



July 2nd, 2025

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 7th July 2025 at 6:00 pm** in **Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre**.

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 2 June 2025

For Information

Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing

4.0 Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 2 June 2025

For Approval

 *Annual Meeting Minutes 2025-06-02.pdf*

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5.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 2 June 2025

For Approval

 *Council Minutes 2025 06 02.pdf*

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Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption

6.0 Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 9 June 2025

For Approval

 *Economy Regeneration and Tourism Minutes 2025-06-09.pdf*

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7.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 June 2025

For Approval

 *Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting Minutes 2025-06-12.pdf*

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8.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16 June 2025

For Approval

 *Active and Healthy Communities Minutes 2025 06 16.pdf*

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9.0 Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 June 2025

10.0 Planning Section

Correspondence

11.0 Correspondence Report


For Information

 [Correspondence Report Council 2025 07 07.pdf](#)

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11.1 Response from South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust re: C/058/2025 - NOM Enhancement of Services at Downe Hospital

For Information

 [Response from SEHSSCT re C0582025 NOM Enhancement of Services at Downe Hospital.pdf](#)

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11.2 Letter from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council re: Motion, Parliaments

For Information

 [Fermanagh and Omagh District Council re Motion - Parliaments.pdf](#)

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11.3 Response from Department for Communities & Department for Work and Pensions re Disability Benefit Reform re: C/062/2025 Notice of Motion, Cost of Living Crisis

For Information

 [Department for Communities re C0622025 - NOM Cost of Living Crisis.pdf](#)

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 [Response from Dept for Work and Pensions re Disability Benefit Reform.pdf](#)

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11.4 Response from Department for the Economy re: C/095/2025 Notice of Motion, 'Good Jobs' Employment Rights Legislation


For Information

 [Response from Dept for the Economy re NOM 'Good Jobs' Employment Rights Legislation.pdf](#)

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11.5 Response from Department of Health re: C/065/2025, C/093/2025 Notice of Motion, Endometriosis

For Information

 [Response from Dept of Health C0652025 C0932025 NOM Endometriosis.pdf](#)

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11.6 Response from DAERA re C0662025 and C0932025 Wildfires in The Mournes

 *Response from DAERA re C0662025 and C0932025 Wildfires.pdf*

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11.7 Commemoration of the 110th Anniversary of the 10th Division's actions on the Gallipoli Peninsula

 *Commemoration of the 110th Anniversary of the 10th Division's actions on the Gallipoli Peninsula.pdf*

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Notices of Motion

12.0 Notice of Motion - Nutrient Action Plan

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Hanlon:

"This Council finds the current proposals out for consultation by the DAERA minister for the Nutrient Action Plan unacceptable.

The current proposals would decimate the local farming industry.

Calls on the minister to collaborate with farmers rather than punish farmers.

Calls on the DAERA to continue to invest in new technologies to improve farming practices, remove phosphates and work together collegiately to improve our Environment, Rivers and Loughs."

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Mr Alan Beggs

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Fionnuala Branagh

Cllr Jim Brennan

Cllr Pete Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Cllr Doire Finn

Ms Lynne Fitzsimons

Ms Joanne Fleming

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Mrs Catherine Hanvey

Cllr Valerie Harte

Mr Conor Haughey

Cllr Martin Hearty

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tierna Howie

Ms Catherine Hughes

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Josephine Kelly

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Cllr Cathal King

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston

Sinead Murphy

Cllr Declan Murphy
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Cllr Kate Murphy
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Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Cllr Áine Quinn
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Cllr Michael Rice
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Ruth Rooney
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Conor Smyth
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Donna Starkey
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Sarah Taggart
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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
.....
Cllr Helena Young
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NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/AGM/

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Council held on Monday 2 June 2025 at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor P Byrne 5.00pm – 5.36pm
Councillor G Kearns 5.36pm – 5.45pm

In attendance:

(Councillors)

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Bowsie
Councillor J Brennan	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor L Devlin	Councillor C Enright
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor D Finn
Councillor C Galbraith	Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor G Hanna
Councillor V Harte	Councillor T Howie
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor C King
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor A Lewis	Councillor O Magennis
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D McAteer
Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Murphy	Councillor S Murphy
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor M Rice
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J Tinnelly	Councillor H Young

(Officials)
Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism
Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer
Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

AGM/001/2025

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Campbell, McEvoy, Ruane and Truesdale and Mr. A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities.

Outgoing Chairperson Councillor Byrne advised that he was concluding his year as Chairperson full of gratitude, pride and a deep humility, noting that his theme for the year had not only been of inclusion and diversity, but as a call to action to help shine a light on the many groups and individuals across the District who quietly and powerfully made a difference in ensuring that everyone had a safe place to grow, belong and thrive.

Councillor Byrne spoke of meeting various groups that supported children with additional needs, such as SNAP Kids, Amazing Abilities, The Active Group, Mourne Stimulus and Dramability noting that their joy and creativity was a reminder that every child deserved to be seen and celebrated. He spoke of his time with the Brain Injury Foundation and Head Injury Support who walked with those living with the life changing impacts of brain injuries, highlighting their bravery, resilience and love. He also spoke of his time at The Haven,

highlighting it as a place of refuge and creativity for those who felt vulnerable, giving them the space to heal and be heard through music, writing, art and storytelling. He stated that he was honoured to not just share in all of these stories, but also to be able to share his own, noting that these stories would stay with him forever.

Councillor Byrne stated that the highlight of his year had been leading Newry Pride 2024, stressing that it was something he would not miss as the first LGBT+ Chairperson of the District, highlighting the fact that he left a family wedding in Spain early to be able to attend the event. He stressed that his theme of inclusion meant reaching across the District to all of its communities, stating that every identity and tradition in the District deserved respect and recognition, referencing his pride at marking the VE Day in Kilkeel and the opportunity to host civic receptions for Upper Crossgar Pipe Band and the Orangefield Flute Band.

Councillor Byrne further recognised the achievements of those within the District, such as Warrenpoint FC's promotion to the Championship, St Vincent de Paul's 180 years of service and the RNLI's 200th anniversary, alongside the many schools and youth clubs he had the pleasure of welcoming to the Chamber. He reiterated his pride at hosting a joint reception with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council in recognition of Armagh winning the All-Ireland Championship, stressing that it was a true celebration of unity and pride.

Councillor Byrne confirmed that he choose not host a Chairman's Ball at the end of his term, but rather choose to shine a light on the real champions of the District, namely the volunteers, community leaders and those who gave their time to those who needed it, stressing that they were the backbone and heroes of society, and offering his thanks for all their work.

Councillor Byrne took the opportunity to thank Council officers and staff, especially Miss Taggart and Ms Kieran who he stated were outstanding at their jobs and their calm guidance and good humour meant the world to him during his time in office. He further thanked Mrs Ward, Chief Executive, and the Directors for their leadership, highlighting that they worked tirelessly to serve every community across the District. He stated that it was often easy to criticise officers but stressed that Councillors had a duty to conduct themselves with respect, honesty and collaboration as officers and Members had the same goal of ensuring the best for the District's communities. He gave a special word of thanks to Deputy Chairperson Councillor Lee-Surginor, stating that his professionalism and support were invaluable over the course of the past year.

Councillor Byrne noted that he had chosen one charity for the year, which was Cuan Mhuire, stating that it was a personal choice as they had not just supported his family but had saved it. He noted that he used his platform to not only raise money for the charity, but to raise awareness and to break the stigma still surrounding addiction and help give back to Cuan Mhuire.

Councillor Byrne spoke of the honour of having been selected as Chairperson but also spoke of the sacrifice of time with family and friends and the time spent travelling given the size and scale of the District, further taking the opportunity to wish the incoming Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson all the best in their new roles.

Councillor Byrne ended by stating that the work of inclusion, compassion and community never stopped and stated it was something he would always strive to continue.

Outgoing Deputy Chairperson Councillor Lee-Surginor spoke of a year that had been filled with unforgettable moments, meaningful encounters and had left him with a renewed appreciation for the strength, resilience and spirit of the District's communities. He stated that one of the privileges of his role had been the opportunity to meet so many people across

the District, from school halls to community centres, highlighting that the passion, generosity and unwavering dedication to making the District a better place was truly the heartbeat of Newry, Mourne and Down.

Councillor Lee-Surginor stated that local businesses, from the small family run shop to the medium and larger enterprises that continued to innovate and expand, were testament to the entrepreneurial spirit of the District, noting that it had been a pleasure to see businesses grow, adapt and contribute to the local economy and identity. He stated that it had been inspiring to be given the opportunity to meet the young people who called the District their home, stressing that these children and young people were not only the future, but the present, highlighting their creativity, kindness and determination.

Councillor Lee-Surginor mentioned two highlights of his term, one of which was the honour and opportunity to meet former Irish President Mary McAleese who reminded him of the importance of leadership grounded in empathy, inclusion and courage. He also spoke of the momentous opportunity to lead Newry Pride alongside Councillor Byrne as members of the LGBT+ community, also stating that it had been an immense honour and privilege to see the diversity and richness of the District's residents celebrating St Patrick's day together.

Councillor Lee-Surginor ended by offering his best wishes to the incoming Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and thanking Council Officers and staff who had supported him over the year.

Mrs Ward thanked Councillor Byrne and Councillor Lee-Surginor for all the work they carried out throughout the year.

Councillor Sharvin noted that Councillor Byrne's theme of his year had been inclusion and diversity, stressing that over 350 events were a testament to his commitment to his role as Chairperson and that his Party colleagues could not be more proud of Councillor Byrne given his hard work over the year.

Councillor Sharvin congratulated Councillor Lee-Surginor on his work as Deputy Chairperson, noting that it could be difficult to attend events at short notice, but commended Ms Taggart and Mrs Kieran for their hard work in ensuring that both Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson were fully aware of their requirements for each event.

Councillor Hanlon, on behalf of the Sinn Féin Party grouping, thanked both the Chair and Deputy Chair for a successful year, stating that Councillor Byrne did live up to his commitment of inclusivity and diversity.

Councillor Jackson, on behalf of the DUP Party grouping, congratulated both the Chair and Deputy Chair on their excellent year and commended their interest shown in all groups across the District.

Councillors Reilly, Lewis and Hanna echoed Councillor Jackson's sentiments, taking the opportunity to also thank Councillors Byrne and Lee-Surginor for their hard work over the year, expressing the positive feedback they had received following each event.

Councillor Young, on behalf of the Alliance Party grouping, congratulated and thanked both the Chair and Deputy Chair for their engaging and empathetic events and wished them a peaceful break.

Councillor Taylor congratulated both the Chair and Deputy Chair on their roles, stating that they had supported every request that had been made of them.

AGM/002/2025 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AGM/003/2025 APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mrs Ward called upon Councillor Hanlon as nominating officer for Sinn Féin to nominate a Councillor for the position of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of Council for Year 3, 2025/26.

