

September 29th, 2026

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the Council meeting to be held on **Monday, 5th October 2026** at **6:00 pm** in **Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre**.

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 7 September 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Action Sheet 2026 09 07.pdf

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Council Minutes For Adoption and Signing

4.0 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 7 September 2026

Attachment: Council Minutes 2026-09-07.pdf

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Committee Minutes for Consideration and Adoption

5.0 Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 14 September 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Economy Regeneration and Tourism Minutes 2026-09-14.pdf

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6.0 Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 17 September 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting Minutes 2026-09-17.pdf

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7.0 Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 21 September 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Active and Healthy Communities Minutes 2026 09 21.pdf

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8.0 Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on 23 September 2026

For Approval

Attachment: Sustainability_and_Environment_Committee_Minutes_2026_08-19.pdf

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10.0 Planning Section

There are no issues arising.

Correspondence

11.0 Correspondence Report

For Information

No correspondence arising.

Notices of Motion

12.0 Notice of Motion - Equal Funding for Church Halls

For Decision

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Bowsie:

"Church halls are vital community facilities throughout rural and urban areas of Newry, Mourne & Down District Council and should not be excluded from being able to apply for council grants that are available to other community halls.

This Council agrees, where a church hall meets the council's existing definition of a 'community facility' (eg it is available to the whole community for public use or hire), it should not be denied funding merely on the basis that the hall's management committee pertains to a religious body.

This Council resolves that in order to be eligible, halls must be managed by a constituted community association or a church body registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, and thus the applicant will ensure it has governing rules which do not restrict any section of the community from using the building or restrict any type of activity, other than for reasons of insurance or legal protections already afforded to such charities."

13.0 Notice of Motion - Maternity Services at Daisy Hill Hospital

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Devlin:

"That this Council recognises the vital role of inpatient maternity services at Daisy Hill Hospital and the importance of safe, accessible maternity care for women across Newry, Mourne and Down and the wider region; expresses its concern at the staffing pressures threatening the sustainability of the service and believes that women should not face unequal access to maternity care because of where they live; calls on the Minister for Health, Department of Health and Southern Health and Social Care Trust to work urgently to support recruitment and retention at Daisy Hill, protect inpatient maternity services and deliver a safe, sustainable solution that works for women, families and staff.

Council further calls for the Department of Health to review and reform the current arrangements for the recruitment, employment and deployment of specialist medical staff across Trusts, with consideration given to a region-wide approach that enables staff to be deployed according to need and supports more equitable terms and conditions, helping to address persistent recruitment and retention challenges."

14.0 Notice of Motion - Establishment of a Fleadh Legacy Fund

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Finn:

"Newry Mourne and Down district council recognises the incredible impact that Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann had in Belfast this summer, and further recognises the work of Comhaltas and the volunteers who made the week such a success. The

Council notes the number of musicians, singers, storytellers and dancers from across our district who attended the Fleadh, and will, take steps to prepare a paper on the establishment of a Fleadh legacy fund to support the work of those artists and young people :and, will further write to the other local councils to ask that they also consider this preparation so that we can see the legacy of the Fleadh and our artists protected into the future."

15.0 Notice of Motion - Dolly Parton Imagination Library

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Feehan:

"Newry Mourne & Down District Council;

Acknowledges that the majority of physical brain development occurs in the first three years of life, when children form over 1 million new neural connections per second; Recognises the benefits of reading, and reading aloud, to young children which can promote the development of basic literacy and vocabulary skills, establish strong inter-personal relationships between children and parents/guardians, as well as improving longer term educational, health, social and economic outcomes; Is concerned about the rising cost of living which will limit the ability of families to pay for essential educational resources like books for young children; Agrees to investigate and establish a pilot of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in the District to provide a new book each month for children aged 0-5, working with any interested partners to secure the success and sustainable funding of the scheme."

16.0 Notice of Motion - Irish Unity Referendum

The following Notice of Motion was received from Councillor Quinn:

"This Council notes that the Good Friday Agreement provides the democratic means to achieve Irish reunification, through unity referendums. If that's what the people decide; condemns the British Prime Minister's recent comments in relation to a referendum on Irish Unity and will write to the British Government reminding it of its obligations under the Good Friday Agreement and urge London to begin preparations and discussions with the Irish government to set a date for the unity referendums, as outlined in the Good Friday Agreement."

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 1 JULY 2024

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

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2026

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

ACTION SHEET – COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2026

<i>Minute Ref</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Lead Officer</i>	<i>Actions taken/ Progress to date</i>	<i>Remove from Action Sheet Y/N</i>
<i>C/115/2026</i>	<i>Action Sheet arising from Council Meeting held on 03/08/26</i>	It was agreed to note the action sheet.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>

<i>C/116/2026</i>	<i>Minutes of Council Meeting held on 03/08/2026</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/117/2026</i>	<i>Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 24/08/2026</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/118/2026</i>	<i>Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 30/07/2026</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/119/2026</i>	<i>Minutes of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held 10/08/2026</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/120/2026</i>	<i>Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held 13/08/2026</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/121/2026</i>	<i>Minutes of Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held 17/08/2026</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/122/2026</i>	<i>Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held 19/08/2026</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/123/2026</i>	<i>Minutes of Special Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 27/08/2026</i>	The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>
<i>C/124/2026</i>	<i>Correspondence Report</i>	It was agreed to note the correspondence report and the following correspondence:	<i>Democratic Services</i>	<i>Noted</i>	<i>Y</i>

		Correspondence from NILGA re: Conference scheduled for 8 October 2026 - Members to contact Democratic Services if they wish to attend.			
<i>C/125/2026</i>	<i>Notice of Motion – Public Drinking Laws</i>	The Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6	<i>S Murphy</i>	<i>Referred to Sustainability and Environment Committee.</i>	<i>Y</i>

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: NMD/C/

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 7 September 2026 at 6.00pm in Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor G Hanna

In attendance in Chamber:	Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Bowsie
	Councillor J Brennan	Councillor P Byrne
	Councillor P Campbell	Councillor L Devlin
	Councillor K Feehan	Councillor C Galbraith
	Councillor V Harte	Councillor M Hearty
	Councillor J Jackson	Councillor G Kearns
	Councillor A King	Councillor N Lawlor
	Councillor D Lee-Surginor	Councillor A Lewis
	Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D Murphy
	Councillor K Murphy	Councillor S Murphy
	Councillor A Quinn	Councillor M Rice
	Councillor M Ruane	Councillor J Tinnelly

In attendance via Teams:	Councillor C Enright	Councillor O Hanlon
	Councillor R Howell	Councillor C King
	Councillor M Larkin	Councillor S O'Hare
	Councillor H Reilly	Councillor D Taylor
	Councillor J Truesdale	

Officials in attendance: Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
 Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
 Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability and Environment
 Mr A Patterson, Director of Active and Healthy Communities
 Mrs A Jones, Director of Corporate Services
 Ms E Kirk, Assistant Director of People & Legal
 Ms D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer
 Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

C/113/2026: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Finn, Howie, Magennis, McAteer and Young.

