

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

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

In the Chair: Councillor V Harte

In attendance in Chamber:

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

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

**Officials in attendance
in Chamber:**

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

**Officials in attendance
Via Teams:**

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

C/204/2023 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

C/205/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FOR: 7
AGAINST: 28
ABSTENTIONS: 0

The proposed amendment was lost.

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

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

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

C/211/2023

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

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

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

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

C/212/2023

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

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

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

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

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

C/213/2023 PLANNING SECTION

There were no issues arising.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The following motion was received from Councillor Truesdale:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor McMurray.

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

C/220/2023 **NOTICE OF MOTION – CHILDCARE STRATEGY**

The following motion was received from Councillor S Murphy:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

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

C/221/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – A1 PRIORITISATION

The following motion was received from Councillor McMurray:

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

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Truesdale.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Councillor McMurray accepted Councillor McAteer's amendment.

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

The motion was unanimously approved.

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

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

C/222/2023

NOTICE OF MOTION – INITIATIVE REGARDING LIVESTOCK WORRYING

The following motion was received from Councillor Clarke:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Ruane.

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

C/223/2023

NOTICE OF MOTION – PROSTATE CANCER DRUG IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The following motion was received from Councillor Lee-Surginor:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Campbell.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Motion was unanimously approved.

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

The following motion was received from Councillors Byrne:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor King.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FOR:	9
AGAINST:	26
ABSTENTIONS:	0

The amended Motion was lost.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FOR:	26
AGAINST:	5
ABSTENTIONS:	4

The Motion was carried.

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

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

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

The following motion was received from Councillor Devlin:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Finn.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Councillor Devlin accepted Councillor Truesdale's amendment.

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

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

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

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

The Motion was unanimously approved.

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

C/226/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

The following motion was received from Councillor Howell:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Councillor Galbraith agreed to withdraw his amendment.

The Motion was unanimously approved.

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

C/227/2023 NOTICE OF MOTION – ROAD SAFETY

The following motion was received from Councillor Andrews:

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

The motion was seconded by Councillor Galbraith.

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

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

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

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 6th November 2023

VENUE: Downshire Civic Centre

MEETING: Council

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

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