Councillor Hanlon nominated Councillor Philip Campbell for the position of Chairperson and Councillor Geraldine Kearns for the position of Deputy-Chairperson of Council for 2025/26.

Councillor Campbell and Councillor Kearns were duly nominated as Chairperson and Deputy-Chairperson respectively of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council for the year 2025/26.

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

Chair of ERT Councillor Lee-Surginor
Proposed by Councillor Howie, seconded by Councillor Young

Deputy Chair of ERT Councillor Feehan
Proposed by Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Devlin

Chair of AHC Councillor Bowsie
Proposed by Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Hanna

Deputy Chair of AHC Councillor Gibbons
Proposed by Councillor Gibbons, seconded by Councillor Sharvin

Chair of S&E Councillor Magennis
Proposed by Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor D Murphy

Deputy Chair of S&E Councillor Hearty
Proposed by Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor D Murphy

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

Deputy Chair of SPR Councillor McAteer
Proposed by Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Andrews

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

Deputy Chair of Planning Councillor Hanna
Proposed by Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Reilly

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

**Councillors Byrne and Lee-Surginor vacated the Chair at this point in the meeting.
5.36pm**

As Councillor Campbell was an apology for the meeting, Councillor Kearns accepted the role of Chair for the meeting.

Councillor Kearns assumed the Deputy Chairperson roles at this point.

AGM/004/2025 NEWLY APPOINTED CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR ASSUME ROLES

Incoming Deputy Chairperson Councillor Kearns stated that she was delighted and honoured to have been selected to serve as the Deputy Chairperson, advising that she was looking forward to a year of promoting the best of the District to make Newry, Mourne and Down the best place to live, work, visit and invest in.

Councillor Kearns advised that she was looking forward to seeing progress on a number of issues that would enhance the quality of life for the residents of an already vibrant District filled with strong communities and dynamic businesses.

Councillor Kearns thanked her Party colleagues for their support in her nomination, and their continued support over the coming year.

Mrs Ward welcomed Councillor Kearns to the role of Deputy Chairperson on behalf of the Senior Management Team and Democratic Services.

AGM/005/2025 APPOINTMENTS TO STATUTORY COMMITTEES 2025/26

Read: List of Committee picks 2025/26 **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Ward advised it had been agreed to use the default method of Quota of Greatest Remainder for appointment to Committees, with the remaining 7 positions being allocated by the d'Hondt method.

The positions were confirmed as follows:

Sinn Féin	Planning
UUP	S&E
Councillor Gibbons	Active & Healthy Communities (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Tinnelly	ERT
UUP	SPR
Councillor Gibbons	Audit
Councillor Tinnelly	Planning

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

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

AGM/006/2024 **TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO EXTERNAL BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS (EXCLUDING STATUTORY POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY) AND INTERNAL BODIES AND FORUMS**

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

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

Noted: It was agreed to note the External Bodies and Organisations List. (excluding Statutory Positions of Responsibility)

AGM/007/2024 **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR INCOMING YEAR**

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to approve the Schedule of Meetings for the year 2025/26.

AGM/008/2023 **SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES PAYABLE TO COUNCILLORS**

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, it was agreed to approve the Newry Mourne & Down District Council Scheme of Allowances payable to Councillors.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 5.45pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 July 2025.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

**Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 2 June 2025 at 6.00pm in
Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick**

In the Chair: Councillor G Kearns

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Bowsie
Councillor J Brennan	Councillor P Byrne
Councillor W Clarke	Councillor L Devlin
Councillor C Enright	Councillor K Feehan
Councillor D Finn	Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor M Gibbons	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor V Harte
Councillor T Howie	Councillor J Jackson
Councillor C King	Councillor M Larkin
Councillor Lee-Surginor	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor Magennis	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor D McAteer	Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor D Murphy	Councillor K Murphy
Councillor S Murphy	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor M Rice
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor H Young	

In attendance via Teams: Councillor R Howell Councillor J Truesdale

Officials in attendance:

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
 Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism
 Mrs S Muphy, Director of Sustainability and Environment
 Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
 Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

C/082/2025

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Campbell, Hearty, McEvoy, Ruane and Tinnelly. Apologies were also received from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Kearns assumed the Chair.

C/083/2025

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C/084/2025 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2025

Agreed: The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 6 May 2025 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor S Murphy, seconded by Councillor Finn.

C/085/2025 COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2025

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 6 May 2025 (copy circulated).

Agreed: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 6 May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor D Murphy.

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/086/2025 MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 MAY 2025

Read: Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 8 May 2025 (copy circulated).

Agreed: The Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on 8 May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

C/087/2025 MINUTES OF ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 MAY 2025

Read: Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 12 May 2025 (copy circulated).

Agreed: The Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 12 May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor.

C/088/2025 MINUTES OF STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2025

Read: Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15 May 2025 (copy circulated).

SPR/073/2025: Approach to City, Town and Village Signage

Councillor Bowsie stated the DUP regretted Council could not come to a reasonable consensus on signage that was accurate, proportionate, respectful and reflective of communities within the District. He went on to question the merit of the Equality and Good

Relations Group saying the purpose of the group should be about understanding each other's perspective and reaching consensus.

Councillor Reilly stated he was very disappointed that Council as a matter of policy was prepared to drive this matter through and was becoming a Nationalist Republican Council for the Nationalist Republican people and that Unionists within it did not count anymore.

Councillor Sharvin spoke of his disappointment at hearing the same comments coming from DUP again after 13 meetings in relation to the matter. He reminded Councillor Bowsie of his use of some of the words particularly at the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee directed at officers. He spoke of the importance of Councillors and officers having a good working relationship and acknowledged officers' independence of their views and proposals brought to Committee.

Councillor Sharvin stated he had provided a number of examples to the Group where Council unanimously supported a number of financial assistance calls and referred to recent VE Day celebrations as an example.

Councillor Hanlon said it was disappointing that there was not overall consensus towards the decision however it was important to recognise Council had a bilingual policy. She commended the work of the Equality and Good Relations Group and the Officers who carried out an enormous amount of work to provide information to allow open discussions to take place but unfortunately not when it came to this matter.

Councillor Hanna questioned the justification for this policy of Council given there was 23% of the Council area that were British Unionists and in referring to Councillor Sharvin's comment about financial assistance for VE Day which he felt implied they were given money stated that their Party could not be bought. He referred to areas within the Mournes and questioned why Council would want to put in place signage that would divide communities.

Councillor Lewis said he understood Irish language was a part of peoples culture however he felt uncomfortable how in modern times the Irish language was being misused and abused. He stated that Council would be met with hefty repairs as signs had been damaged in the past and would happen again adding that he did not support such attacks and vandalism. He stated Council should accept that not every town and village within the District would see the Irish language with the same level of respect.

Councillor Bowsie replied to Councillor Sharvin's comments and said Council officers were open to criticism and the specific remarks that he responded to was regarding the Corporate Services position that the DEA consultation that had been completed was no longer relevant because it was only for certain settlements and not others was ridiculous.

Councillor Taylor said as someone that had served on the Equality and Good Relations Group through his time in Council this was one of the limited number of occasions where it had failed in its role and he had found it to be a constructive forum with many debates and arguments about areas of concern and issues that were sensitive to the communities represent.

In reply to comments made by Councillor Hanlon, Councillor Taylor said he did not find it was Unionists that were taking a limited mindset approach in regard to this as they genuinely tried to find a way forward that would work for everybody. He added there was a determination from Sinn Féin to move forward with a policy that was not going to be conducive to good relations and stated he was sorry a way forward that would be acceptable to everybody could not be found.

Councillor Howie reiterated comments she had made whilst chairing the Committee meeting in that she was very disappointed with the language and comments made across the Chamber. She added her disappointment with how the Irish language had been used as a stamp to define one community or the other stating that the Irish language was a language for all and signage would be something that should include those minority speakers within the district.

In referring to Councillor Hanna’s comments about signage within his area in the Mournes, Councillor Howie said the paper was not saying that all signs were going to be changed immediately and would more than likely be gradual over the next few years. She pointed out that in Wales and Scotland minority languages were included on signage and did not see why Newry Mourne and Down be any different.

Councillor Jackson on behalf of the DUP party said they believed Northern Ireland should feel comfortable expressing national and cultural identity and that did include those who cherished their Irish identity. He added the way forward and approach to legislation however must be fair and balanced to each tradition, recognising and reflecting the delicate balance of community relations in Northern Ireland and must be about facilitation rather than imposition. He voiced frustration at feeling not being listened to when putting forward representations to these groups.

Councillor Sharvin took the opportunity to point out that in the recording from the Committee meeting, Councillor Bowsie had stated that the findings of the DEA Forum did not suit the officer.

The Chief Executive advised she was not present at the SP&R Committee Meeting and had not listened to the recording. Councillor Bowsie was asked that if he did make that statement that he withdraw it. She added Council officials were there to deliver on behalf of all parts of the Community and all Councillors in the Chamber and it was quite a serious allegation to make if it was said that it did not suit an officer.

The Chief Executive made clear that Council officers prepare papers and people were entitled to their views and that officers were always open to criticism however it was a very serious allegation if the comments as articulated had been said by Councillor Bowsie and if so asked him to consider his statement and withdraw it.

Ms Taggart stated as there was dissent in the chamber a vote was required, the results of which were as follows:

FOR:	30
AGAINST:	6
ABSTENTIONS:	0

The Chairperson declared the Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15 May 2024 adopted.

Agreed:	The Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15 May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor McAteer.
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Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 19 May 2025 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 19 May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Mathers.**

C/090/2025 **MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2025**

Read: Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 May 2025 (copy circulated).

SE/056/2025: Officer Report on Notice of Motion – Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty & Air Quality Management Areas

Ms Taggart advised there was an amendment to the record of the vote to read as follows:

FOR	11
AGAINST	2
ABSTAIN	1

The proposal was carried.

Councillor Reilly took the opportunity to point out that 70% of electricity bills were taken up by subsidies, green taxes etc and that was hurting ordinary working class people and reinforced his opposition to the Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Agreed: **The Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor Enright, subject to the agreed amendment.**

C/091/2025 **MINUTES OF SPECIAL AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2025**

Read: Minutes of Special Audit Committee Meeting held on 23 May 2025 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **The Minutes of Special Audit Committee Meeting held on 23 May 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor O'Hare.**

C/092/2025 **PLANNING SECTION**

There were no issues arising.

C/093/2025

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Read: Report dated 2 June 2025 from Mrs Ward, Chief Executive, regarding an update on correspondence received for the attention of Council (copy circulated).

Response from Minister of Health re: C/065/2025 Notice of Motion – Endometriosis

Councillor Devlin welcomed that the drug treatment for Endometriosis was now available in Northern Ireland and whilst it was not going to solve the problems of every woman with endometriosis it was now an option for clinicians to consider, albeit on a case by case basis.