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Reilly who had joined the meeting online after being in hospital.

The Chairperson took the opportunity to share some of the highlights over the previous month which included attending events for the following:

- Skiffie Festival
- The Ulster Scots
- Downpatrick Cricket Club
- Violence against Women and Girls events including one in Craigavon
- Launch of the redevelopment of Irish Street, Downpatrick
- Retail NI High Street Heroes in Annalong and Newry
- Heart O' Down Pipe Band and Drum Major Championships Heroes
- Kilkeel Leisure Centre
- Reception Garden party a Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn
- The Mourne Chamber of Festival Music at Newcastle Cinema
- New Accessible Pathway at Dunleath Park
- Cruise ship at Warrenpoint
- Eats and Beats, Newcastle

The Chairperson took the opportunity to mention that he had met that morning with the Newry Canal Working Group and how the project was moving well and it was hoped something would be done for the development of the Canal if funding could be sourced.

C/114/2026: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C/115/2026: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3 AUGUST 2026

Read: Action sheet from Council Meeting held on 3 August 2026.
(Copy circulated)

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor Andrews, the Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 3 August 2026 was agreed.**

COUNCIL MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/116/2026: MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3 AUGUST 2026

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 3 August 2026 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 3 August 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/117/2026: MINUTES OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24 AUGUST 2026

Read: Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 24 August 2026 (copy circulated).

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Jackson, the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 24 August 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, subject to an amendment to the attendance list.**

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/118/2026 MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30 JULY 2026

Read: Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 30 July 2026 (**copy circulated**).

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Devlin, the Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting held on 30 July 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/119/2026 MINUTES OF ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 AUGUST 2026

Read: Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 10 August 2026 (**copy circulated**).

ERT/079/2026 – FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CALL 1.1 & 2

Councillor Lewis enquired as to when the letters of offer would be issued to which Mr Mallon confirmed that would be once the minutes were approved by Council and following the 5 day call in period.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Andrews, the Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 10 August 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/120/2026

**MINUTES OF STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 AUGUST 2026**

Read: Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 August 2026 **(copy circulated)**.

The Chief Executive advised an error had been made on the information the Chairperson had read out when resuming open session at the Committee Meeting.

For the purposes of correcting the recording Mrs Jones outlined that it should read as follows:

ITEM 18 – REQUEST FOR EASEMENT AT LIGHTHOUSE CAR PARK CASTLEWELLAN

On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Aurla King, it was agreed to grant an easement for electricity cables under that portion of the Council facility known as The Lighthouse Road Car Park, Castlewellan as shown by a green line on the map attached to the officer's report to the adjoining Landowner for market value consideration, subject to payment of Council's legal and valuation costs.

ITEM 19 – LICENSE FOR PORTION OF BURREN VILLAGE GREEN

On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to grant a licence of Burren Village Green as shown outlined in yellow on the map attached, to the group named in the officer's report for a term of 5 years at a peppercorn licence fee, subject to Departmental Consent.

SPR/111/2026 – OFFICERS REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – ALL ISLAND CITIZEN ASSEMBLY

Councillor Bowsie voiced his opposition to the recommendation and decision of the Committee for an All-Island Citizen Assembly. He stated all political parties had the right to fight for their political aspirations but that it was not okay to ask Council officers to engage in plans for Irish unity. He further commented that Council management should step in as it was outside the remit of local government and Council staff and that the focus should be on Council services.

Councillor Quinn responded by stating it had been well recorded at the Committee meeting that these issues were DUP's point of view and that she did not think it was necessary to drag up issues that had already been addressed at that meeting.

Councillor Bowsie pointed out the recommendation was asking Council officers to engage in politically motivated research and that this was something Council officers should not be doing, they should be focusing on leisure services, waste collection etc.

For clarity Councillor Byrne pointed out the matter had been discussed at length at Committee and it had been made clear Council that officials were not being asked to go out and carry out any politically charged work and to raise the issue again after the full discussion that had taken place was political point scoring. He added forums were used to gather the views of the Council and District and allowed everyone to share their views, whether that was unity, a stronger union or neither, and asking for views on different services such as duplication of services and the New Ireland Working Group would thrash

out the questions for the people of the District. He asked that all councillors engage in the New Ireland Working Group as SDLP and Sinn Fein engaged in the New Ulster Scots British Working Group because it was important to reach out on both sides.

Councillor Reilly spoke in agreement with Councillor Bowsie stating it was clearly a political project that Council should not be undertaking, and to compare it with the Ulster Scots British tradition was unreasonable as the latter was purely cultural. He said he was astonished with the officers' report as he felt it was controversial because 25% of the District had no affinity with Irish republicanism whatsoever yet rate money was going to be used to prepare a report that diminished their place in the United Kingdom and their national identity.

Councillor Reilly enquired about an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) that had not yet been carried out, commenting that it was akin to putting the cart before the horse to allow this to go ahead and then do an EQIA.

Councillor Taylor spoke in support of Councillor Bowsie and Councillor Reilly regarding the subject and how it was a heavily political project. He voiced disappointment at Councillor Byrnes comments regarding the Ulster Scots Committee as he believed that the two were not the same as there was nothing political about Ulster Scots as it was about the promotion and protection of cultural rights within the District.

Councillor Taylor pointed out that the motion had the real prospect of alienating the unionist community and creating the perception that Council was a cold house for the unionist community. He added Council should be focusing on local issues instead of trying to pursue constitutional political agendas.

