cases is **12 Noon on Friday 22 March 2024**. Applications will be individually date-stamped, and the time of receipt formally recorded. It is the responsibility of the applicant, taking into account their chosen method of delivery, to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for their application to arrive with the Department on or before the deadline. **Late applications will only be considered under exceptional circumstances.** Please ensure that posted applications bear the correct amount of postage as any shortfall may lead to a delay in delivery, causing you to miss the deadline. Applicants who send their application form electronically are also required to meet the closing deadline for receipt in this office.
38. Interviews are expected to be held early **April 2024**, with the successful nominees confirmed as soon as possible thereafter.

### **Disqualified Candidates**

39. There are no statutory disqualification criteria for this post.

## Probity and Conflicts of Interest

40. The Department must ensure that any individual appointed is committed to the seven principles of conduct underpinning public life and values of public service. **These principles are: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership.** The successful candidate will be asked as part of their appointment to sign a declaration committing to the seven principles.
41. The information pack includes copies of the leaflets entitled “Probity and Conflicts of Interest – Guidance for Candidates” and an information leaflet from the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (NI) about “Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and Making a Complaint”. These provide information on these issues, including some examples to help applicants evaluate whether or not they have a real, perceived or potential conflict.
42. The Department must take account of any actual or perceived conflict of interest. Therefore, applicants, in their application form, must disclose information or personal connections which, if they were to be appointed, could lead to a conflict of interest or be perceived as such. Failure to do so could lead to the appointment being terminated.
43. It is very important that all applicants provide appropriate details on their application form of any interests which might be construed as being in conflict with the appointment for which they have applied. If it appears, from the information provided on the form, that a possible conflict might exist, or arise in the future, this will be fully explored with the applicant with a view to establishing whether it is sufficiently significant to prevent the individual from carrying out the duties of the post. The Panel will do this at interview stage.

## Other Public Appointments

44. Departments have a duty to satisfy themselves, as far as practicable, that those they appoint to the Boards of public bodies will carry out their duties in an efficient and effective manner. The Department for Infrastructure will, therefore, be checking with other Departments if there are any probity or performance issues associated with applicants

who hold other public appointments. Similar information will be provided by the Department on request about all associated board members.

### **The Two Terms Rule**

45. According to the CPANI Code, those who have served two terms in the same position on the same board cannot apply through open competition for a third term. If any applicant has served two terms in this position, their application will be discounted at the sift stage.

### **Double Paying**

46. Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that: If appointed, they will be asked to obtain confirmation from their employer that any remuneration due and time worked for this position are truly additional to their existing job role and is not a duplication with salaried employment (unless allowed under the terms and conditions of employment); and
47. In the interests of minimising the potential for double paying to occur the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.
48. Former Civil Servants are subject to rules on the Acceptance of Outside Business Appointments, Employment or Self-Employment for a period of up to two years after leaving the NI Civil Service. Individuals in this category, who wish to apply, should check their eligibility to do so with their former Department.



## Publicising Appointments

49. A Press Release will be published to announce the appointment. The Commissioner for Public Appointments also requires that announcements about successful candidates should contain details of any recent political activity. Consequently, should you be appointed, you will be required to complete a political activity form. Details of any political activity, together with some of the information that you have provided in your application form, will be made public in the press announcement. This applies particularly to any other public appointments you may hold and to any significant political activity recently undertaken by you. The Press Release will include:

- Your name;
- A short description of the body to which you have been appointed;
- A brief summary of the skills and knowledge you bring to the role;
- The period of appointment;
- Any remuneration associated with the appointment;
- Details of all other public appointments held and any related remuneration received;  
and
- Details of any political activity declared in the last 5 years

## Section 4 - Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Complaints Procedure

### Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

50. The Department is committed to providing equality of opportunity. The Department monitors applications to ensure that equal opportunities measures are effective in its appointments processes. Applicants are therefore asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form attached to the application form. The information is purely for monitoring purposes. It is **not** made available to the selection panel and does **not** play a role in the decision-making process. The information will be analysed independently by staff in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and will be treated in strict confidence.