Councillor Devlin went on to advise that since tabling the Notice of Motion, Cork City had opened its doors in April to a brand new state of the art Endometriosis centre. This facility was due to deliver a new model of care, one that met the complex needs of women with endometriosis while providing timely, equitable access to essential services for women living with the condition.

Councillor Devlin proposed Council write to the Minister of Health and ask him to consider some additional collaboration with the Government in the South to see if women who were severely impacted by Endometriosis could access the service in Cork.

Councillor Finn seconded Councillor Devlin's proposal.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Finn that Council write to the Minister of Health and ask him to consider some additional collaboration with the Government in the South to see if women who were severely impacted by Endometriosis could access the service in Cork.**

Response from DAERA re: C/056/2025 Notice of Motion – Fishing Industry Visa and Enhancement Support

Councillor Rice welcomed support from the Agriculture Minister in relation to the issues on obtaining seasonal workers, particularly in the fishing industry and the reset of relations between the EU and the British Government. He added hopefully this would begin to redress some of the disastrous implications of Brexit, however as outlined by the Minister this would be at the mercy of the British Government and referring to recent comments by Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, it was feared the continued issues with seasonal workers would not just persist but accelerate the impact on fishing towns and communities across the north.

Councillor Reilly voiced his disappointment at the response received and that there was no movement for the fishing industry. He referred to Councillor Rice welcoming relations between the UK and Brussels and stated that was a disaster and one of the biggest betrayals for the fishing community.

Councillor Sharvin commented that the Minister clearly had no impact on the UK Government. He referred to how recently the Labour Government had announced a Fishing and Coastal Growth Fund of £360 million however it was unclear what each harbour would receive.

Councillor Sharvin proposed Council write to the Minister of Fisheries in the UK Government to ask his opinion and to get commitment to resolving the issue and write to the Westminster

Minister to ask where the £360 million was and how much of that would the three ports within this District actually receive.

Councillor Devlin seconded Councillor Sharvin's proposal.

The Chief Executive advised that following the Motion, Council did write to the UK and Scottish Governments, however a response had not been received to date.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Devlin that Council write the Minister of Fisheries in the UK Government to ask his opinion and to get commitment to resolving the issue and write to the Westminster Minister to ask where the £360 million was and how much of that would the three ports within this District actually receive.**

Response from Minister of Education and Education Authority re: C/081/2025 Notice of Motion – Funding to Pre School Groups

Councillor Andrews thanked Members for their support for the Motion advising that in recent days the facility had secured the necessary funding that was to be welcomed with thanks to the Minister of Education.

Councillor Hanna joined Councillor Andrews in thanking the Minister of Education.

Response from DAERA re: C/066/2025 Notice of Motion – Wildfires in the Mourne Mountains

Councillor Hanna stated he felt this was weak response from the DAERA Minister and that action was needed as soon as possible.

Councillor Devlin concurred with Councillor Hanna's comments stating there had been little action from the huge fire in April 2021 and referred to the Northern Fire and Rescue Service, Mourne Heritage Trust, Mourne Rescue etc who were paying the price every time stating that it was to time to see action and not just words.

Councillor Devlin enquired if a date had been set for the Special Council Meeting to which the Chief Executive confirmed a meeting had been arranged for 26 June 2025 with Mourne Heritage Trust, NIFRS and the National Trust.

Councillor Clarke joined Councillors Hanna and Devlin in their comments stating that Council had been told throughout the process that there was an issue with the procurement exercise to deliver a wildfire plan for the Mournes. He spoke of concerns that it was not yet mid-summer season and there was serious risk to habitats and how it seemed every organisation had a different approach to the potential of wildfires and a common approach from all partners was needed.

Councillor Clarke proposed Council write back to DAERA Minister to request a time frame regarding the procurement exercise to deliver a Wildfire Plan for the Mournes and also write to all statutory partners to get clarity on a common approach to deal with wildfires.

Councillor Hanna seconded Councillor Clarke's proposal.

Agreed: It was agreed Council write back to DAERA Minister to request a time frame regarding the procurement exercise to deliver a Wildfire Plan for the Mourne and also write to all statutory partners to get clarity on a common approach to deal with wildfires.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy to note the correspondence report and the following correspondence:

- Correspondence from Planning Appeals Commission to Department for Infrastructure in relation to Regionally Significant Planning Application, Lands approximately 650m south west of 40 Mullaghgarraff Road, Hilltown, Newry
- Minutes from the Northern Ireland Housing Council Minutes from a meeting held on 10 April 2025
- Response from the Minister of Health in relation to a Notice of Motion C/065/2025, Endometriosis
- Response from the DAERA Minister in relation to Notice of Motion C/056/2025, Fishing Industry Visa and Enhancement Support
- Response from the Minister for Communities in relation to Notice of Motion C/042/2025, Arts Funding
- Response from DAERA Minister in relation to Notice of Motion C/066/2025, Wildfires in the Mourne Mountains
- Response from Minister of Education and the Education Authority in relation to Notice of Motion C/081/2025, Funding to Pre School Groups

C/094/2025

NOTICE OF MOTION – SUPREME COURT RULING

The following Motion was received from Councillor Jackson:

"That this Council welcomes the recent Supreme Court ruling which clarified that under the Equality Act 2010:

• a 'woman' is a biological woman or girl (a person born female) • trans women (biological men) should not be permitted to use the women's facilities • if somebody identifies as trans, they do not change sex for the purposes of the Act, even if they have a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) Furthermore, it accepts the initial assessment by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland that this judgement, in the context of our corresponding equality law, the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 ('SDO'):- "is likely to be deemed by our industrial tribunals and courts to be highly persuasive and, consequently, it is likely to be followed in cases where similar issues arise."

Accordingly, Council resolves to urgently review all relevant Council policies and to make it clear that if a space or service is designated as women-only across the District, a person who was born male but identifies as a woman does not have a right to use that space or service."

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Hanna.

Councillor Jackson voiced his and that of his Party disappointment that the Notice of Motion was not to be heard by Council and advised that on that basis and the earlier discussion on Irish Language signage the DUP had made the decision to withdraw from the Equality and Good Relations Reference Group until further notice. He added that as other Notice of Motions were being heard while the one he had tabled was not, that the DUP Party Members would not take part and withdraw from the Council Meeting.

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

Councillors Bowsie, Hanna, Jackson, Lewis and Reily left the meeting at this point - 7.02pm.

C/095/2025 NOTICE OF MOTION – “GOOD JOBS” EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS LEGISLATION

The following Motion was received from Councillor Hearty, presented by Councillor D Murphy:

“This Council calls for the delivery of equal and fair rights for all workers and welcomes the “Good Jobs” Employment Rights legislation currently being considered by the Stormont Assembly.

This bill presents an unparalleled opportunity to grow a productive regional economy that benefits our businesses, our workers and their families within the all-Ireland and global economic contexts.

Good jobs, which deliver fair wages, guarantee secure employment, with strong union recognition and collective bargaining rights, are the cornerstone of an economy that values inclusive growth and a fairer distribution of wealth.

The bill will ensure the fairer treatment of workers in regard to pay, tips and gratuities, holiday pay and parental leave as well as bringing tangible benefits to workers’ lives across our entire community.

This Council endorses strong, progressive workers’ rights legislation; to build a strong, regional economy; in which both businesses and workers prosper and we finally begin to eradicate the scourge of workplace inequalities.”

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Hanlon.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor D Murphy advised the “Good Jobs” Employment Rights legislation that was due to come before the Assembly was the most progressive employment legislation ever to be introduced in the north and presented an unparalleled opportunity to grow a productive regional economy that benefited businesses, workers and their families within the all-Ireland and global economic contexts.

He stated good jobs which delivered fair wages, secured employment, strong union recognition and collective bargaining rights were the cornerstone of a fair and inclusive economy and the Windsor Framework had helped to protect from much of the insecurity and trading turbulence associated with an unregulated Brexit. As a result, the north’s regional economy was increasingly merging with the economy of the south and the European Union.

Members were informed that studies from the Centre for Business Research (CBR) concluded that “labour laws boost productivity and inclusivity,” and that “strong labour protection was associated with higher employment and lower unemployment.” These also stated that labour laws including those regulating flexible working, working time and employee representation had positive productivity effects.

Councillor D Murphy pointed out that going forward it made sense that legislation for workers' rights should be standardised on an All-Ireland basis and was a policy area which could be explored and progressed by the North South Ministerial Council. The "Good Jobs" bill would bring tangible benefits to workers' lives across the entire community. Workers' rights transcend the historic community divisions that have hampered political, social and economic progress.

Councillor Taylor stated the Ulster Unionist Party was committed to building an economy that worked for all including within Newry, Mourne and Down District where there were many businesses who were small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). He added his Party was dedicated not only to wealth creation and supporting businesses but also to protecting workers' rights and believed that access to good jobs, where workers had a voice, a decent income, job security, satisfying work and decent working conditions should be integral to public policy.

Councillor Taylor said the Motion presented may sound promising on paper however the finer details were far from ideal. He said the legislation recently presented to the Assembly lacked significant backing and major business endorsements and the UUP party had engaged extensively with businesses including the Federation of Small Businesses which had raised grave concerns about the consultation process for the Bill.

Councillor Taylor stated time was needed to properly scrutinise the legislation being brought forward to the Assembly and the Ulster Unionist Assembly team would hold the Minister to account and ensure that this legislation was thoroughly examined and until such time and the Council should not endorse or support poorly scrutinised legislation

Councillor Sharvin on behalf of SDLP spoke in support of the sentiments of the Motion and following on from a private members bill by his colleagues to address regional balance across the north. He added SDLP wanted to see fair, secure employment and growth and opportunities however it was difficult to have a full and honest debate about something that had not yet been published and shared and given that it was not published it was for the current executive to consider for endorsement and then to the assembly.

Councillor Sharvin proposed an amendment to the Motion to read as follows:
"that this Council calls for the delivery of equal and fair rights for all workers and welcomes the "Good Jobs" Employment Rights legislation currently being considered by the Stormont Executive."

Councillor Finn seconded Councillor Sharvin's proposed amendment.

Councillor D Murphy accepted Councillor Sharvin's amendment.

Councillor Howie spoke in support of the amended Motion on behalf of her Party.

It was noted Councillor Taylor did not support the Motion.

The Chairperson declared the Motion was passed.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Hanlon that this Council calls for the delivery of equal and fair rights for all workers and welcomes the "Good Jobs" Employment Rights legislation currently being considered by the Stormont Executive.**

This bill presents an unparalleled opportunity to grow productive regional economy that benefits our businesses, our workers and their families within the all-Ireland and global economic contexts.

