

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/C/

Minutes of Council Meeting held on Monday 7 July 2025 at 6.00pm in Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor P Campbell

In attendance in Chamber:

Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor J Brennan
Councillor P Byrne	Councillor K Feehan
Councillor C Galbraith	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor V Harte	Councillor M Hearty
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor G Kearns
Councillor C King	Councillor M Larkin
Councillor Lee-Surginor	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor D McAteer
Councillor K Murphy	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Rice	Councillor M Ruane
Councillor G Sharvin	Councillor J Truesdale
Councillor H Young	

In attendance via Teams:

Councillor W Clarke	Councillor O Magennis
Councillor S O'Hare	Councillor S Murphy
Councillor A Quinn	Councillor D Taylor

Officials in attendance:

- Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
- Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
- Mrs S Murphy, Director of Sustainability and Environment
- Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
- Mrs D Starkey, Democratic Services Officer

C/098/2025

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Andrews, Devlin, Enright, Finn, Gibbons, Hanna, Howell, Howie, McEvoy, D Murphy and Tinnelly. Apologies were also received from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, and Mr Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities.

The Chairperson spoke of how since stepping into his role he had been privileged to represent the District visiting a variety of events and community programmes that showcased the best of the people and Council.

He spoke of the vibrant Wake the Giant Tourism Festival in Warrenpoint which once again showcased the creativity and spirit of local communities while underlining the growing importance of tourism to the District's economy.

The Chairperson also had the opportunity to host a wide range of visiting groups, including local primary schools, young ambassadors and community organisations that offered the chance to engage directly with those who were shaping the future of the District whether through education, civic engagement or grassroots action.

The Chairperson advised that throughout his term as Chair young people and communities would be at the core of the work he delivered and he was honoured to have attended a number of local events over the past few weeks including visiting Newry Street Unite in Kilkeel, a remarkable cross-community organisation led by passionate volunteers who provided essential services and support to local people.

The Chairperson said a significant milestone that month was the announcement of the Newry, Mourne and Down Draft Local Development Plan Strategy to shape the District's future with this long-term vision setting out a framework for sustainable growth, improved infrastructure and strengthened communities across the District. He said he was proud to have played a part in its launch and to support the planning that would shape the region for future generations.

The Chairperson wished to note another positive interagency meeting held in Newry in relation to the flooding in 2023, however it had been agreed there had been a lack of Council representation he hoped that going forward there would representation to address this issue.

C/099/2025 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C/100/2025 ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 JUNE 2025

Read: Action sheet from Council Meeting held on 2 June 2025.

Agreed: The Action Sheet from Council Meeting held on 2 June 2025 was agreed on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Harte.

*Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 15.05.2025:
SPR/073/2025: Approach to City, Town and Village Signage*

Councillor Bowsie advised he would withdraw his comment in relation to criticism for not putting the consultation into the report.

He spoke of the Call-in that had been lodged with only the six Unionist Councillors having signed it and not the seven Members required, thereby making it invalid. He said there were outstanding procedural issues on the call-in sheet and asked the Chief Executive to explain those procedures as it should not be the case that legitimate concerns by Unionists about procedural irregularities should only be examined if there was enough political weight to do so by a solicitor.

The Chief Executive advised the Call-in process was set within legislation determined by the Local Government Act and she was happy to revert to the Members on the issue outside of the meeting.

C/101/2025 COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 2 JUNE 2025

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 2 June 2025 (copy circulated).

Agreed: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 2 June 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mathers.

C/102/2025 COUNCIL MINUTES FOR ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 JUNE 2025

Read: Minutes of Council Meeting held on 2 June 2025 (copy circulated).

Agreed: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 2 June 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Larkin.

COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION

C/103/2025 MINUTES OF ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 JUNE 2025

Read: Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 9 June 2025 (copy circulated).

ERT/057/2025: ERT Business Plans

Councillor Byrne referred to the Tourism Strategy and the update provided at the meeting that work was ongoing and new branding would be delivered towards the end of the year and into next year. He enquired as to the timeframe for works in relation to the branding including the website, use of hashtags for events etc. and requested an update on work to date and a timetable be presented to the next ERT Committee.

The Chief Executive advised she would refer the matter to the Director.

Agreed: The Minutes of Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee Meeting held on 9 June 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted on the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Ruane.

C/104/2025

**MINUTES OF STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 JUNE 2025**

Read: Minutes of Strategy Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 June 2025 (copy circulated).

SPR/099/2025: Kilkeel Lower Square and River Walk EI Scheme

Councillor Reilly spoke of NI Water plans to remove a concrete manhole structure from the river and how that would inhibit work being carried out to improve the aesthetics of that area. He said he would like an urgent meeting with NI Water in relation to that, if even through the Mournes DEA forum.

The Chief Executive confirmed she would pick the matter up with the officer overseeing that project.