### Diversity in Public Appointments

51. The Department is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified people irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic origin, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants.
52. Women, younger people, people with a disability and ethnic minority communities are currently underrepresented on the Board and applications from these groups would be particularly welcome.

### Complaints Procedure

53. The Department is committed to getting this appointment process right first time. However, if you are not entirely satisfied with any aspect of our service, please tell us and we will do our best to resolve the matter. Our aim is to resolve any complaint quickly and you are invited initially to bring any concerns you may have to the official named below. However, if you still feel dissatisfied after this approach, you may initiate a formal complaint in writing. Please direct your concerns in the first instance to:

Head of Public Appointments Unit  
Department for Infrastructure  
Room 4-08, Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8GB  
Email: [gavin.irwin@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:gavin.irwin@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

If you remain dissatisfied you may then write to:-

Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPA NI)  
Dundonald House  
Annexe B  
Stormont Estate  
Upper Newtownards Road  
Belfast  
BT4 3SB  
Email: [info@publicappointmentsni.org](mailto:info@publicappointmentsni.org)

## Annexes

## REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

Interview for: \_\_\_\_\_ Venue \_\_\_\_\_  
 Interview time: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview date: \_\_\_\_\_

Claim forms must be submitted within **one month** of attendance at interview. Please complete in Capital Letters

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	
<b>Total number of miles claimed @ Public Transport mileage rate, currently (25.7p per mile)</b>	<b>Details of Return Journey</b>	<b>Official use</b>
Insert No. of miles: <input type="text"/>		
<b>Public Transport Fares</b> (Bus, Rail, Air - attach receipts) <i>Only receipted fares will be considered for reimbursement</i>		
<b>Other (attach VAT Receipts)</b> <i>Only receipted expenses will be considered for reimbursement</i>		
<b>Total Claimed</b>		<b>Total Recommended</b>

**DECLARATION:** I declare that I necessarily incurred all of the above expenses to attend the above interview and that the information provided is accurate and complete.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE RECEIVED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CLAIM CHECKED:** I confirm that to the best of my knowledge, the facts given in this claim are correct. I recommend payment of: £ \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**RECOMMENDED FOR PAYMENT**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTES:**

Claim forms must be fully completed and original receipts for travel and other expenses must be attached.

Any claim that does not include the necessary information and/or receipts will be returned to the candidate.

Claims that are complete will be processed and payment made within 30 working days of the date of receipt.

If you have any query on your entitlement to make a claim, please contact:

Jennifer Macrory

## PROBITY & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

### GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

*This guidance should be read in conjunction with the information contained in the leaflet "CPA NI Guidance on Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and how to raise a complaint" which provides examples of the types of issues that may give rise to conflicts of interests.*

#### **Standards of behaviour**

Ministers expect that the conduct of those they appoint to serve on the Boards of public bodies will be above reproach. Everyone who puts themselves forward for a public appointment must be able to demonstrate their commitment to the maintenance of high standards in public life.

#### **The Seven Principles Underpinning Public Life**

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles, which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way. These are:

**Selflessness** - Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

**Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

As part of the selection process you will be tested on your commitment to maintaining high standards in public life with particular emphasis on probity issues and conflicts of interest.

### **What is a conflict of interest?**

Public Appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared.

There is always the possibility for real or perceived conflicts of interest to arise. Both are a problem, as the perceived inference of a conflict may, on occasions, be as damaging as the existence of a real conflict.

No-one should use, or give the appearance of using, their public position to further their private interests. This is an area of particular importance, as it is of considerable concern to the public and receives a lot of media attention. It is important, therefore, that you consider your circumstances when applying for a public appointment and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.

### **Surely a perceived conflict is not a problem, as long as I act impartially at all times?**

The integrity of the individual is not in question here. However, it is necessary for the standing of the individual and the board that members of the public have confidence in their independence and impartiality. Even a perceived conflict of interest on the part of a board member can be extremely damaging to the body's reputation and it is therefore essential that these are declared and explored, in the same way as an actual conflict would be. The fact that a member acted impartially may be no defence against accusations of potential bias.