Good jobs, which deliver fair wages, guarantee secure employment, with strong union recognition and collective bargaining rights, are the cornerstone of an economy that values inclusive growth and a fairer distribution of wealth. The bill will ensure the fairer treatment of workers in regard to pay, tips and gratuities, holiday pay and parental leave as well as bringing tangible benefits to workers' lives across our entire community.

This Council endorses strong, progressive workers' rights legislation; to build a strong, regional economy; in which both businesses and workers prosper and we finally begin to eradicate the scourge of workplace inequalities.

C/096/2025

NOTICE OF MOTION – VOTING RIGHTS FOR THE ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

The following Motion was received from Councillor Quinn:

"That this Council notes that the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement recognises the birth right of all the people of the north to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both; recalls that, in November 2013, the Fifth Report of the Convention on the Constitution recommended to give citizens residing outside the 26 counties the right to vote in presidential elections; further notes that Irish citizens living in the north can stand for, and be elected as, President of Ireland but cannot vote in presidential elections; and calls on this Council to write to the Irish Government and ask that they implement the recommendation of the Convention on the constitution with regards to voting rights in presidential elections, thereby extending the right to vote in elections for President of Ireland to all Irish citizens on the island of Ireland."

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Rice.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor Quinn urged Members to support the Motion calling on the Irish Government to fulfil their responsibility and extend the right to vote in Irish presidential elections to the hundreds of thousands of Irish citizens living in the North of Ireland. She said it was long past time for an Irish Government to resolve this unacceptable democratic deficit and set the date for a referendum to allow Irish citizens here to have their say in electing the president of Ireland.

Members were reminded 12 years had passed since 2013, when the constitutional convention in Dublin voted overwhelmingly by a margin of 78% to extend the voting rights to Irish citizens living in the North and abroad. This was an important recognition of the reality of the hundreds of thousands of Irish citizens living here and of the vast Irish diaspora across the globe. That position had since been endorsed by all the main parties in the South.

Councillor Quinn added that despite these strong endorsements, there had been a total lack of progress on delivering this proposal. In 2014, Sinn Féin introduced legislation in the Dáil to give effect to the recommendations of the constitutional convention. In 2017, the Irish Government agreed to hold a referendum on amending article 12 of the Irish constitution to extend voting rights, but no progress had been made since then. Even the 2020 Programme

for Government pledged to deliver this, yet nothing had been done. In another backward step, the current Government had failed to prioritise this measure in its current Programme for Government, representing a regressive omission that denied the clearly defined and recognised rights of Irish citizenship and ran counter to the democratic will of people.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Rice said the Motion called the Irish Government to build a responsibility and finally extend the right to vote in Irish presidential elections. He asked Members to reflect on the unique situation that the District which held both all Ireland titles, the Tailteann Cup and the Sam McGuire yet if the election was held tomorrow, neither the teams nor their supporters would be able to vote in the Irish presidential elections. The Irish Government must give a timeline to set a date for the referendum and finally act on the 12 year commitment to extend voting rights to the North.

Councillor Feehan confirmed SDLP support for the extension of presidential voting rights to Irish citizens in the north which was well established with Council having adopted a position in support of extending the franchise to those in the North back in 2015 and were happy to reaffirm that support today.

Councillor Feehan confirmed SDLP would be supporting the Motion as a vote of confidence for a more inclusive representative Ireland, one where every citizen mattered and one where every vote counted.

Councillor Howie thanked Councillors Quinn and Rice for bringing the Motion and said the Good Friday Agreement recognised the right to identify as British, Irish or both or neither and subsequent legal tests affirming that this applied to citizenships for people from across Northern Ireland, and they can hold British, Irish or both citizenships.

Councillor Taylor commented that motions on voting rights in Presidential Elections had been presented periodically during his time on Council and the most recent one by Sinn Féin may be a response to a Bill presented by Peadar Tobin in the Republic which referred to this same issue. It was clear this had not been a priority issue for successive Irish Governments and there were practical concerns raised by legislators and commentators in the Republic around the constitution such as how people would register, how to verify voters who were abroad and what the political consequences would mean so even in the Republic, there was far from any consensus on the issue. Councillor Taylor stated that with that in mind he would not support any proposal for voting rights to be extended to citizens in Northern Ireland.

Councillor Quinn thanked Members for their support and the Chairperson declared the Motion was passed.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Rice that this Council notes that the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement recognises the birth right of all the people of the north to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both; recalls that, in November 2013, the Fifth Report of the Convention on the Constitution recommended to give citizens residing outside the 26 counties the right to vote in presidential elections; further notes that Irish citizens living in the north can stand for, and be elected as, President of Ireland but cannot vote in presidential elections; and calls on this Council to write to the Irish Government and ask that they implement the recommendation of the Convention on the constitution with regards to voting rights in presidential elections, thereby

extending the right to vote in elections for President of Ireland to all Irish citizens on the island of Ireland.

C/097/2025

NOTICE OF MOTION – ESTABLISHMENT OF ARTS WORKING GROUP

The following amended Motion was received from Councillor Finn:

“That NMDDC recognises the impact that regional inequalities in funding has had on our district’s arts sector, acknowledges the support that artists, creatives and groups require and the gap in what they will need in the future, particularly given the closure of Newry Town Hall, and seek to establish an arts working group to provide support and create a roadmap for the sector across our district”.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

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

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.25pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 July 2025.

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting
held on Monday 9 June 2025 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, Monaghan Row**

Chairperson: Councillor D Lee-Surginor

**Committee Members
in attendance:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor G Hanna
Councillor V Harte	Councillor G Kearns
Councillor A Lewis	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor J Tinnelly
Councillor H Young	

Committee Members

in attendance via Teams: Councillor C Galbraith Councillor O Hanlon

Non-Committee Members
in attendance via Teams: Councillor C Bowsie

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

ERT/052/2025

APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

No apologies were received.

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

ERT/053/2025

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Andrews declared an interest in Item 12 on the agenda due to his role as a member of SEUPB.

ERT/054/2025

**ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 12 MAY 2025**

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 12 May 2025 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 12 May 2025.**

ERT/022/2025 - Ballykinlar Hut Removal update

Councillor Andrews enquired whether an update was available in respect of above. Mr Mallon advised that progress was continuing and he hoped that agreements would be in place soon.

ERT/055/2025 **TO AGREE START TIMES FOR ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2025-26**

Read: Proposed Start Times for Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meetings 2025-26 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Ruane, the start times for Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meetings 2025-26 were agreed.**

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

ERT/056/2025 **OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – OUTDOOR REVAMP OF DELAMONT COUNTRY PARK**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Outdoor Revamp of Delamont Country Park. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Bowsie welcomed the development plans for Delamont and acknowledged the existing recommendations and progress made. He proposed a third recommendation to commission market research, including costings, to assess the viability of a major outdoor adventure experience at Delamont, with a focus on provision for secondary school-aged users. As Councillor Bowsie was not a member of the Committee, Councillor Hanna proposed this on his behalf, this was seconded by Councillor Lewis.

Councillor Ruane queried the impact of this proposal, given the completion of the existing business case. Mr Mallon clarified that the proposed research would need to be a separate piece of work, potentially running alongside the current Masterplan, although its cost was not yet known.

Councillors Andrews and Hanlon supported the proposal, suggesting that the scope be broadened to include all age groups and wider outdoor recreation. Councillor Bowsie agreed, while emphasising the need to address the gap in teenage provision.

Mr Mallon confirmed that officers would progress the proposal if agreed by members. He noted that while the research was not currently budgeted, it could be added to the consultant commission with costs brought back for approval.

Following discussion, Councillor Hanna proposed, and Councillor Lewis seconded, that market research be commissioned to assess the viability and cost of developing a major outdoor adventure experience at Delamont Country Park, identifying gaps in current provision.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Lewis, the following was agreed:

- **To note the progression against delivery of the Delamont Country Park – Masterplan that seeks to deliver against the vision that Delamont Country Park is developed as a landmark outdoor tourist attraction and "*Window to Strangford Lough*"**
- **Members agreed to proceed with the project as set out in the Masterplan and Business case presented to SFWG on the 20th May 2025, subject to capital funding approval at SPR on 12 June 2025.**
- **To commission a market research study, including detailed costings, to assess the viability of developing a major outdoor adventure experience at Delamont Country Park and identify gaps in the current market.**

ERT/057/2025

ERT BUSINESS PLANS

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

Mr Mallon presented the reports and asked for consideration and approval.

Councillor Young commended the growth in tourism and the economy, while highlighting the importance of protecting the natural environment. She noted that outdoor adventure, food and drink, heritage, and culture were identified as key attractions, and raised concerns about environmental impacts—particularly waste. She enquired about potential measures required, including the need for additional rangers and bins and queried whether ranger roles should focus more on education or enforcement.

Ms Smyth stated that there had been increased community engagement efforts to promote awareness and conservation of local environmental assets, supported by tourism and Geo Park initiatives.

Councillor Feehan asked when the new tourism branding would fully replace the old. Mr Mallon advised that the department were delivering against the tourism strategy with final branding design to be completed later in the year and launched ahead of the next tourism season.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve the Assessment of the ERT Directorate Business Plan 2024 – 25 and the ERT Directorate Business Plan 2025-26.

ERT/058/2025

DBEC BUSINESS CASE FOR MARKETING

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding DBEC Business Case for Marketing. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to approve the attached business case, and to approve the procurement and appointment of a communications and engagement partner to support DBEC brand development and event delivery.**

ERT/059/2025

GEPARK INTERPRETATION MASTERPLAN

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding Geopark Interpretation Masterplan. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Smyth reported that the Forever Mourne partnership had developed a new interpretive plan for the Geopark. Section 2.1 of the report outlined key findings and next steps. The plan aimed to standardise visitor interpretation across tourism sites. Members were asked to consider adopting it as a framework for future interpretation, with no additional costs anticipated.

Councillor Clarke enquired how the business community and wider public would be engaged in the rollout of the Masterplan. Ms Smyth advised that it was developed collaboratively by all contributing partners. Community and stakeholder engagement was to be led by AONB and Geopark teams through their existing and developing networks.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to approve the adoption of the Interpretation Masterplan for the Mourne Gullion Strangford UNESCO Global Geopark as the framework for all future interpretation development across the Geopark.**

ERT/060/2025

LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Labour Market Partnership. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Smyth advised that Council had been delivering the Labour Market Partnership for several years and was entering a new year of delivery. The report outlined the current position and proposed action plan, approved by the Department for Communities (DfC).