Councillor Quinn responded by saying she would not rehash what had already been discussed at the Committee meeting. She pointed out she had been elected on a mandate, and the idea of a constitutional future was because young people were being frozen out of homes, out of jobs, immigrating and could not see a future at the minute. They needed access to proper healthcare, housing and education instead of having a two-tiered system whereby people who lived in South Armagh had a lower life expectancy than someone that lived in Dundalk. She added the whole idea was to help plan and prepare for the future because a referendum was coming and whatever the outcome was entirely up to the people and Council needed to plan for it.

Councillor Quinn stated that if Members had an issue with the constitutional question or had facts that represented a different agenda then they should come to the New Ireland Working Group to discuss these. She added she was happy to speak to anyone who had information that was going to improve the current situation.

In response to the point raised by Councillor Reilly regarding the EQIA, the Chief Executive pointed out an EQIA would be carried following a decision by Council, and one would not be completed prior to a decision being reached.

Councillor Bowsie proposed not to support the recommendation of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee, seconded by Councillor Lewis.

As there was dissent in the chamber the Chairperson put the matter to a recorded vote, the results of which were as follows: (copy attached)

FOR:	6
AGAINST:	26
ABSTENTIONS:	2

The Chairperson declared the proposal lost.

SPR/112/2026 – BRCD TOURISM PROJECT PROGRAMME

Councillor Tinnelly voiced his concern regarding the establishment of a project board commenting it was a premature exercise at this stage. He made reference to an MLA having said that the money for the project was no longer available and asked the Chief Executive and/or Director leading the project whether that was the case.

Councillor Tinnelly stated he was passionate about the potential project because Kilbroney was involved and spoke of how Kilbroney Park was unique within the District. He said he was raising concerns that should the money be unavailable then Council were being sent on wild goose chase which would be unacceptable because there had been no accountability on the Gondola project.

The Chief Executive said she could not comment on any MLA statement, however she confirmed that it had been reported clearly and openly through Council that all BRCD partners were in support of the development of the project and that officers would be working towards the outline business case stage for the purposes of securing the money. She added it had been very clear from all political party levels, including the Executive, that they wished to see the money stay within the District and that was what officers were trying to ensure with the outline business case.

The Chief Executive added that the purpose of having a project board was to ensure that all Elected Members were kept informed of progress and issues, and also that they were to help officers deliver on the outline business case. She confirmed that the establishment of a project board was also to ensure governance was managed appropriately.

She added that as far as the proposal for the Gateway to the Mourne, Council had responded on the RSK report and whilst it was not an agenda item, the Gateway Project had been discussed within the chamber, the National Trust had met with Members at Council and that Members had agreed to a memorandum of understanding signed with the National Trust following the RSK report. She confirmed that it had been clear that the National Trust had been involved in the development of the project and the work had been stopped by the National Trust, which the Trust themselves had confirmed with Members at the Special Council meeting.

Agreed:	On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Mathers, the Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 August 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.
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C/121/2026

**MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 AUGUST 2026**

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 17 August 2026 **(copy circulated)**.

**AHC/058/2025 – OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – ADDITIONAL
TRAINING PROVISION FOR GAELIC GAMES**

Councillor Tinnelly noted that while he had been in attendance at the meeting, he had missed the discussion on the above item. He voiced his disbelief at the contents of the officer's report and questioned why there had been no mention of the Kilbroney Park project and requested an update on the project.

Mr Patterson advised the report presented to Committee was a summary report with an appendix listing various capital projects and projects that were being worked on. He advised that it was not a comprehensive list of all projects that were being developed. He confirmed that work was ongoing on the Kilbroney project, with surveys having taken place over the summer months as some were seasonal and officers were awaiting that information to be compiled by the consultancy team, which would then be presented to the capital team and then submitted through to planning for further consideration.

Mr Patterson further advised a meeting would be held with DEA councillors later in the month to provide an update to that effect.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, the Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 17 August 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/122/2026

**MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 AUGUST 2026**

Read: Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 19 August 2026 **(copy circulated)**.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor Hearty, the Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 19 August 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.**

C/123/2026

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL STRATEGY POLICY AND RESOURCES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27 AUGUST 2026**

Read: Minutes of Special Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 27 August 2026 **(copy circulated)**.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Rice, seconded by Councillor Mathers, the Minutes of Sustainability and**

C/124/2026:

Environment Committee Meeting held on 27 August 2026 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted.
CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Read:

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

The Chief Executive advised that any Members wishing to attend the NILGA Conference scheduled for 8 October 2026 to contact Democratic Services as soon as possible.

Agreed:

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

- **Correspondence from NILGA re: Conference scheduled for 8 October 2026 – Members to contact Democratic Services if they wish to attend.**

C/125/2026:

NOTICE OF MOTION – PUBLIC DRINKING LAWS

The following Motion had been received from Councillor Trusdale:

"That this Council supports proposed changes to public drinking laws that would grant officials the authority to request the surrender of alcoholic beverages in designated public areas.

This forms part of a broader initiative led by the Stormont Department for Communities and the Department of Justice to modernize legislation addressing anti-social behaviour and alcohol consumption in public spaces.

Under the proposed amendments to the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008, council officers would be empowered to ask individuals to voluntarily surrender alcoholic drinks in areas where public drinking is restricted. While council staff would not have the power to forcibly confiscate alcohol, police officers would retain the authority to enforce surrender and issue fixed penalty notices to those who refuse to comply."

This was seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor.

Agreed:

The Motion was referred to the Sustainability & Environment Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.46pm.

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 5 October 2026.

Signed:

Councillor G Hanna
Chairperson

Marie Ward
Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 09/09/26. VENUE: Downshire Civic Centre & MS Teams. MEETING: Council.
 SUBJECT OF VOTE: August SPR Meeting - Councillor Bowsie proposed not to support the recommendation of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee, seconded by Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews		Against		
C Bowsie	For			
J Brennan		Against		
P Byrne		Against		
P Campbell		Against		
W Clarke				Absent
L Devlin		Against		
C Enright		Against		
K Feehan		Against		
D Finn				Absent
C Galbraith		Against		
M Gibbons				Absent
O Hanlon		Against		
G Hanna	For			
V Harte		Against		
M Hearty		Against		
R Howell		Against		
T Howie				Absent
J Jackson	For			
G Kearns		Against		
A King		Against		
C King		Against		
M Larkin		Against		
N Lawlor		Against		
D Lee-Surginor			Abstain	
A Lewis	For			
O Magennis				Absent
A Mathers		Against		
D McAteer				Absent
D Murphy		Against		
K Murphy		Against		
S Murphy		Against		
S O'Hare		Against		
A Quinn		Against		
H Reilly	For			
M Rice		Against		
M Ruane		Against		
D Taylor	For			
J Tinnelly		Against		
J Truesdale			Abstain	
H Young				Absent
TOTALS	6	26	2	7