### **What should I do if I think I have a conflict of interest?**

You will find a section on conflicts of interest in the application form for you to complete. This asks you to consider and declare whether or not you have a real, or perceived, conflict. If you are unsure if your circumstances constitute a possible conflict, you should still complete this section, in order to give the Selection Panel as much information as possible.

### **If I declare a conflict, does this mean I will not be considered for appointment?**

No - each case is considered individually. If you are short-listed for interview, the Panel will explore with you how far the conflict might affect your ability to contribute effectively

and impartially on the Board and how this might be handled, if you were to be appointed. For example, it may be possible to arrange for you to step out of meetings where an issue is discussed, in which you have an interest. However, if, following the discussion with you, the Panel believes that the conflict is too great and would call into question the probity of the Board or the appointment they can withdraw your application from the competition. The summary of the outcome of the interview process, which is put to the Ministers, will include clear written reference to any probity issues or perceived or actual conflicts of interest connected to any candidate put forward as suitable for appointment. It will include sufficient information to ensure that the Ministers are fully aware of any of these matters and can make an informed decision.

**What happens if I do not declare a known conflict, which is then discovered by the Department after my appointment?**

Again, each case would be considered on its merits, but the Department may take the view that by concealing a conflict of interest, you would be deemed to have breached the seven principles of conduct underpinning public life and may terminate your appointment.

**What happens if I do not realise a potential conflict exists?**

This situation may arise where the applicant is not familiar with the broad range of work which a body covers and therefore does not realise that a conflict might exist. In some cases, the Panel, with their wider knowledge of the body, might deduce that there is a potential conflict issue, based on the information on employment and experience provided by the candidate in the application form. They will then explore this at interview with the candidate.

**What happens if a conflict of interest arises after an appointment is made?**

This could arise for two main reasons. The first is that the member's circumstances may change, for example, they may change jobs and in doing so, a conflict with their work on the board becomes apparent. The second is where a member is unfamiliar with the range of the work of the body, but after appointment, it becomes clear that a conflict exists where none had been envisaged during the appointment process.

In both cases, the issue should be discussed with the Chair of the board and the Chief Executive of the body concerned, in consultation with the Sponsoring Department, to decide whether or not the member can continue to carry out their role in an appropriate manner and each case is considered individually.

It may be that the conflict is such that it would be impractical for the member to continue on the board, if they would have to withdraw from a considerable amount of the body's routine business. In such cases, the member may be asked to stand down from the body.

You may be asked to sign a declaration of commitment to the above principles as a condition of your appointment.





**DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE**

**APPLICATION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF:**

**NON-EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR MEMBER  
OF WARRENPOINT HARBOUR  
AUTHORITY**

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Closing Date – 12 noon on Friday 22 March 2024**

Candidate No: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICATION FORM FOR NON-EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR MEMBER TO THE BOARD OF WARRENPOINT HARBOUR AUTHORITY

The Application Form is in two parts. The closing date for the return of completed application forms is Noon Friday 22 March 2024.

### PART A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Typewritten or electronic versions of the application forms are welcome and should be completed in Arial with a minimum font size of 12. Handwritten applications should be completed using **black ink**.
- If your application is submitted by e-mail, we will require you to sign Part A when you attend interview.
- Please do not staple, tape, or stick additional information to this form. CVs, letters, or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to the completed application form will **not** be accepted.
- We would advise you to retain a copy of your application for your own information.
- Applications will not be reviewed until after the closing date.
- We will only process the personal data you provide us for the purpose of recruiting members to the Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Harbour and in line with the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Code of Practice. For more information, please see our Privacy Notice at [GDPR Privacy Notices for DfI Business areas | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Please send the two parts of your completed application to:

Public Appointments Unit  
Department for Infrastructure  
Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
Belfast BT2 8GB

Or by email to: [publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

**PART A: PERSONAL INFORMATION**

**1. PERSONAL DETAILS**

Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/etc): Surname: Forename(s): Former surname(s) (if any): National Insurance Number: (if applicable)	<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>										

**CONTACT DETAILS:**

Permanent address, including postcode:	
Telephone No (including STD code):	
Mobile:	
E-mail address:	
Address for correspondence, including postcode: (if different from above)	
Telephone No of correspondence address (including STD code): (if different from above)	

We will normally contact you by email; however, if you would prefer to be contacted by a different means then please indicate this here.