Councillor Young enquired if the promotion of green jobs had been considered within the Labour Market Plan. Ms Smyth confirmed that the agreed action plan, included at Appendix 1,

outlined key focus areas and although 'green jobs' were not listed as a specific category, stated that related opportunities were reflected across various elements of the plan.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Young, the following was agreed:

- **To approve the acceptance of Department for Communities Letter of Offer for Newry, Mourne and Down Labour Market Partnership, Skills and Employability activities including administration and operational budget as set out in Appendix 2 of the Officer's Report.**
- **To approve the attached business case (appendix 3) for the implementation of Newry, Mourne and Down Labour Market Partnership Action Plan for 2025/26.**
- **On acceptance of the Letter of Offer, approval to proceed with the necessary procurements required and appointment of delivery agents to implement the initiatives outlined in attached appendix documents.**

ERT/061/2025

LOCAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Local Economic Partnership. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Feehan, the following was agreed:

- **Sign and accept a Letter of Offer for implementation of the Local Economic Partnership.**
- **Sign and accept a Memorandum of Understanding with Department for Economy for the implementation of the Local Economic Partnership.**
- **To commence recruitment of associated secretariat resource.**

ERT/062/2025

PEAT PLUS PROJECT

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Peat Plus Project. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor Clarke, the following was agreed:

- **Accept and return the required documentation to Ulster Wildlife/SEUPB, including but not limited to partnership agreement, Letter of Offer and legal**

agreements to allow the commencement of Peat Plus.

- **Commence the recruitment process of 1FTE officer according to the terms and conditions of the Letter of Offer.**
- **Approve the attached business case for implementation and proceed to carry out the required procurement exercises in line with NMDDC and PEACEPLUS procurement policies for the implementation of the project.**

ERT/063/2025

TOURISM TRADE CONSUMER SHOWS 2025/26

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Tourism Trade Consumer Shows 2025/26.
(Copy circulated)

Ms Smyth presented the report detailing upcoming tourism events scheduled until spring 2026, where the tourism team had planned to promote the district and engage with tour operators. She noted that the selected events had been identified as valuable opportunities to enhance the district's tourism profile.

Councillor Andrews thanked Ms Smyth for the report and expressed appreciation to Council staff for their efforts in showcasing and promoting the district.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to participate in the tourism trade and consumer shows outlined in section 2,1 of the Officer's Report in collaboration with Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland to support the tourism sector and promote the destination.

ERT/064/2025

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CALL 2 AND 3

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Financial Assistance Call 2 and 3. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lewis, the following was agreed:

- **To approve the issue of Letters of Offer to projects as per Council Policy to the groups recommended for the award of funding within the budget allocation for each theme.**
- **To approve the pre-letter of offer conditions must be met prior to issue of full letter of offer and where this is not satisfied, budget to be reallocated.**
- **Open a call for Community Capital works and Minor Items in August 2025.**

- Capacity building delivered and pro-forma developed to support the application process for Community Capital works and Minor Items.

Having previously declared an interest, Councillor Andrews left the meeting at this stage – 6.30pm

ERT/065/2025

PEACEPLUS THEME 1.1 PROCUREMENT

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding PeacePlus Theme 1.1 Procurement **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Clarke, the following was agreed:

1. To note the minutes of the PeacePlus Partnership Board meeting of 22 May 2025
2. To approve the attached business cases and procurement for the following elements of the Action Plan:
 - i. Strand 2.4 Cross Community Civic Pride Environmental Programmes
 - ii. Strand 2.4 Community Action Health & Wellbeing
 - iii. Strand 2.7 Social Prescribing Programmes

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

AGREED:

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

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Harte, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

The Chairperson advised that the exempt appendices were noted, and the following had been agreed while in closed session.

ERT/066/2025

WARRENPOINT FRONT SHORE KIOSKS

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Warrenpoint Front Shore Kiosks. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Harte, it was agreed that subject to funding approval, Council proceed to undertake the relevant Expression of Interest / Procurement exercise to appoint suitable vendors to take a lease on the kiosks.

FOR NOTING

ERT/067/2025 AONB & GEOPARK UPDATE 2024/25

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding AONB & Geopark Update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to note the 24/25 update on the AONB and Geopark progress.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.42pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 July 2025

Signed: **Councillor D Lee-Surginor**
 Chairperson
 Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee

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

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on
Thursday 12 June 2025 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre**

In the Chair: Councillor O Hanlon

**In Attendance in
Chamber:**

Councillor R Howell	Councillor T Howie
Councillor C King	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D McAteer
Councillor M Rice	Councillor G Sharvin
Councillor H Reilly	

**Committee Members in
Attendance via Teams:**

Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor D Taylor
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Non-Committee Members

In Attendance via Teams: Councillor G Hanna Councillor A Quinn

**Officials in Attendance
in Chamber:**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital, Estates & Procurement
Ms V Keegan, Assistant Director of Digital & Communications
Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of People & Legal
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director of Community Development
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability
Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism
Mrs A McAlarney, Development Manager: Planning
Mrs L Jackson, Development Plan Manager
Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in Attendance
Via Teams:**

Ms C Hughes, Head of Performance & Improvement (Acting)

SPR/081/2025:

APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSONS REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Enright and Mrs Kelly, Director of Corporate Services.

SPR/082/2025:

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SPR/083/2025: ACTION SHEET OF STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2025

Read: Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 15 May 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to approve the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 15 May 2025.**

SPR/084/2025: TO AGREE START TIMES FOR STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2025-26

Read: Proposed Start Times of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meetings 2025/26. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor King, seconded by Councillor Howell, the start times of the Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meetings 2025/26 were agreed.**

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

SPR/085/2025: PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025-26

Read: Report from Ms C Hughes, Head of Performance & Improvement (Acting), regarding Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26. **(Copy Circulated)**

Mr Mallon outlined the content of the Performance Improvement Plan, noting that it would be published prior to ratification at full Council on 7 July.

In proposing the report, Councillor Reilly stated that unless the practical aspect of bin collections vastly improved this would be a meaningless plan, further advising that he had requested missed bin collections be actioned and they were still awaiting action, despite being advised otherwise.

Mr Mallon advised that the relevant Director would follow up with Councillor Reilly outside of the meeting.

Councillor Howie queried why all of the DEA Fora had not been given the opportunity to consult on the plan. Mrs Hughes advised that the consultation had been scheduled between 14 March and 9 May 2025, and three of the forums did not have meetings scheduled within those time periods. She confirmed that the relevant co-ordinators had been sent the presentation, reports and survey link to be forwarded to their members.

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

- **The Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26 (including the five performance improvement**

objectives), Consultation and Engagement Report 2025-26 and Objective Delivery Plans 2025-26.

- That in order to meet the statutory deadline, authority is given by the SPR Committee to publish the Performance Improvement Plan 2025 – 26 before 30 June 2025, ahead of full Council ratification.

SPR/086/2025:

DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANS

Read:

Report from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive, and Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Directorate Business Plans. **(Copy Circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Rice, the following was agreed:

- The assessment of the Chief Executive's and Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2024-25
- The Chief Executive and Corporate Services Business Plan 2025-26

SPR/087/2025:

SECTION 75 STATUTORY DUTIES COMPLIANCE: REVISED EQUALITY SCHEME – FIVE YEAR REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S EQUALITY SCHEME.

Read:

Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal & People, regarding Section 75 Statutory Duties Compliance – Revised Equality Scheme – Five Year Review of Council's Equality Scheme. **(Copy Circulated)**

Mrs McClean outlined the report, confirming that this review was in line with legislation as set out within the Northern Ireland Act 1998. She advised that the changes were minor modifications and confirmed that the scheme had been approved by the Equality Commission in March 2025.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve Council's Equality Scheme, and that further to approval, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland be informed of the outcome of the review.

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 Mathers, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of

Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

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

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

SPR/088/2025: LEASE OF LANDS AT DRUMANESS PLAYING FIELDS

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal and People, regarding Lease of Lands at Drumaness Playing Fields. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to enter into a lease with the group noted in this report in respect of that portion of Drumaness Playing Fields as outlined in blue on the map attached to the Officer's report for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent, subject to Departmental Consent.

SPR/089/2025: LEASE OF CLOGHREAGH PLAYING FIELDS

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal and People, regarding Lease of Cloughreagh Playing Fields. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to enter into a lease with the group noted in this report in respect of Cloughreagh Playing Fields for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent, subject to Departmental Consent.

SPR/090/2025: LEASE OF LANDS AT LISMORE PARK, CROSSMAGLEN

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal and People, regarding Lease of Lands at Lismore Park, Crossmaglen. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to grant the lease of lands at Lismore Park, Crossmaglen as outlined and hatched red on the map attached hereto for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn

rent, subject to Departmental Consent, to the company as noted in the Officer's Report.

SPR/091/2025: LEASE OF LANDS AT STATION ROAD, CASTLEWELLAN

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal and People, regarding Lease of Lands at Station Road, Castlewellan. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Reilly, it was agreed to enter into a lease with the group noted in this report in respect of lands at Station Road, Castlewellan as outlined in red on the map attached hereto for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent, subject to Departmental Consent.**

SPR/092/2025: PUBLIC PATH EXTENSION, KILLEAVY

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal and People, and Mr P Rooney, Head of Legal Administration, regarding Public Path Extension, Killeavy. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor King, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to enter into an Agreement with the noted party noted for a period of up to 14 years to extend the path to include the land shown shaded in purple on the map attached for the amount stated in the Officer's Report.**

SPR/093/2025: RENEWAL OF LICENCE FOR ADVERTISING HOARDINGS, NEWRY

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal and People, regarding Renewal of Licence for Advertising Hoardings, Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to grant licences to the parties noted within the report, permitting them to operate the advertising hoardings on the car park known as Canal Bank 1, Newry for a term of 5 years subject to yearly licence fees to be determined by Council's Valuer.**

SPR/094/2025: CONACRE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ROSTREVOR AND KILBRONEY

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal and People, regarding Conacre Arrangements for Rostrevor and Kilbroney. **(Copy circulated)**

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

- That a full Expression of Interest is issued in respect of the cutting of grass from the Hay Meadow, Kilbroney Park and that Council enter into a Conacre Licence Agreement for the 2025 Season (September only)
- That an Expression of Interest is issued to the 2 parties who have expressed an interest in the grazing of the lands at Rostrevor Cemetery, Rostrevor and that Council enter into a Conacre Licence Agreement with the highest bidder from mid-July until 31 October 2025.

SPR/095/2025: EASEMENT AT MAIN AVENUE, DERRYBEG, NEWRY

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal and People, regarding Easement at Main Avenue, Derrybeg, Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to grant an Easement for a foul and storm pipe under that portion of Council lands as are shown by a red dashed line at Main Avenue, Derrybeg, Newry to the party named in this report subject to the payment of the market value easement fee (less any apportionment due to the owner of the freehold) and subject also to the payment of Council's legal and valuation costs.

SPR/096/2025: CAMLOUGH LAKE RECREATIONAL HUB

Read: Report from Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital, Estates & Procurement, regarding Camlough Lake Recreational Hub. **(Copy circulated)**

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

- To appoint Contractor (Supplier 3) to provide full delivery of the Camlough Lake Recreational Hub Facility, subject to obtaining all statutory approvals and finalisation of land acquisition.