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting
held on Monday 14 September 2026 at 6.00pm in Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town
Hall**

Chairperson: Councillor K Feehan

Committee Members:

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor G Hanna
Councillor G Kearns	Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor N Lawlor	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor S Murphy	Councillor M Ruane
Councillor H Young	

Committee Members

in attendance via Teams: Councillor W Clarke

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

Officials in attendance

via Teams: Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

ERT/086/2026: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Quinn

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/087/2026: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**ERT/088/2026: ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 10 AUGUST 2026**

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on 10 August 2026. **(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 10 August 2026.**

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

ERT/089/2026: **MOURNE GULLION LANDSCAPE CONNECTIONS PROJECT – BASELINE SURVEY**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Baseline Surveys for Mourne Gullion Landscape Connections Project. (Copy circulated)

Mrs Smyth outlined the report which sought approval of the business case detailed at Appendix 1 of the officer's report. She noted that one of the initial workstreams had been the commissioning of baseline ecological surveys, which were required to establish baseline data for measuring habitat condition, which was a key requirement of the project. Mrs Smyth confirmed that the baseline surveys were fully funded through the Lottery Heritage Fund and the DAERA Environment Fund.

Councillor Young noted that the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were in an unfavourable condition due to factors including wildfires, erosion and inappropriate development. She welcomed the proposed multi-agency approach and its alignment with the Council's Biodiversity Strategy and the Northern Ireland Environmental Improvement Plan. She highlighted risks associated with seasonal survey windows and queried how these risks had been assessed, whether contingency timescales had been identified, and if any related decisions would be taken on a multi-agency basis.

Mrs Smyth advised that the timing of the surveys had been agreed as part of the project, that multiple agencies were involved and were aware of the agreed timescales, and that the survey was progressing accordingly. She added that this was the first item of business to ensure the project was completed within the required timescales.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to approve the business case for Baseline Surveys for Mourne Gullion Landscape Connections Project as outlined in Appendix 1 of the officers' report.**

ERT/090/2026:**NIGHTTIME ECONOMY**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Nighttime Economy / Evening Living. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Smyth presented the report, which outlined the work undertaken since the previous Committee discussion to explore the development of a Night-Time Economy Action Plan for Downpatrick, Newcastle and Newry. She advised that engagement had taken place with Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Ashby de la Zouch Town Council and the Association of Town and City Management in relation to Purple Flag accreditation and best practice in supporting a safe, clean and vibrant night-time economy. She further advised that the proposed Enterprise and Regeneration Strategy would provide an opportunity to consider and shape future actions to support the night-time economy across the three locations.

Councillor Hanlon welcomed the report and sought clarification on the proposed timeline, noting that the original Motion had been submitted in April and that engagement with regeneration groups had yet to take place. She also highlighted changing patterns within the night-time economy, noting the success of a recent museum event which had operated from 4.00pm to 9.00pm.

In response, Mrs Smyth advised that the next stage would involve the procurement of external consultancy support to assist with the development of the strategy. She further advised that engagement with regeneration groups was expected to take place before Christmas 2026 and continue into early 2027.

Councillor Galbraith welcomed the report, thanked officers for their work to date and echoed Councillor Hanlon's comments regarding changing patterns in the night-time economy.

Councillor Hanna questioned the suitability of Downpatrick and Newcastle pursuing Purple Flag accreditation given their smaller populations, to which Mrs Smyth advised that Purple Flag accreditation was determined by the quality and operation of a location's night-time economy rather than its population size. She noted that Belfast and Derry/Londonderry held Purple Flag status and that Newry had previously been accredited. She further advised that the accreditation process considered factors such as evening activity, accessibility, transport, public conveniences and safety.

Following a further query from Councillor Hanna, Mr Mallon advised that Purple Flag provided an established framework for assessing and improving the night-time economy. He noted that, while some elements might not be applicable in smaller towns, the framework could help identify appropriate interventions and inform future improvements. He further advised that the proposed Council-wide strategy would consider both daytime and night-time economies across the district, with any recommendations informed through engagement with local chambers of commerce and regeneration groups.

Councillor Hanlon noted that, while Downpatrick had a resident population of approximately 11,500, the wider DEA population was closer to 21,000 and supported the town centre. She also

highlighted the impact of recent flooding and emphasised the importance of regeneration initiatives in supporting local businesses and the town's recovery.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Galbraith, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to engage with Downpatrick Regeneration Working Group, Newry Regeneration Working Group, Newry BID and Chambers of Commerce within the district to develop recommendations for a nighttime economy action plan through the new Enterprise and Regeneration Strategy.

ERT/091/2026: RING OF GULLION LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Ring of Gullion Landscape Partnership Scheme - Legacy phase project – Heritage Festival. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Smyth outlined the report, which detailed proposals for a Heritage Festival, as set out in Section 2.2 and the accompanying appendix. She advised that approval was sought to issue a Service Level Agreement for the delivery of the Heritage Festival Landscape Partnership Legacy Phase Project.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve issuing of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for the delivery Ring of Gullion Heritage Festival Landscape Partnership Legacy phase project as set out in section 2 of the officers' report.

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

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

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

ERT/092/2026: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: CALL 1 2027/28

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Financial Assistance: Call 1 2027/28. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed to proceed with the delivery of call 1 financial assistance for 27/28 revenue projects, in line with the timeframe and themes outlined within the officer's report.**

FOR NOTING

ERT/093/2026: BATHING WATERS CONSULTATION

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Consultation Response on the Bathing Waters Policy Review for Northern Ireland. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to note the consultation response submitted by the deadline of 21 August 2026.**

In response to a query from Councillor Lee-Surginor regarding accessibility, Mr Mallon advised that the dashboard was available online. He confirmed that Council had submitted a corporate response to the consultation and noted that members of the public and other stakeholders could also submit responses. He further advised that a link to the dashboard could be provided to Members.