By Telephone 
                 
 By Mobile 
                 
 By Post

**2. OTHER INFORMATION**

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence (other than minor motoring offences) which is not spent in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Are you the subject of any legal, criminal, or statutory investigations or actions, or are any pending?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Have you ever been adjudged bankrupt or made a composition or arrangement (such as those set out in Note 1 below) with your creditors over the past 10 years?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Were you dismissed from any public office over the past 10 years?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you answered **yes** to any of the questions above, please provide details below.

**Note 1**

- Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) and Fast-Track Voluntary Arrangements (FTVAs);
- Bankruptcy Restrictions Orders or Undertakings (BROs/BRUs);
- Debt Relief Orders (DROs); and
- Debt Relief Restrictions Orders or Undertakings (DRROs/DRRUs).

### 3. Reasonable Adjustments

Please let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments, or arrangements to enable you to attend for interview or take up an offer of appointment. The selection panel will only be advised of any adjustments they need to know about to manage the interview process.

**PART B: PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS**

Candidate No: \_\_\_\_\_

4. **PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS** – please list all current public appointments, giving the name of the public body, the position held, the length of the appointment and any remuneration paid.

Public Body	Position Held	Dates		Remuneration
		From	To	

Have you ever been a member of the Board of WHA?

Yes  No

If you have previously served on this board, please indicate when and the positions held	Position Held	From	To

**PART B: PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS**

**5. PROBITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

*Before you complete this section, it is important that you read the guidance on probity and conflicts of interest contained in your information pack.*

a) Are you prepared to abide by the seven principles of public life?

Yes  No

b) Have you, your partner, or your immediate family, any business or other interests or personal connections that might be construed as being in conflict with the appointment for which you have nominated for?

Yes  No

c) Are there any other probity issues which might cause embarrassment if, in the future, they are raised in public?

Yes  No

If you answered **yes** to questions b) and/or c) above, please provide details below.

Any potential probity issues or conflicts of interest detailed above will not prevent you from being called for interview but will be explored with you at that time to establish how you would address the issue should you be successful in your application.

**PART B: PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS****6. DECLARATION**

I have read and understood the information provided in the Candidate Information Booklet. I declare that I am available to meet the time commitment required for this role.

I have read the 'Probity and Conflicts of Interest: Guidance for Candidates' information leaflet and I understand that, if appointed, I must raise with the Departmental Permanent Secretary and the Chief Executive of the public body, any probity or conflict of interest issues that might arise during my term of appointment and that my failure to do so could lead to my appointment being terminated.

I undertake to inform DfI Public Appointments Unit in writing of any change in my circumstances which may occur between the date of my application and any possible date of appointment.

I have read the information pack and understand my responsibilities in relation to statutory disqualifications and public appointments. I declare that the information I have given in support of my application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief and is a reflection of my own individual experience, personal achievements and undertakings and all statements contained therein relate to me personally. I understand that if I am found to have suppressed any material fact or to have given false answers, I will be liable to disqualification or, if appointed, to dismissal.

I understand and accept that the information I have provided will be processed by the Department for Infrastructure, in accordance with its Data Protection Registration, for the purposes of making these public appointments; and that this may involve disclosing information to other Government Departments, the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland, or anonymously in response to Assembly Questions and other enquiries.