NEWRY CANAL RESTORATION WORKS – LOCK 6

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Newry Canal Restoration Works – Lock 6.
(Copy circulated)

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

- To approve the procurement and appointment of a contractor required to deliver the project as outlined in section 2.1 of the Officer's Report.
- To approve the business case and allocate budget within the capital plan as outlined in section 4 of the Officer's Report.

Cllr Sharvin joined the meeting during discussion on the above item – 6.32pm

CASTLEWELLAN TREE TOP WALK - OBC

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Castlewellan treetop Walk - OBC. **(Copy circulated)**

On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Howell, the following was agreed:

- To approve the Outline Business Case as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's Report.
- To approve the allocation of budget in the Capital Programme as per the preferred option 3 as laid out within the Officer's Report.
- To approve the procurement and appointment of an Integrated Consultancy Team to progress design development of the infrastructure enabling works.

KILKEEL LOWER SQUARE AND RIVER WALK EI SCHEME

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Kilkeel Lower Square and River Walk EI Scheme. **(Copy circulated)**

On the proposal of Councillor Rice, seconded by Councillor Reilly, the following was agreed:

- To approve business case and the allocation of budget in the capital plan for the design and development of Kilkeel Lower Square & River Walk Environmental Improvement Scheme.
- To approve the procurement and appointment of the ICT to deliver RIBA Design Stage 2 – 3.

SPR/100/2025:

DIGITAL INNOVATION AND REGENERATION UNIT

Read:

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Digital Innovation and Regeneration Unit.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve the Digital Innovation and Regeneration Unit structure and budget allocation as outlined within section 4 of the Officer's Report.

SPR/101/2025:

PROCUREMENT OF AN ICT TO PROGRESS DELAMONT COUNTRY PARK DEVELOPMENT

Read:

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Procurement of an ICT to Progress Delamont Country Park Development. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Howie, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, the following was agreed:

- To approve the procurement and appointment of an ICT to develop the Delamont Master Plan: Viewpoint and Orientation Centre projects to RIBA Stage 3.
- To approve the procurement and appointment of a specialised site-specific Interpretation Plan that sets out the Interpretative Experience for Delamont Country Park.
- To approve the business case and the allocation of budget in the Capital Programme to progress the projects at Delamont Country Park as set out in Section 4 of the Officer's Report.

SPR/102/2025:

AUTOMATED CHARGED PARKING INSTALLATION

Read:

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Automated Charged Parking Installation.
(Copy circulated)

- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Howell, the following was agreed:
- To approve the procurement and appointment of a supplier under the EPSO framework, to enable the installation of an automated parking system, as set out in section 2 of the Officer's Report.
 - To allocate a budget within the Capital Plan for the design, implementation and operation of an automated parking system, as set out in Section 4 of the Officer's Report.

SPR/103/2025: FLEET MANAGEMENT

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

- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Rice, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to approve the 2025-26 Fleet Procurement Programme.

Cllr Reilly left the meeting at this stage – 7.08pm

SPR/104/2025: LEISURE FACILITY LEASE AGREEMENT

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Leisure Facility Lease Agreement. **(Copy circulated)**

- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to proceed with the preferred supplier as per the terms outlined within the Officer's Report.

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

SPR/105/2025: EXEMPT MINUTES OF MOURNE MOUNTAIN GATEWAY PROJECT – PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING 1ST APRIL 2025

Read: Exempt Minutes of Mourne Mountain Gateway Project – Programme Board Meeting 1st April 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the minutes.

SPR/106/2025: MINUTES OF SFWG WORKING GROUP HELD 20 MAY 2025

Read: Minutes of SFWG Working Group held 20 May 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the minutes**

SPR/107/2025: DRAFT MANAGEMENT YEAR END ACCOUNTS 2024-25

Read: Report from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive, regarding Draft Year End Management Accounts 2024/25. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the 2024/25 draft year end Management Accounts.**

SPR/108/2025: DEBT WRITE OFF AS AT MARCH 2025

Read: Report from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive, regarding Debt Write Off As At March 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the debt write off as at March 2025.**

Mrs Ward declared an interest in the following item and left the Chamber at this stage – 7.22pm

SPR/109/2025: CHIEF EXECUTIVE APPRAISAL

Read: Report from Mrs M Hughes, HR & OD Manager, regarding Chief Executive Appraisal. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed to note the 2024/25 Performance Appraisal of the Chief Executive has been completed and that members of the group agreed in their assessment of performance.**

Mrs Ward rejoined the meeting at this stage – 7.24pm

FOR NOTING

SPR/110/2025: COMPLIANCE END OF YEAR REPORT

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal & People, regarding Compliance End of Year Report. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed to note monitoring statistics.**

SPR/111/2025: PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Read: Report from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration, regarding Planning Update. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor McAteer commended the work that had been carried out within the Planning Department but stressed that further consideration should be given to the current backlog of applications. He queried whether the Operating Protocol could be reviewed in an attempt to allow the constant objections being raised at the last minute which caused continuous delays to planning applications and had an impact on the reporting statistics.

Mr McGilly advised that the Protocol was under review and would be presented to the Planning Committee at a future date but advised that legislation allowed objections to be submitted at any stage of a planning process.

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

SPR/112/2025: MINUTES OF MOURNE MOUNTAIN GATEWAY PROJECT – PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING 1ST APRIL AND 2 MAY 2025

Read: Minutes of Mourne Mountain Gateway Project – Programme Board Meeting of 1 April and 2 May 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

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

SPR/113/2025: ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING ACTIONS AND MEASURES – DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANS 2024-25

Read: Report from Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of Legal & People, regarding Assessment of Community Wealth Building Actions and Measures – Directorate Business Plans 2024-25. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed to note the Assessment of Community Wealth Building Measures 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer’s Report.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 7.37pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 July 2025.

Signed: **Councillor Oonagh Hanlon**
 Chairperson

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

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AHC/2025

**Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on
Monday 16 June 2025 at 6.00pm in the Council Chambers,
Downshire Civic Centre**

Chairperson: Councillor C Bowsie

**In attendance
in Chamber:**

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

**Committee Members in
attendance (via Teams):** Councillor M Gibbons

**Non Committee Members
in attendance:** Councillor T Andrews

Officials in Chamber: Mr A Patterson, Director, Active and Healthy Communities
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development
Mrs M Flynn, Head of Engagement
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

Officials via Teams: Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy Living

AHC/048/2025: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Truesdale.

AHC/049/2025: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**AHC/050/2025: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2025**

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 19 May 2025. **(Copy circulated).**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to note the**

Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 19 May 2025.

AHC/051/2025: TO AGREE DATES AND TIMES FOR ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2025/26

Read: Schedule of Meetings for Active and Healthy Communities Committee for 2025/26. (Copy circulated).

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Devlin, to approve the schedule of meetings for the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meetings 2025/26.**

AHC/052/2025: ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANS

Read: Report dated 19 June 2025 from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities regarding Directorate Business Plans for Active and Healthy Communities. **(Copy circulated)**

Park Runs

Councillor Mathers asked that Council reach out to Park Run organisers who had successfully brought hundreds of people and families into the District over the past few weeks in Newry. He added that organisers were grateful for the opportunity to hold Park Runs and it was important that these events were supported as there was potential to improve and grow. Councillor Devlin joined in highlighting the success of Park Runs including that held in Castlewellan.

Mr Patterson confirmed ERT officers were working with event organisers and the AHC Directorate was happy to support those efforts and work with colleagues.

Community Trails

Councillor Devlin enquired about the reopening of the community trail at Tievenadarragh following the recent storm and spoke of the importance of trails for communities.

Mr Haughey confirmed responsibility for the clearance of trails was with the S&E Department and the latest update was the Seaforde Trail had been reopened. He added that in terms of Tievenadarragh and Drumkeeragh, particularly Drumkeeragh which had been heavily damaged by the storm, a tender had recently been completed for specialised resources due to the size of trees that had been felled and it was hoped all works would be carried out with trails opened by mid-July.

Councillor Devlin thanked Mr Haughey for the update and extended thanks to all officers involved in the effort.

Capital Projects

In response to Councillor Devlin's request for an update regarding the Newcastle Leisure Centre and Rock Pool, Mr Patterson advised work had been progressing regarding procurement and that Consultancy teams were needed to bring in specialist subject matter experts, conservation architects, designers etc to get both projects to planning stage. He advised work would continue over the summer months with an expectation for consultancy teams to be in place for August/September after which consultation would take place with Members.

In thanking Mr Patterson for the update Councillor Devlin spoke of the importance of community engagement.

Maintenance Programmes

Councillor Finn referred to reviewing and implementing preventative maintenance programmes and thanked officers for their efforts with issues regarding Newry Leisure Centre equipment. She went on to request an update on the kind of maintenance for machines to ensure problems did not arise again.

Mr Patterson confirmed Council had approval to go to contract for a provider for the upkeep and maintenance of machines with work going on behind the scenes to ensure the user experience was seamless in terms of down time of machines.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Finn, to approve the Assessment of Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plan 2024-25 and the Active and Healthy Communities Directorate Business Plan 2025-26.**

AHC/053/2025: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE REPORT

Read: Report dated 19 June 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding an update on District Electoral Area (DEA) Forums. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to note the report and approve the actions in the action sheets attached for:**

- **Slieve Gullion DEA Forum Private Meeting held on 13 May 2025**
- **Crotlieve DEA Forum Private Meeting held on 13 May 2025**
- **Mournes DEA Forum Private Meeting held on 20 May 2025**

AHC/054/2025: COUNCIL OF SANCTUARY

Read: Report dated 19 June 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding Council joining the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network and working towards recognition as a Council of Sanctuary. **(Copy circulated)**

In speaking in support of the report and proposing that NMDDC join the Local Authority Network and work towards formal recognition as a 'Council of Sanctuary' Councillor Lee-Surginor welcomed that Council was forward-looking and full of compassion as Newry Mourne and Down was a welcoming place that was supportive of people.

Councillor D Murphy seconded the proposal and spoke of how many Irish people had unfortunately experienced the need for sanctuary in different parts of the world with so many needless conflicts and that what was already provided would be strengthened. He added that it would come as some type of relief for many people that were unfortunately

experiencing attack and the need for sanctuary in different places in the North.

Councillor Finn voiced support for the proposal particularly with the backdrop of the violence witnessed across Northern Ireland over the last week.

Councillor Finn proposed Council write to DfC/TEO to ask for an update on the new Strategy on Racial Equality, EAWG, the Refugee Integration Strategy and Race Law Reform in Northern Ireland.

Councillor Devlin seconded Councillor Finn's proposal.