ERT/094/2026: HARBOURS BILL

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, Consultation Response on the Harbours Bill. **(Copy circulated)**

In response to a query from Councillor Young regarding ongoing public concerns relating to odours and noise associated with port operations, and the mechanisms available to the Department to intervene in any future comparable situations, Mr Mallon advised that he would revert to her outside the meeting.

NMD MUSEUMS QUARTERLY UPDATE

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding NMD Museums Quarterly Update Report (Q1 26/27 Apr-Jun). **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to note the update on the activities, programming and achievements of NMD Museums.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.22pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 5 October 2026

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

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

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 17 September 2026 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre

In the Chair: Councillor C Bowsie

**In Attendance in
Chamber:**

Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor C King
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D McAteer
Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor M Rice

**Committee Members in
Attendance via Teams:**

Councillor P Byrne	Councillor R Howell
Councillor T Howie	Councillor A King
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J Truesdale	

**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
Ms A Jones, Director of Corporate Services
Ms V Keegan, Assistant Director of Digital and Communications
Ms E Kirk, Assistant Director Legal & People
Ms J Tierney, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
Mrs A McAlarney, Development Manager - Planning
Ms M Hughes, HR & OD Manager
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/139/2026: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSONS REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Hearty.

SPR/140/2026: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**SPR/141/2026: ACTION SHEET OF STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES
MEETING HELD ON 13 AND 27 AUGUST 2026**

Read: Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 13 and 27 August 2026. (Copy circulated)

SPR/130/2026 – Local Authority Deeds

Councillor Bowsie requested an update on the information that was to be brought back to Committee, to which Mrs Murphy advised that the information had been provided to Councillor Reilly directly.

SPR/071/2026 – LDP Revised Timetable

Councillor McAteer queried whether any progress had been made on the request for reducing the timeline regarding the LDP completion.

Mr McGilly advised that an additional examiner had been appointed by the Department which would potentially speed up the independent examination process, however it would still require legislative change.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor C King, it was agreed to note the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 13 and 27 August 2026.**

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Rice, 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 Hanlon, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

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

SPR/142/2026: DOWNPATRICK CHURCH STREET PUBLIC REALM SCHEME

Read: Report from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director: Regeneration, regarding Downpatrick Church Street Public Realm Scheme. (Copy circulated)

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

allocation of project risk allowance as detailed in sections 2.1, 2.2 and 4.1 of the officer's report.

SPR/143/2026: KILKEEL LOWER SQUARE AND RIVER WALK EI SCHEME

Read: Report from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director: Regeneration, regarding Kilkeel Lower Square and River Walk EI Scheme. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Rice, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to approve the allocation of project risk allowance as detailed in sections 2.1, 2.2 and 4.1 of the officer's report.

SPR/144/2026: FACILITY REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Facility Refurbishment Project. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve the final project costs and payment to the contractor as detailed within the officer's report.

SPR/145/2026: HR STRUCTURE

Read: Report from Ms M Hughes, HR & OD Manager, regarding HR Structure. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor C King, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve the proposed HR & OD structure and associated additional payroll costs as detailed in the officer's report.

SPR/146/2026: LICENCE RE HYDROMETRIC UNITS AT VICTORIA LOCKS, NEWRY, AND CANAL BANK 1 CAR PARK, MILL STREET, NEWRY

Read: Report from Ms E kirk, Assistant Director of Legal & People, regarding Licence re Hydrometric Units at Victoria Locks, Newry and Canal Bank 1 Car Park, Mill Street. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to grant licences to the Department for Infrastructure – Rivers

Agency in respect of Hydrometric Units for measuring water levels at Victoria Locks and Canal Bank 1 car park for a term of 10 years subject to a peppercorn licence fee.

SPR/147/2026: PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY BETWEEN RINGHADDY ROAD AND QUARTERLAND ROAD

Read: Report from Ms E kirk, Assistant Director of Legal & People, regarding Public Right of Way between Ringhaddy Road and Quarterland Road. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Howie, it was agreed to approve the Heads of Terms as detailed at section 2.2 of the officer's report. It was also agreed that officers will engage with the residents' group and two other landowners that have an interest in the Public Right of Way.**

SPR/148/2026: CORPORATE WEBSITE HOSTING AND WEB SERVICES CONTRACT

Read: Report from Mrs V Keegan, Assistant Director: Digital & Communication, regarding Corporate Website Hosting and Web Services Contract. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to approve the establishment of a formal contract with the current supplier for the provision of website hosting and associated web services for an initial period of three years, with the option for Council to extend for up to two further periods of one year each, subject to satisfactory performance, continued business need, budget availability and compliance with the terms of the contract.**

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

SPR/149/2026: MINUTES OF STRATEGIC FINANCE WORKING GROUP MEETING OF 4 AUGUST 2026

Read: Minutes of Strategic Finance Working Group Meeting held 4 August 2026. (Copy circulated)

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

SPR/150/2026: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS UPDATE – QUARTER 1 2026/27

Read: Report from Ms A Jones, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Management Accounts Update – Quarter 1 2026/27. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to note the quarter 1 2026/27 Management Accounts.**

FOR NOTING

SPR/151/2026: MINISTERS MEMO AND CO-CHAIRS LETTER

Read: Report from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive, regarding Ministers Memo and Co-Chairs Letter. (Copy circulated)

Mrs Ward advised that the correspondence had been copied to all Ministers and relevant Departments to advise that SOLACE and the Department for Communities were working collaboratively to establish a Collaboration and Delivery Agreement regarding financial arrangements between central and local government and Ministers.

Councillor McAteer welcomed a close working relationship between central and local government.

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

SPR/152/2026: PLANNING UPDATE REPORT

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

Mr McGilly advised that the report had been presented for noting and provided a detailed breakdown of planning performance across Development Management, Enforcement and the Local Development Plan. He explained that it reflected ongoing monitoring of the service relating to the 2025/26 financial year and represented the most up-to-date performance data available at local level.

Councillor Hanlon welcomed the detailed planning performance report, stating that it would assist Members in responding to queries from applicants and agents, acknowledged the ongoing pressures facing the Planning Department and commended staff for their work.

She sought clarification on how applications were allocated across the district, including whether allocations were made in date order and whether certain application types, such as changes of use, could be processed more quickly.