I also understand and accept that, if appointed, my name will be published in the Public Appointments Annual Report. Also, that some of the information I have provided will be included in a press release announcing my appointment and therefore placed in the public domain.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**PART C- EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING**

(Return with your application form)

Please ensure that you read the notes for guidance in the Candidate Information Pack before you complete this part of your application form.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to ensuring that all eligible persons have equal opportunity for public appointments on the basis of their ability and aptitude for the role. Monitoring is carried out to help us ensure that our processes and procedures promote equality of opportunity as far as possible and therefore your help in completing and returning this monitoring form as part of your application would be appreciated. Please note the information you provide in this monitoring form will be detached from the information on the application form, held separately and will not be available to selection panels or to anyone else involved in the selection process. The information will be used for statistical purposes only and analysed independently by staff in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) in the strictest confidence. Thank you for your cooperation.

**National Insurance Number**

Please enter your National Insurance Number below:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

**Gender**

Please tick one box:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female

**Age**

Please give your date of birth:

Day		Month		Year			

**Community Background**

Please indicate your community background by ticking the appropriate box below:

<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a Roman Catholic community background
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a Protestant community background
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have neither a Protestant or Roman Catholic community background

**Disability**

The Disability and Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a disability as a “physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. Do you consider yourself to have a disability (Please tick one box below)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

**Race**

Please tick one box to indicate your race:

<input type="checkbox"/>	White	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black African
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian

Are you a member of a Mixed Ethnic Group?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Are you a member of the Irish Travelling Community?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

If you are of other ethnic origin, please specify

**Language**

Is English your first language? (Please tick one box below):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

**Sexual Orientation**

Please consider the statement below and tick one box:

My sexual orientation is towards someone:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Of the same sex (this covers gay men and lesbians)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Of a different sex (this covers heterosexual men and women)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Of the same sex and of the opposite sex (this covers bisexual men and women)

**Marital status**

Please indicate your marital status by ticking one box below:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Single, that is never married or in a civil partnership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Married
<input type="checkbox"/>	Separated, but still legally married

<input type="checkbox"/>	Divorced
<input type="checkbox"/>	Widowed
<input type="checkbox"/>	In a civil partnership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
<input type="checkbox"/>	Surviving partner from a civil partnership

**Dependants**

Do you have personal responsibility for the care of a child, or children, a person with a disability or a dependent older person?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Which sector would you consider best reflects your employment history over the course of your career?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private Sector
<input type="checkbox"/>	Civil Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Public Sector
<input type="checkbox"/>	Voluntary Sector

Other, Please Specify:

--

What is your highest level of educational attainment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	No Qualifications
<input type="checkbox"/>	GCSE/ O-level or equivalent
<input type="checkbox"/>	A-level or equivalent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Degree or higher

<b>Report to:</b>	Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	4 March 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Correspondence to Council
<b>Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
<b>Contact Officer (Including Job Title):</b>	Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

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

<b>For decision</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>For noting only</b>	
<b>1.0</b>			<b>Purpose and Background</b>
1.1			To provide an update on correspondence received for attention of Council.
<b>2.0</b>			<b>Key issues</b>
2.1			This paper refers to correspondence to be brought to the attention of Council. Items are referred to in 3.0 below.
<b>3.0</b>			<b>Recommendations</b>
			That Council considers and notes the following correspondence:
3.1			<b>Correspondence from BBC NI</b>  Council received a response from BBC NI in relation to C/020/2024 Notice of Motion, BBC Programme Farm Gate and Agricultural issues. Refer to Appendix 1.
3.2			<b>Correspondence from Bank of Ireland</b>  Council received a response from Bank of Ireland in relation to C/249/2023 Notice of Motion, Bank Closures and Euro ATMs. Refer to Appendix 2.
3.3			<b>Correspondence from Derry City and Strabane District Council</b>  Council received correspondence in relation to a motion passed at a meeting of Derry City and Strabane District Council regarding Violence in Gaza. Refer to Appendix 3.
3.4			<b>Correspondence from Ards and North Down Borough Council</b>  Council received a response from Ards and North Down Borough Council in relation to C/250/2023 Notice of Motion, Cystic Fibrosis Medication. Refer to appendix 4.
3.5			<b>Correspondence from Minister for the Economy</b>  Council received a response from the Minister for the Economy, Conor Murphy MLA in relation to C/029/2024 and SE/004/2024 Notice of Motion, Flood Defences. Refer to appendix 5.