Councillor Jackson on behalf of the DUP group stated they supported an approach that allowed those fleeing war or persecution to find refuge in the United Kingdom and that had to be underpinned by the proper legal processes. He spoke of one concern which was to make sure that the Charter did not encourage illegal immigrants.

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Devlin that Council write to DfC/TEO to ask for an update on the new Strategy on Racial Equality, EAWG, the Refugee Integration Strategy and Race Law Reform in Northern Ireland.**

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lee Surginor, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to approve NMDDC to join the Local Authority Network and work towards formal recognition as a 'Council of Sanctuary.'**

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Brennan , seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following items, which related to exempt information by virtue of para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.**

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

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

AHC/055/2025: EVENT SUPPORT

Read: Report dated 19 June 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding support for an event. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor McEvoy, to approve Council support for the initiative as set out within the officer's report

AHC/056/2025: COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Read: Report dated 19 June 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development seeking approval for the award of funding from the 2025/26 Community Support Programme budget. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Finn, to proceed with the Community Support Programme as set out within the officer's report.

AHC/057/2025: FUNDED PROGRAMME DELIVERY

Read: Report dated 19 June 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development, regarding delivery of a funded programme. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Brennan, to continue with delivery of the funded programme as detailed within the officer's report to the end of September 2025, pending receipt of a Letter of Offer from the Programme Funder.

FOR NOTING

AHC/058/2025: SUMMER ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

Read: Report dated 19 June 2025 from Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director of Healthy Living, regarding the Summer Activity Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Howell, to note the planned Summer Activity Programme for July and August 2025 as per appendix 1 of the officer's report.

AHC/059/2025: Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Report

Read: Report dated 16 June 2025 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development regarding actions arising from recent Newry and Downpatrick Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Meetings and the PCSP Meeting. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

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

- **Minutes of Newry Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership Meeting held on 26 March 2025 approved at Newry NRP held on 28 May 2025.**
- **Minutes of the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting held on 25 March 2025, approved at the Policing Committee & PCSP Meeting on 27 May 2025.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.31pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 July 2025

Signed: Councillor C Bowsie
Chairperson

Signed: Andrew Patterson
Director Active and Healthy Communities

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2025

**Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 18 June 2025 at 6.15pm in Council Chamber,
Monaghan Row, Newry**

Chair: Councillor O Magennis

**In attendance in
Chamber:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Enright
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor J Jackson
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor K Murphy
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor M Ruane
Councillor D Taylor	Councillor H Young

**Committee Members in
Attendance via Teams:** Councillor W Clarke

Officials in Chamber: Mrs S Murphy, Director Sustainability and Environment
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

SE/066/2025: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Finn, Hearty and O'Hare and Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director, Environment.

SE/067/2025: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**SE/068/2025: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2025**

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 May 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

SE/036/2024 – Former landfill site review – Aughnagun and Drumanakelly

Councillor Enright enquired whether an update was available in respect of the above matter and queried whether a report could be provided detailing the reasons for delays in the progression of items listed on the action sheet for longer than six months. Mrs Murphy confirmed that a feasibility study conducted in March 2024 had recommended the development of a business case, and that the recommendation remained valid.

Councillor Jackson enquired about CCTV provision in Ballynahinch and the possibility of installing a camera to cover the Lisburn Street car park, noting that there had been several issues relating to fly tipping and anti-social behaviour in the area. Mr Sage advised that he was happy to explore this matter further and would revert to the Member outside of the meeting in respect of this.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 21 May 2025.**

SE/069/2025: **TO AGREE START TIMES OF SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS, WORKING GROUP AND CLEANSING & REFUSE TASK FORCE GROUP 2025-26**

Read: Copy of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meetings, Working Group and Cleansing & Refuse Task Force Group 2025-26. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, Start Times of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meetings, Working Group and Cleansing & Refuse Task Force Group 2025 were agreed.**

FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION

SE/070/2025: **DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLAN**

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, the following was agreed:**

- **Assessment of the Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plan 2024-2025**
- **Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plan 2025-26.**

SUSTAINABILITY

SE/071/2025: **INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Control of Invasive Species Across the NM&DDC Estate. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Andrews enquired whether officers had contacted the Department for Infrastructure (DFI) Roads Service regarding the substances used in weed spraying within the District. The Chair suggested that Mr Sage revert to Councillor Andrews outside of the meeting in relation to this matter.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Young, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, it was agreed to note the report.**

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

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to come out of closed session.**

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

RESTRICTED – FOR DECISION

SE/072/2025: BUSINESS CASES FOR 25/26 FLEET REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding Fleet Procurement Programme 2025-26. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Reilly, it was agreed to approve the recommendations within the Business Cases / Full Economic Appraisals as detailed in Appendices: 2-8 attached to the officer's report.**

SE/073/2025: BT LINE RENTAL FOR TOWN CENTRE CCTV SYSTEMS

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding DAC 5-year line rental for delivery of town centre CCTV. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to approve the award of a contract for line rental of telecommunication lines for CCTV systems as noted in the officer's report.

SE/074/2025: SUSTAINABILITY CONTRACTS

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

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to approve the award of contracts as listed in Appendix 1 of the officer's report.

SE/075/2025: PPE CONTRACTS

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director: Sustainability, regarding PPE 6-month Framework Contract. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to approve contents of the officer's report and award a 6-month contract for procurement of PPE via the Epso Framework.

SE/076/2025: WASTE CONTRACTS

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director: Sustainability & Environment, regarding Waste Management Contracts. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve the Direct Award Contracts as detailed in Appendix 1 and the price uplift as set out in section 2.7 of the officer's report.

SE/077/2025: EXTENSION FOR MDR CONTRACT

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment, regarding Extension of Mixed Dry Recycling Contracts. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to approve:

- The extension of the contract for the Receipt and Processing of Mixed Dry Recyclables from 30 September 2025 to 31 March 2026, subject to the approval of the Arc21 Joint Committee.
- The extension of the current haulage contract with Natural World Products Ltd from 30 September

2025 to 31 March 2026, subject to approval of the Arc21 Joint Committee.

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

SE/078/2025: REPORT FROM THE CLEANSING AND REFUSE TASK GROUP ON WEDNESDAY 21 MAY 2025

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director: Sustainability & Environment, regarding Report from Cleansing and Refuse Task Group. **(Copy circulated)**

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

SE/079/2025: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2025 & ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN HELD ON 29 MAY 2025

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting In Committee Minutes of Thursday 27 March 2025 & Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin held on 29 May 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, it was agreed to note the documents.

FOR NOTING

SE/080/2025: ARC21 COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2025

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting No 095 Minutes Thursday 27 March 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to note the document.

SE/081/2025: PORT HEALTH UPDATE

Read: Report from Mrs S Murphy, Director: Sustainability & Environment, regarding Port Health Update. **(Copy circulated)**

In referencing the report, Councillor Reilly referred to checks carried out on items imported from third world countries such as plastic coming into Great Britain from Hong Kong and China and wondered why the checks would not be undertaken in Great Britain. Mrs Murphy stated that she would revert directly to the Member outside of the meeting in relation to this matter.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to note the report.

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There being no further business the meeting ended at **6.57pm.**

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 July 2025.

Signed: Councillor Oonagh Magennis
Chairperson

Signed: Mrs Sinead Murphy
Director of Sustainability & Environment

Report to:	Council
Date of Meeting:	7 July 2025
Subject:	Correspondence to Council
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)

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

For decision	x	For noting only	
1.0			Purpose and Background
1.1			To provide an update on correspondence received for attention of Council.
2.0			Key issues
2.1			This paper refers to correspondence to be brought to the attention of Council. Items are referred to in 3.0 below.
3.0			Recommendations
			That Council considers and notes the following correspondence:
3.1			Correspondence from South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Council received a response from the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust in relation to Notice of Motion C/058/2025, Enhancement of Services at the Downe.
3.2			Correspondence from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Council received correspondence from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council in relation to Motion, Parliaments.
3.3			Correspondence from the Department for Communities and Department for Work and Pensions re Disability Benefit Reform Council received correspondence from the Department for Communities and Department for Work & Pensions in response to Notice of Motion C/062/2025, Cost of Living Crisis
3.4			Correspondence from the Department for the Economy Council received a response from the Department for the Economy in relation to Notice of Motion C/095/2025, 'Good Jobs' Employment Rights Legislation.
3.5			Correspondence from the Department of Health Council received a response from the Department of Health in relation to Notice of Motion C/065/2025, C/093/2025, Endometriosis.

3.6	Correspondence from DAERA re C0662025 and C0932025 Wildfires in The Mourne Council received a response from DAERA regarding the Emergency Motion on Wildfires in the Mourne Mountains.
3.7	Commemoration of the 110th Anniversary of the 10th Division's actions on the Gallipoli Peninsula Invitation received from Dalaradia Cultural & Historical Society to attend Tour to Gallipoli and participate in an Act of Remembrance from 13-18 October 2025 with cost including all travel and hotel accommodation approximately £1650.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Not applicable.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/> The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> 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"/> Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)

6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <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>
7.0	Appendices
8.0	Background Documents
	None

Chairman
Jonathan Patton

Chief Executive
Roisin Coulter

07 May 2025

Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Dear Marie

RE: DOWNE HOSPITAL

I note at the recent Council meeting held on 8 April 2025 a notice of motion was made to and supported by Council. This motion called for the Department of Health to consider enhancing the classification of the Downe Hospital within its future hospital reconfiguration policy and for the South Eastern Trust to continually review the potential for the safe enhancement of services at the Downe.

The Trust's key priority, as always, is to ensure safe service delivery to our patients. I would like to reiterate the statement that I made to Council on 25 November 2024. The Downe Hospital plays a vital role in the Trust, delivering a broad range of local hospital services and Regional Day Procedure services, with excellent feedback from patients.

I again confirm that there are no plans to reopen the Downe Hospital Emergency Department (ED). The Bengoa Report: Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together, approved by the Executive, championed the model to have one major acute hospital at the Ulster Hospital, supported by local hospitals at Lagan Valley and Downe. A very successful consultant-led urgent care model operates from the Downe. This model is clinically appropriate, safer for patients, and sustainable. Feedback from patients who use the service is excellent.

The Trust continues to strive to deliver the most appropriate services for its population both within and outside of the hospital setting to maximise efficient use of resources including the development of the Primary Care Multi-disciplinary Teams and the Hospital at Home model of care.

Yours sincerely



ROISIN COULTER
Chief Executive

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

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Our Ref: Council/June 2025/13.2

Date: 13 June 2025

Email: fiona.dillon@fermanaghomagh.com

Ms Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council
Monaghan Row
NEWRY
BT35 8DL

Dear Ms Ward,

Re: Motion – Rural Parliaments

At the Council meeting held on 3 June 2025, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council adopted the following Motion:

Rural Parliaments are an instrument for raising rural issues and bringing about positive change for communities and individuals.