Mr McGilly advised that applications were prioritised based on a range of factors and were therefore not always allocated strictly in date order across the district. He stated that staffing levels and resource availability could vary between areas, impacting allocation times and confirmed that work had recently been undertaken to address backlogs in certain areas by redistributing applications where possible.

Mrs McAlarney advised that a number of categories of development were prioritised within the planning process, noting that planning services operated through three teams across the district, each dealing with differing application volumes and staffing levels, resulting in variations in allocation times.

Councillor Hanlon queried whether change of use applications could be considered under economic development and potentially be prioritised, to which Mrs McAlarney advised that it could be, and advised applicants to highlight these during the application process.

Councillor McAteer welcomed the report and noted the improvements in planning performance, commented on the difficulties faced by Members in explaining delays to applicants and queried whether planning staffing levels from the comparable Council noted within the report could help shape any plans for improvement.

Councillor McAteer also raised concerns regarding seasonal survey requirements, particularly bat surveys, which could result in significant delays to applications and queried whether there was a more flexible approach that could be adopted to allow applications to progress while still ensuring the necessary survey requirements were met.

Mr McGilly advised that comparative information on planning staff structures in other Councils could be provided at a future meeting. He explained that the validation checklist had been introduced to identify all necessary survey requirements at the outset and to ensure applications were only validated once the required information had been submitted. He added that biodiversity checklists assisted in identifying survey requirements and emphasised that agents and applicants should be aware of these requirements prior to submission, thereby helping to ensure that additional survey requirements did not arise unexpectedly during the application process.

Mrs McAlarney advised that the validation checklist had only been in place since 1 June and was ensuring that applications were submitted with all necessary information at the outset, which helped to reduce any potential additions to the backlog. She explained that, previously, requests for surveys had often arisen during the processing stage, resulting in delays due to the seasonal nature of some survey requirements. Mrs McAlarney stated that the validation checklist should largely eliminate these issues by identifying survey requirements before applications were validated.

Councillor McAteer sought clarification on whether the validation checklist comprehensively identified all potential survey and assessment requirements at the outset of the application process. Referring to a previous case involving hedgerow removal and a subsequent requirement for additional environmental assessment, he queried whether the checklist was sufficiently detailed to ensure applicants were made aware of all likely requirements in advance and to minimise unforeseen requests arising later in the process.

Mr McGilly advised that processing applications without the necessary surveys could create difficulties later in the process, as consultation responses might identify additional issues. He stated that the validation checklist remained the key mechanism for addressing these matters and was proving effective in ensuring applications were submitted with the required information.

Councillor Rice referred to the report's indication that the Council had the second highest number of planning applications in Northern Ireland and sought information on how the Council's staffing resources compared with those of other Councils and queried whether additional resources could be secured to help manage the high volume of applications received within the district.

Mr McGilly advised that he could provide comparative analysis on staffing levels and structures across other councils at a future meeting. He noted that different councils operated varying planning structures and processes and that the Council continually reviewed its own arrangements to identify improvements. He further advised that a review of current processes was ongoing and that an update on this work would be brought to a future Committee meeting.

Mr Mallon advised that the Council had been engaging with the Department at a senior level as part of its planning improvement programme. He stated that feedback from the Department indicated that the Planning Department had an adequate staffing structure and resource level relative to its workload. Mr Mallon noted, however, that the key challenge facing the service related to the existing backlog of applications rather than staffing resources.

Councillor Rice expressed the view that, given the significant backlog of planning applications, additional resources should be considered to help address the issue. He commented that if the primary challenge facing the service was the backlog rather than staffing levels, further support or resources should be provided to assist in reducing it.

Mr Mallon advised that Planning officers had recently engaged with the Department as part of the Planning Improvement Process to explore additional approaches to managing both new planning applications and the existing backlog. He stated that proposals arising from this work were currently being developed and that a report outlining the intended actions would be brought to the Committee at its next meeting.

Councillor McAteer queried whether there were any updates regarding the involvement of the external consultant, to which Mr Mallon advised that it was still early in the process, and a report would be brought back to Committee in due course.

Councillor Hanlon queried when a follow up report would be tabled for Members consideration, to which Mr McGilly advised that a report could be tabled quarterly, to reflect the availability of NISRA planning statistics.

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

SPR/153/2026: **ANNUAL REGISTRATION SERVICES REPORT 2025/26**

Read: Report from Ms E Kirk, Assistant Director of Legal & People, regarding Annual Registration Services Report 2025/26. (Copy circulated)

Ms Kirk advised that the report set out the first annual registration report for 2025/26.

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

SPR/154/2026: **MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING OF 30 JUNE 2026**

Read: Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting of 30 June 2026. (Copy circulated)

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

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 6.55pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 5 October 2026.

Signed: _____
Councillor Callum Bowsie
Chairperson

Signed: _____
Marie Ward
Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: AHC/2026

Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 21 September 2026 at 6.00pm in the Council Chambers, Downshire Civic Centre

Chairperson: Councillor T Howie

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor J Brennan	Councillor P Campbell
Councillor C Galbraith	Councillor J Jackson
Councillor A King	Councillor N Lawlor
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor K Murphy

Committee Members in attendance via Teams:

Councillor D Finn	Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor R Howell	Councillor D Lee-Surginor
Councillor A Lewis	Councillor Magennis

Officials in Chamber: Mr A Patterson, Director, Active and Healthy Communities
Mr C Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy Living
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Community Development
Ms D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

AHC/066/2026: APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

There were no apologies.

AHC/067/2026: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AHC/068/2026: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 AUGUST 2026

Read: Action sheet of the Active & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 17 August 2026. (Copy circulated).

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on Monday 17 August 2026.**

AHC/069/2026: DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA (DEA) FORUMS UPDATE REPORT

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

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor King, it was agreed to note the report and approve the actions in the Action Sheets attached for:**

- **Newry DEA Forum Meeting held on 4 August 2026**
- **Slieve Gullion DEA Forum Meeting held on 4 August 2026**
- **Downpatrick DEA Forum Meeting held on 11 August 2026**
- **Rowallane DEA Forum Meeting held on 18 August 2026**

AHC/070/2026: LEISURE CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS 2026-2027

Read: Report from Conor Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding leisure closing arrangements for 2026-2027. (Copy circulated)

The Chairperson asked that the dates for leisure closure arrangements be communicated clearly with facility users.

Mr Haughey confirmed notifications would go out via the Be Active App and Council public notices.