3.6	<p><b>Correspondence from Minister for Infrastructure</b></p> <p>Council received a response from the Minister for Infrastructure, John O’Dowd MLA in relation to C/029/2024 and SE/004/2024 Notice of Motion, Flood Defences. Refer to appendix 6.</p>
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<b>4.0</b>	<b>Resource implications</b>
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4.1	Not applicable.
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<b>5.0</b>	<b>Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)</b>
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5.1	<p><b><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></b></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
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5.2	<p><b><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></b></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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5.3	<p><b><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></b></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
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<b>6.0</b>	<b>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</b>
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6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service
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	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy / strategy / plan / public service is not influenced by rural needs <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
	<p><b>Appendix 1: BBC NI</b>  <b>Appendix 2: Bank of Ireland</b>  <b>Appendix 3: Derry City and Strabane District Council</b>  <b>Appendix 4: Ards and North Down Borough Council</b>  <b>Appendix 5: Minister for the Economy</b>  <b>Appendix 6: Minister for Infrastructure</b></p>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Background Documents</b>
	<b>None</b>

**BBC Northern Ireland**

Broadcasting House,  
Ormeau Avenue,  
Belfast BT2 8HQ

028 9033 8000  
bbc.co.uk/northernIreland

01 February, 2024

Marie Ward  
Chief Executive  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  
O'Hagan House  
Monaghan Row  
Newry  
BT35 8DJ



Dear Marie

**BBC News NI – Farming, the Environment and Rural Affairs**

I'm replying to your recent letter about BBC-related concerns that had been raised at a meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (08 January).

We understand the importance of BBC news coverage of agriculture, the environment and rural affairs more generally.

We have been involved in a significant re-structuring of the BBC's newsgathering operation in Northern Ireland over the last 12mths, seeking to enhance our digital services and to respond to the new ways in which audiences are consuming BBC content. This will involve some changes to Good Morning Ulster over the coming period, including to the current slot for farming news.

None of this will affect/diminish the role of our specialist journalism in this area (which is led by our **Agriculture and Environment Correspondent**). And our ambition is that stories about farming and rural life will be a more developed and integrated part of the BBC's local news output, drawing on the work of our **newly enhanced network of area-based reporters**, and making effective use of digital technologies and opportunities.

We will also **aggregate locally relevant stories about farming, the environment and related issues** in a dedicated section of the BBC's news website. This will make these stories easy to find and follow. And it will also showcase the extent, editorial ambition and distinctiveness of our journalism in this area.

We want to **deepen our connection with communities across the region and to better/more fully reflect stories and issues affecting their lives**. This will always work in progress and it's something that benefits from stakeholder engagement (such as we've had with the UFU and DAERA), audience feedback and ongoing review.

We understand that **the farming slot on Good Morning Ulster** has been appreciated by many listeners, but think that this editorial need can be met in a more developed and impactful way, making use of wider newsroom resources, expertise and capabilities – and by **more fully integrating stories in this area within the totality of our local news services, both linear and digital**.

We note, and take seriously, the Council's concerns and hope that these will be allayed by the commitments that we've outlined above and the enhancements that we will be able to make to this aspect of the BBC's news programming over the coming period.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Smyth', written in a cursive style.

Adam Smyth  
Director – BBC Northern Ireland



Subject: Re: Notice of Motion – Bank Closures and Euro ATMS

You don't often get email from [gillian.orr@boi.com](mailto:gillian.orr@boi.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated outside of Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.**

Classified as Private (Amber)

Dear Marie,

Thank you for your letter re: Notice of Motion – Bank Closures and Euro ATMS. Bank of Ireland ceased the provision of Euro ATMs across its network more than ten years ago, with low usage a factor in the decision.

We are making a considerable investment in our ATM estate in the coming years which will provide new services for customers with improved efficiency and environmental benefits, however we do not have plans to reintroduce Euro ATMs across our network.