As such, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council:

- ***recognises the value of Rural Parliaments already employed in several European countries, including Scotland***
- ***notes the comprehensive report 'Rural Parliaments in Europe' commissioned by the Scottish government in 2012***
- ***will contact the Executive Office and the other 10 Councils in this region, to lobby for the creation of a Rural Parliament similar to the current Scottish model, but also considering best practices from other European models***
- ***requests the Executive and all Councils in the North of Ireland, to co-finance a Rural Parliament in the north of Ireland and to work with the Irish government to form links across the island to establish an All-Island Rural Parliament***
- ***this Council should endeavour to host the inaugural Rural Parliament in the north when it is established.***

Yours sincerely

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



Department for

Communities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn

Pobal

Depairtment fur

Commonities

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From: The Minister

Level 9

Causeway Exchange

1-7 Bedford Street

Belfast

BT2 7EG

Telephone: (028) 90512692

e-mail: private.office@communities-ni.gov.uk

Our ref: CORR 0323-2025

Date: 13 June 2025

Cllr Philip Campbell

Chairperson

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Via email: philip.cambell@nmandd.org

Dear Cllr Campbell,

WELFARE CHANGES: THE PATHWAYS TO WORK: REFORMING BENEFITS AND SUPPORT TO GET BRITAIN WORKING GREEN PAPER

I refer to Marie Ward's letter dated 16 April 2025, detailing Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's concerns regarding the UK Government's recently published 'Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working' Green Paper.

I acknowledge the Council's concern about the changes and the uncertainty created by the UK Government proposals. I have made clear my strong opposition to the proposed welfare cuts, and I have raised my concerns directly with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Labour Government Ministers.

I am committed to the delivery of a welfare system that protects those who need it most; encourages employment for those who can work; promotes the skills and advancement of people in employment; and that supports people who can't work.

My officials continue to work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions to understand the full impacts and implications for Northern Ireland.

DWP will be holding a consultation event in Northern Ireland on the afternoon of 16 June in Belfast. The details are available on the Department for Work and Pensions website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/pathways-to-work-reforming-benefits-and-support-to-get-britain-working-green-paper>) Places at this event will be limited, but of course you can also submit your views online/in writing/by email. I would encourage you to engage with the consultation process. It is important that key stakeholders bring their views to the table and make Northern Ireland's voice heard.

Yours sincerely



Gordon Lyons MLA
Minister for Communities

Cc: Marie Ward Chief Executive



Ministerial
Correspondence
Caxton House
Tothill Street
LONDON
SW1H 9DA

0207 340 4000

www.gov.uk

ministers@dwp.gov.uk

Ms Marie Ward
council@nmandd.org

Our ref: MC2025/48370

27th June 2025

Dear Ms Ward

Thank you for your recent correspondence of 16 April in relation to Health and Disability. I am replying as the Minister for Social Security and Disability.

As the Secretary of State set out in her letter dated 26 June 2025, we have listened to colleagues who supported the principle of reform but were worried about the impact of the pace of change for individuals already in receipt of support.

We have always said we are determined to reform the social security system so that it is fair, provides dignity and respect for those unable to work, supports those who can, and is sustainable so that it is there for generations to come.

We will make two changes to strengthen the Bill.

Firstly, we recognise the proposed changes have been a source of uncertainty and anxiety and we will therefore ensure that individuals currently in receipt Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will stay within the current system.

Secondly, we will adjust the pathway of Universal Credit payment rates to ensure that all existing recipients of the Universal Credit health element, any new claimant meeting the severe conditions criteria, and those who qualify under Special Rules for End of Life (SREL) have their incomes fully protected in real terms.

We want to ensure that disabled people and those with health impairments are at the heart of our reforms. I will take forward a ministerial review of the PIP assessment to ensure that the benefit is fair and fit for the future.

At the heart of this review will be coproduction with disabled people, the organisations that represent them, and MPs so their views and voices are heard. The review will then report to the Secretary of State.

These commitments sit alongside our raising of the standard rate of the Universal Credit, the first permanent real-terms increase in the headline rate of out of work benefits since the 1980s, the protection of the incomes of the most vulnerable who will no longer be reassessed, and the introduction of “right to try”.

Our aims are to target funding for those most in need and make sure the system is sustainable for the future to support generations to come.

We believe those who can work, should be supported to do so, and those who cannot, should be protected. We will front load more of the additional funding generated by these reforms for back to work support for sick and disabled people.

This is a fair package that will preserve the social security system for those who need it by putting it on a sustainable footing, support people back into work, protect those who cannot work and reduce anxiety for those currently in the system.

I would like to reiterate my thanks to colleagues for engaging with us on these important reforms.

With all best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Stephen Timms'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP
Minister of State for Social Security and Disability

**From the Office of the Minister
DR CAOIMHE ARCHIBALD MLA**

Marie Ward
Chief Executive
Newry Mourne & Down District Council
Donna.Starkey@nmandd.org



Adelaide House
39-49 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8FD
02890 529333
Private.Office@economy-ni.gov.uk

Our ref: COR-0425-2025

Date: 23 June 2025

Marie a chara

Notice of Motion – ‘Good Jobs’ Employment Right Legislation

Thank you for your letter of 16 June 2025 on the motion agreed by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council in support of workers' rights and my proposals for updates to employment rights law.

My proposed package of reforms will improve standards for all workers and make it more difficult for good employers to be undercut by those competitors employing poor practices. I welcome the support of the Council and, in particular, its recognition that these proposed measures provide an opportunity to help grow a productive regional economy that benefits our businesses, our workers and their families within the all-Ireland and global economic contexts.

I am committed to continuing to work with stakeholders, including businesses and trade unions, to refine the practical detail of the measures that I propose to set out in legislation, helping to ensure they work effectively for both workers and employers.

Thank you for the Council's support and interest in this important work.

Is mise le meas



DR CAOIMHE ARCHIBALD MLA
Minister for the Economy

FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH



63

Marie Ward
sarah-louise.taggart@nmandd.org

Castle Buildings
 Stormont Estate
 BELFAST, BT4 3SQ
 Tel: 028 9052 2556
 Email: private.office@health-ni.gov.uk

Your Ref: C/065/2025, C/093/2025

Our Ref: COR-0878-2025

Date: 24 June 2025

Dear Marie

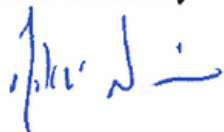
Thank you for your email correspondence of 16 June 2025 regarding a Notice of Motion following a meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held on 7 April 2025. I acknowledge your request to collaborate more closely with Cork City for the treatment of Endometriosis.

The Department's Strategic Planning and Performance Group established a Regional Gynae Forum last year, and the development of a number of pathways is forming part of the work programme for this Group. The members of the Endometriosis Task and Finish Group will fully consider the most appropriate pathway for women with this condition, including the most appropriate treatments, depending on the nature and severity of condition.

The treatment of endometriosis is available in all Gynaecology Departments at secondary care level across Northern Ireland including Daisy Hill Hospital, however, treatment for severe endometriosis is only available in the Endometriosis Centres in Belfast and Western Trust, in line with national guidelines. These regional services are similar to the regional services available in Cork and Tallaght for Republic of Ireland patients.

I trust that this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely



Mike Nesbitt MLA
Minister of Health

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



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department of

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Marie Ward
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Newry Mourne and Down District Council
Downshire Civic Centre
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303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast, BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 9052 4140
Email: private.office@daera-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: COR-0442-2025,
Your Ref: C/066/2025, c/093/2025
Date: 27 June 2025

Dear Marie

EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION – WILDFIRES IN THE MOURNE MOUNTAINS

Thank you for your letter dated 16 June 2025 concerning time frames for the procurement exercise to deliver a Wildfire Plan for the Mournes and for engaging with statutory partners to get clarity on a common approach to deal with wildfires.

Following the previously unsuccessful procurement exercise a full review was undertaken and I intend to re-issue a new procurement exercise to develop a wildfire management plan for the Mournes this summer.

Regarding a common approach, I have asked my officials to provide me with a strategic framework which will inform the development of actions to be delivered by a range of relevant stakeholders to help address the wildfire issue.

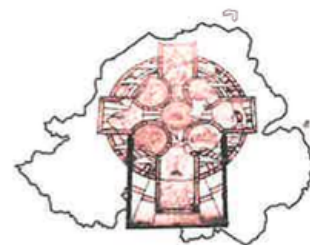
Officials met with statutory partners as part of the NI Strategic Wildfires Group on 20 June to discuss a final draft and I expect officials to present me with a strategic framework shortly.

Yours sincerely

ANDREW MUIR MLA
Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

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

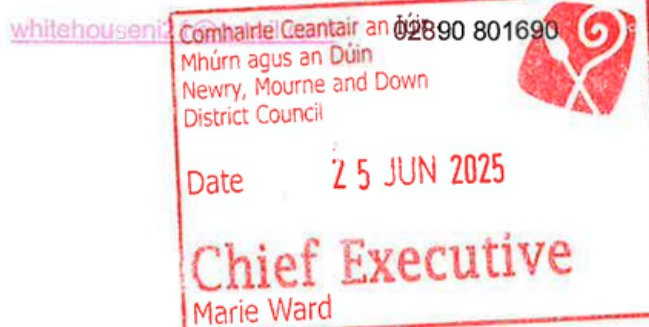
INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
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Dalaradia Cultural and Historical Society @ The Whitehouse, 28-34 Whitehouse Park, BT37 9SQ

10 June, 2025

The Chief Executive
Each County Council
Northern Ireland
Southern Ireland



Dear Sir/Madam,

Commemoration of the 110th Anniversary of the 10th (Irish) Division's actions on the Gallipoli Peninsula

This August marks the 110th anniversary of the landing of the 10th (Irish) Division at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli peninsula during the First World War. The Division was the first volunteer Division to be raised throughout Ireland from both communities and the first to see action. The Division served only a few weeks on the peninsula but suffered some 3,500 casualties.

We would like to commemorate this important common Anniversary by inviting each Council in Ireland and Northern Ireland to be represented on a special commemorative Tour to Gallipoli and participate in an Act of Remembrance. The Tour will visit the major battle sites and war cemeteries on the peninsula and experience the history and culture of Turkey.

We are anticipating the Tour being organised for 13 – 18 October, 2025 with flights departing and returning to Dublin. We cannot finalise an itinerary and price until we get a feel for final numbers but we estimate the cost to be in the region of £ 1,650 (E 1,800) to include all travel, hotel accommodation in twin rooms, and most meals.

We would cordially invite your Council to be represented on this unique pilgrimage to honour those from our communities who volunteered for service and to assist the process of reconciliation on our island. It would greatly assist our planning if you could respond by 31 July, 2025 with a deposit of £ 500 or E 500 per person nominated.

Yours faithfully,

Robert Williamson
Chair