Councillor Mathers enquired about staff training days particularly for Newry Leisure Centre with reference made to reduced hours subject to staff cover.

Mr Haughey explained these were annual training dates in all centres, as highlighted in the appendix and due to training taking place from mid-morning to 6pm it was subject to staff cover as rotas and shift patterns may be changed to enable staff to take part in training. He added there were occasions when centres had to close a bit earlier due to that however most of the time they were open between 6pm to 10pm in all centres.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve the leisure closure arrangements for the 2026/27 period as detailed within appendix 1 of the officer's report.**

FOR NOTING

AHC/071/2026:

FUNDED PROGRAMME DELIVERY UPDATE

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director: Community Development regarding correspondence in relation to confirmation of funding for the 2026/27 Good Relations Programme and Ending Violence against Women and Girls Fund. (Copy circulated)

Councillor Lee-Surginor took the opportunity to welcome the Executive Office approving the budget allocation and issue of Letters of Offer for the 2026/27 District Council Good Relations Programme and Ending Violence against Women and Girls Fund.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jackson it was agreed to note the correspondence from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister confirming budget allocation for the 2026/27 District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) and Ending Violence against Women and Girls Fund (EVAWG).

AHC/072/2026:

INDOOR LEISURE BOOKING PRIORITISATION

Read: Report from Conor Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding how booking requests for facility hire are prioritised within indoor leisure facilities. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

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

AHC/073/2026:

INDOOR LEISURE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION 2026

Read: Report from Conor Haughey, Assistant Director, Healthy living regarding the findings of the Indoor Leisure Customer Satisfaction Survey and Mystery Shopper Programme undertaken during 2026. (Copy circulated)

Councillors Galbraith and Brennan expressed concern at the lift to the vitality suite in the Down Leisure Centre having been out of order for quite a while and asked for an update.

Mr Haughey said unfortunately the lift was still out of order and that officers had met that day with the contractor regarding difficulties in getting specialised parts for the lift. There was to be a further meeting, the outcome of which would be communicated to Members.

Mr Haughey advised that whilst not the best solution there was a lift to the front of the building and assured members discussions were ongoing to get the other lift operational again. He added that the problem with the lift was due to members of the public going into the lift from the pool side and that they were wet and that was affecting corrosion on the cable etc. Members were informed there had been a total revamp on the lift itself had been completed however it was electrical issues that were causing problems at the minute and an update would be provided once available.

Councillor Mathers stated he was glad the report showed service users were generally happy with the Leisure services; however he wished to reiterate his concerns which had already been highlighted regarding some instances of dissatisfaction among service users in terms of classes being cancelled at short notice. He added communication was key and that officers should speak to some of the service users and gather ideas as to how to alleviate these problems moving forward.

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

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.10pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 5 October 2026.

Signed: _____
Councillor T Howie
Chairperson

Signed: _____
Andrew Patterson
Director Active and Healthy Communities

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ref: SE/2026

Minutes of Sustainability & Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 19 August 2026 at 6.00pm in Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall

Chair: Councillor M Ruane

**In attendance in
Chamber:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor K Feehan
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Murphy	Councillor S O'Hare

**Committee Members in
Attendance via Teams:**

Councillor J Brennan	Councillor D Finn
Councillor M Hearty	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor J Truesdale	Councillor H Young

Officials in Chamber:

Mrs S Murphy, Director, Sustainability and Environment
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability
Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in Attendance
via Teams:**

Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

SE/094/2026:

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Campbell and Taylor.

SE/095/2026:

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SE/096/2026:

**ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 2026**

Read:

Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 June 2026. (Copy circulated)

SE/076/2026 – Bus Shelter Requests

In response to a query on the above item from Councillor Andrews, Mr Sage advised that officers would revert to him outside of the meeting.

SE/046/2024 – Notice of Motion – Newry Market

In response to a query from Councillor Feehan regarding Newry Christmas market and whether there are any plans for this to be a permanent event, Mr Sage advised that officers would revert to him outside of the meeting.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 17 June 2026.**

Although not included on the action sheet, Councillor Jackson enquired about the review of public toilets across the District. Mr Sage advised that condition surveys had been undertaken across Council facilities and that the findings would inform the prioritisation of refurbishment and replacement works. He further advised that an update would be provided to the September Sustainability and Environment Working Group.

Members commended the Cleansing Department for its work in maintaining the cleanliness and appearance of the district during several high-profile events held over the summer period.

FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION

SE/097/2025: SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

Read: Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Update on the Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy following Public Consultation. (Copy circulated)

Mr Sage presented the report seeking approval for the publication and launch of the final Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. He advised that the strategy had been subject to public consultation following Committee approval in October 2025 and that feedback received from Members, staff, stakeholders and the public had informed the final draft. He noted that amendments arising from the consultation process were set out in Appendix 1 and that, subject to Council ratification, the strategy was scheduled for launch in September 2026, supported by a communications and awareness campaign.

In proposing the recommendations, Councillor Andrews welcomed the broad range of contributions received during the consultation process and highlighted the importance of securing support from a variety of stakeholders on such a significant issue. This was seconded by Councillor Feehan

Councillor Jackson requested a recorded vote on the item, stating that the DUP could not support the recommendations on the basis that it did not agree with the target of achieving Net Zero by 2050, which it considered to be unachievable.

This was endorsed by Councillor Reilly, who expressed concerns regarding aspects of the Strategy and stated that he considered the images used of flooding in Downpatrick and Newry to be misleading. He argued that flooding in the Clanrye and Quoile rivers was attributable to a lack of dredging and that local carbon reduction measures would not prevent such flooding. He further stated that local decarbonisation measures would have limited impact in the context of global emissions.

Councillor Truesdale welcomed the strategy and commended the work undertaken in its development. She highlighted the clear five-theme framework and noted the strategy's focus on direct emissions reductions, alignment with statutory requirements, inclusion of baseline carbon emissions data and consideration of local climate impacts. She sought clarification on the monitoring of actions and whether budgets, ownership and implementation details would be incorporated into future iterations of the action plan.

In response, Mr Sage advised that the action plan represented the first year of implementation and would be developed further, including the identification of budgets and action owners. He noted that many actions would require business cases and funding, with priority given to measures that would deliver the greatest impact. He added that progress would be reported annually and that the action plan would be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

Councillor Finn welcomed the strategy and echoed the comments regarding the work undertaken in its preparation. She highlighted the importance of the Council demonstrating leadership in addressing climate change and sought details on how the strategy would be promoted and communicated to the public.