Ensuring customers have access to cash and banking services locally, we have invested purposefully, with a full refurbishment of the Newry branch undertaken in 2023, providing customers with modern and efficient banking in their community.

We would be pleased to welcome Council to visit our Newry branch to meet the team and find out more about how Bank of Ireland is supporting its customers, colleagues, shareholders and wider society.

Many thanks,

Gillian

**Gillian Orr (she/her)**  
**Corporate Affairs Manager UK**

1 Donegall Square South,  
Belfast,  
BT1 5LR

Email: [gillian.orr@boi.com](mailto:gillian.orr@boi.com)

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Derry City & Strabane  
District Council  
Comhairle  
Chathair Dhoire &  
Cheantar an tSratha Báin  
Derry Cittie & Stràbane  
Deistrick Council

Our Ref: TJ/C49/24

16 February 2024

Mrs Marie Ward  
Chief Executive  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Marie.Ward@nmandd.org

Dear Mrs Ward

At a Meeting of Derry City and Strabane District Council held on 31 January 2024, the following Motion was passed:

**That this Council notes with deep concern that at least 26,900 civilians have been killed as a result of the ongoing bombardment and siege of Gaza of which at least 10,000 are children Council notes that more than 8000 Palestinians are missing. Council Further notes there is an escalating death toll in the West Bank, with 370 people killed of which 99 are children.**

**Council is alarmed that almost 70 percent of the buildings in Gaza, including hospitals and schools, have been destroyed or severely damaged. The civilian population is facing a dire humanitarian crisis, with critical shortages of food, water, and medical supplies.**

**Council is particularly concerned that civilians are being confined to increasingly smaller areas without access to shelter or aid. This dire situation is leading to an escalation in civilian deaths due to bombing, shootings, starvation, disease, and lack of medical treatment.**

**Council resolves to:**

**1. Write to the British Prime Minister and Home Secretary, urging them to immediately implement a Palestinian Visa Scheme similar to the Ukraine Visa Scheme,**

#### Derry

C/o Council Offices  
98 Strand Road  
Derry  
BT48 7NN

#### Strabane

C/o Council Offices  
47 Derry Road  
Strabane  
BT82 8DY

#### John Kelpie MEng., CEng., MStructE., MIEI

Chief Executive  
Derry City and Strabane District Council

+44 (0) 2871 253 253  
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f Derry City & Strabane District Council  
@dcscouncil

- 2. Write to an Taoiseach asking that a request is put to the EU commission proposing a temporary protection directive, for those Palestinians seeking sanctuary, as was enacted in March 2022 in response to the Ukraine war.**
- 3. Council will also write to the leaders of all political parties across Ireland urging them to support this call.**
- 4. Council will seek collaboration from ALL NI councils and relevant Northern Ireland government departments, support this call pledging to facilitate and support the resettlement of Palestinian families in Ireland**

**With this in mind, we as a council affirm our support to UN General Assembly resolution 194, article 11, which enshrines the Palestinian Peoples' Right of Return.**

I would appreciate your consideration in this important matter and would be grateful for a response at your earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely



**John Kelpie  
Chief Executive**

20 February 2024

Marie Ward  
Chief Executive  
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council

Sent via email only: [Marie.Ward@nmandd.org](mailto:Marie.Ward@nmandd.org)

Dear Marie,

Further to your letter received by my Office on 21 December 2023, I am writing to advise you that at a meeting of Ards and North Down Borough Council on 31 January 2024 it was discussed and resolved as follows:

"That Council notes with extreme concern proposals by NICE to remove its NHS recommendations for Kamro, Orkambi and Symkevi due to rising cost; 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."

It was also agreed that Council write to the Prime Minister on the same issue.

I trust you find this information useful.

Yours sincerely



**Stephen Reid**  
**Chief Executive**

**From the Office of the Minister  
CONOR MURPHY MLA**



Marie Ward  
Chief Executive  
Comhairle Ceantair an Lúir Mhúrn agus an Dúin  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council  
Warrenpoint Town Hall,  
Church Street,  
Warrenpoint,  
BT34 3HN  
[donna.starkey@nmandd.org](mailto:donna.starkey@nmandd.org)

Adelaide House  
39-49 Adelaide Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8FD  
02890 529333  
[Private.Office@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Private.Office@economy-ni.gov.uk)

**Our ref: COR-1050-2024**

**Date: 26 February 2024**

Marie a chara

### **Notice of Motion – Flood Defences**

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 February.

I am keenly aware of the devastating impact the floods have had in Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, and of the frustration that support hasn't been made available sooner at a time of great distress for affected businesses.

On Wednesday, I was pleased to [announce](#) details of an additional range of flood support programme for businesses.

The support schemes contained in the announcement will be delivered by the district councils and I look forward to the continued cooperation between both your Council and my

Department in helping to ensure the efficient delivery of much needed support to affected businesses across the Council area.

Is mise le meas

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Conor Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**CONOR MURPHY MLA**  
**Minister for the Economy**



From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure  
**JOHN O'DOWD MLA**

Ms Marie Ward  
Chief Executive  
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

[Donna.Starkey@nmandd.org](mailto:Donna.Starkey@nmandd.org)

Room 708  
Clarence Court  
10-18 Adelaide Street  
BELFAST  
BT2 8GB  
Telephone: (028) 9054 0540  
Email: [Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

Your reference: SE/004/2024 & C/029/2024

Our reference: COR-1042-2024

28<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Marie, a chara,

## **NOTICE OF MOTION – FLOOD DEFENCES**

Thank you for your letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024 following the Council's meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024 requesting comment on the maintenance schedules for shores, road sheughs, gullies and major drains like the plank or Saul drains in Downpatrick.

In the past, my Department aimed to inspect and clean, where necessary, all road gullies in urban areas twice each year and road gullies in rural areas once each year. Gully surrounds, roadside outlets and open drains were also cleared on a regular basis. This sought to ensure that a reasonable level of maintenance was being carried out to drainage systems, taking account of the Department's finite funding and staff resource levels. In addition, inspection and cleaning of gullies was undertaken at locations where fallen leaves presented ongoing problems at certain times of year, or where there was a history of gullies becoming blocked for other reasons.

However, due to ongoing severe funding pressures, my Department has had to restrict this service and is currently only able to deliver a limited service across a range of functions, including gully emptying. As a result, my Department currently aims to inspect and clean, where necessary, all gullies once annually. Limited outlet and open drain cleaning are also undertaken subject to available resources. Other maintenance work such as manhole and pipeline cleaning are only undertaken on a reactive basis.

Under the terms of the Drainage (NI) Order 1973, my Department focuses on protecting the drainage function of designated watercourses. Rivers Directorate operates a structured maintenance regime on designated watercourses with a rolling programme of inspections being carried out and maintenance being undertaken as deemed necessary. These designations have been approved for maintenance at public expense by the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland. The minimum recommended inspection frequency for open reaches of 'Main' and 'Minor' watercourses is once every 6 years. The minimum recommended inspection frequency for open reaches of 'Urban' watercourses is annually.

The following table details the 14 reaches of designated watercourse within the vicinity of Downpatrick.

<b>Designation Title</b>	<b>Designation Category</b>
Quoile (and Annclloy River)	Main
Quoile (Extension)	Main
Mcllroy's Drain	Minor
Mcllroy's Tributary	Minor
South Junction	Minor
Plank Drain	Minor
Market Street Drain	Urban
Pemberton Park Stream	Urban
Pemberton Park Stream Extension	Urban
Plank Drain	Urban
Saul Street Stream	Urban
Strangford Road Stream	Urban
Stream Street Drain	Urban
Town Drain	Urban

For all other watercourses which are not designated, their maintenance is the responsibility of the riparian landowner.

In relation to my Department's flood defence infrastructure assets, inspections are carried out on a cyclical basis using catchment based prioritisation systems. When determining the frequency of inspections these systems take into account matters such as flood risk, criticality and annualised damages.

Is mise le meas,



**JOHN O'DOWD MLA**  
Minister for Infrastructure