Mr Sage advised that the launch of the strategy would be supported by a public awareness campaign developed in conjunction with the Communications and Marketing Department, together with engagement activities involving schools and community groups. He further advised that the Head of Sustainability would provide Councillor Finn with additional information on the launch arrangements outside of the meeting.

As there was dissent within the Chamber, the item was put to a recorded vote, the results of which were as follows: (copy appended to minutes).

FOR	11
AGAINST	2
ABSTENTION	0

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Feehan, to note the contents of the report and the outcomes of the public consultation process and to approve progression of the final draft Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy for publication and launch.

SE/098/2025: CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS UNDER THE TOBACCO AND VAPES ACT

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Consultation on proposals under the Tobacco and Vapes Act. (Copy circulated)

Mrs Trainor advised the report sought approval to submit Council's response to the Department of Health and Social Care consultation on regulatory proposals under the Tobacco and Vapes Act. She advised that the consultation sought views on proposals relating to the packaging, appearance and retail display of tobacco, vaping and nicotine products.

Councillor Truesdale welcomed the report, describing it as a strong and consistent response in support of tighter regulation. She noted that the protection of children and young people was a key theme throughout the response, together with the need for consistency across product types and the importance of ensuring that existing regulatory requirements did not hinder the introduction of new measures.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, the submission of the Environmental Health Department's consultation response detailed in appendix 1 of the officers' report, to the Department of Health and Social Care proposals for regulatory reform on packaging, appearance and display requirements was agreed.

SE/099/2025: THE TOY SAFETY REGULATIONS: CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Response to The Toy Safety Regulations: call for evidence. (Copy circulated)

Mrs Trainor advised that the purpose of the report was to seek approval to submit the Council's response to the Office for Product Safety and Standards consultation on proposed changes to the Toy (Safety) Regulations 2011. She advised that the consultation sought views on implementing elements of the new EU Toy Safety Regulation, with the aim of enhancing child protection and reducing the number of unsafe and non-compliant toys placed on the UK market.

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor D Murphy, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to approve the submission detailed at appendix 1 of the officers' report, in response to the call for evidence from the Office for Product Safety & Standards on considerations for recognition of new

EU product requirements to The Toy (Safety Regulations) within UK.

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SE/100/2025:

DAERA CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT AIR QUALITY (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS

Read: Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding DAERA consultation on the Draft Air Quality (Amendment) Regulations. (Copy circulated)

Mrs Trainor advised that the purpose of the report was to seek approval to submit the Council's response to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) consultation on proposed legislative amendments to strengthen air quality standards for particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) in Northern Ireland. She advised that the proposed amendments aimed to reduce harmful air pollution, protect public health and align local standards more closely with World Health Organisation guidance and emerging standards across the UK and Ireland. She further noted that DAERA had included 14 consultation questions, and the Council's proposed responses were set out in Appendix A of the officer's report.

In response to a query from Councillor Andrews regarding engagement with key sectors, including agriculture, Mrs Trainor confirmed that the consultation had been conducted on a public basis and that all interested organisations and stakeholders had the opportunity to submit responses.

Councillor Truesdale welcomed the report and expressed support for the proposed strengthening of air quality standards. She noted the well-established health impacts of particulate matter and agreed with officers' assessment that the proposed compliance date of 1 January 2028 would be challenging to achieve. She further acknowledged that delays in progressing the wider Clean Air Strategy had contributed to the timescales facing Councils.

Councillor Truesdale confirmed her support for the report recommendations and reiterated her support for the establishment of an independent Environmental Protection Agency, recognising the importance of clean air, clean water and the natural environment to public wellbeing.

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Andrews, to note the contents of the report concerning DAERA proposals to tighten annual average particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) limits, targets and objectives in Northern Ireland, approve the proposed consultation response detailed at appendix 1 of the officers report and agree that it is submitted to DAERA by the consultation deadline of 31 August 2026, subject to approval at Full Council.

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Jackson, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, 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 D 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/101/2026: BUSINESS CASE – VEHICLE AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT PARTS

Read: Report from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Business Case – Vehicle and Grounds Maintenance Equipment Parts. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to approve the recommendations of the business case as detailed in section 2.6 of the officers' report.

SE/102/2026: BUSINESS CASE – FOREST PARK ROUTEWAYS AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE WORKS

Read: Report from Mr Conor Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability regarding Business Case – Forest Park Routeways and Associated Landscape Works. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to approve the recommendation of the business case as detailed at section 2.5 of the officers' report.

SE/103/2026:

CONTRACT EXTENSIONS

Read:

Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Waste Management Contract Extensions. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to approve the contract extensions as detailed at Appendices 1 and 2 of the officers' report.

SE/104/2026:

MIXED DRY RECYCLABLES

Read:

Report from Mrs S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Extension of Mixed Dry Recycling Contracts. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to approve the extension of the contract for the receipt and processing of Mixed Dry Recyclables from 30 September 2026 to 31 March 2027.

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

SE/105/2026:

ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING IN-COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THURSDAY 28 MAY 2026 & JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN HELD ON 25 JUNE 2026

Read:

Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting In-Committee Minutes of Thursday 28 May 2026 & Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin Held On 25 June 2026. (Copy circulated)

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor D Murphy, to note the documents.

FOR NOTING

SE/106/2026: **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 28 MAY 2026**

Read: ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting No 106 Minutes Thursday 28 May 2026. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, to note the document.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.45pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 7 September 2026.

Signed: _____
Councillor M Ruane
Chairperson

Signed: _____
Mrs Sinead Murphy
Director of Sustainability & Environment

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 19/08/2026. VENUE: Warrenpoint Town Hall. MEETING: Sustainability and Environment Committee.

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Sustainability And Climate Change Strategy

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews	For			
J Brennan	For			
P Campbell				Absent
K Feehan	For			
D Finn	For			
M Hearty	For			
J Jackson		Against		
D Murphy	For			
K Murphy	For			
S O'Hare	For			
H Reilly		Against		
M Ruane	For			
D Taylor				Absent
J Truesdale	For			
H Young	For			
TOTALS	11	2	0	2