SPR/097/2025: Newry Canal Restoration Works – Lock 6

Councillor Feehan thanked officers for their work on Newry Canal restorations works on lock 6 stating it was a vital piece of the puzzle for the restoration of Newry Canal.

Councillor Feehan proposed officers put together a paper scoping out the scale of works and costs required to undertake similar restoration works from Lock 2 through to Lock 8.

Councillor Byrne seconded Councillor Feehan's proposal.

Agreed: The Minutes of Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 June 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Reilly.

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Byrne that officers put together a paper scoping out the scale of works and costs required to undertake similar restoration works from Lock 2 through to Lock 8.

C/105/2025

**MINUTES OF ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2025**

Read: Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16 June 2025 (copy circulated).

Councillor Jackson stated that following the concerns raised at Committee by the DUP Group, his Party continued to have the same concerns and were still worried that the Charter might encourage illegal immigrants to come to the country. He added that it could create a barrier to the lawful & justified removal of those who did come illegally and who posed a threat to law and order within the community.

Councillor Jackson said there were people who had serious concerns about the impact of illegal and uncontrolled immigration and the impact that it was having within their

communities. He also said anyone that ignored or denied that there was no issue with immigration was not living in reality and therefore the Party would not be supporting the Council of Sanctuary.

Councillor Jackson proposed Council did not support the Council of Sanctuary. This was seconded by Councillor Lewis.

Councillor Byrne pointed out the Report presented to AHC Committee was generic and broad.

He spoke of the importance of being an open, inclusive and welcoming City and Council. He stated that while he understood the questions that Councillors were being asked by the community, at this stage it was to initiate the process for Council to begin working towards formal recognition as a Council of Sanctuary only.

Councillor Byrne proposed a report be brought back to AHC Committee outlining the process for Council of Sanctuary and what it meant including the Charter for the Council of Sanctuary to alleviate any concerns that people had.

Councillor Sharvin seconded Councillor Byrne's proposal.

Councillor Harte spoke in support of Councillor Byrne's proposal.

Councillor Reilly spoke in support of Councillor Jackson's proposal and the perception it would create leading to an influx of refugees and migrants. He added there was a lot of concern within the community and also made reference to section 75 of the 1998 Northern Ireland Act.

Councillor Taylor advised he had also received numerous calls and emails since Council had taken forward a position and whilst not a Member of the AHC committee he would like more information about what it actually entailed before supporting the proposal.

Councillor Truesdale spoke in support of Councillor Byrne's proposal stating that the terms refugee backgrounds and illegal immigrants were being referenced in the wrong context therefore she felt that education was required.

In referring to Councillor Reilly's comments, the Chief Executive advised that the City of Sanctuary had been taken on board by a number of other Councils in Northern Ireland including Belfast City Council, Mid Ulster Council as well as Queens University and a number of schools. She added that the purpose of City of Sanctuary was to encourage inclusivity, solidarity and compassion for people from a forced displacement background such as people who had lived experience of the asylum system.

The Chief Executive further clarified that what it meant was that as a Local Authority Council would be committed to being welcoming to everyone in the community, the process involved making that formal promise and she stated that further information would be brought back to the AHC Committee. The Chairperson put Councillor Jackson's proposal, seconded by Councillor Lewis to a recorded vote, the results of which were as follows (copy attached):

FOR:	5
AGAINST:	23
ABSTENTIONS:	0

Councillor Harte was not in the chamber for the above recorded vote.

FOR:	25
AGAINST:	4
ABSTENTIONS:	0

Agreed: **The Minutes of Active and Healthy Communities Committee Meeting held on 16 June 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Lee-Surginor, seconded by Councillor Galbraith.**

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Sharvin that a report be brought back to AHC Committee outlining the process for Council of Sanctuary and what it meant including the Charter for the Council of Sanctuary to alleviate any concerns that people had.

MINUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 JUNE 2025

Agreed: **The Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 June 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and adopted, on the proposal of Councillor Larkin, seconded by Councillor Young.**

PLANNING SECTION

There were no issues arising.

C/108/2025

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Read: Report dated 7 July 2025 from Mrs Ward, Chief Executive, regarding an update on correspondence received for the attention of Council (copy circulated).

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

- **A response from South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust regarding C/058/2025 Notice of Motion on Enhancement of Services at the Downe.**
- **Correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council in relation to a Motion relating to Parliaments.**
- **A response from Department for Communities and Department for Work and Pensions regarding C/062/2025 Notice of Motion on Cost of Living Crisis**
- **A response from the Department for the Economy regarding C/095/2025 Notice of Motion on 'Good Jobs' Employment Rights Legislation.**
- **Response from Department of Health regarding C/065/2025, C/093/2025 Notice of Motion on Endometriosis.**
- **Response from DAERA re C0662025 and C0932025 Wildfires in The Mournes.**
- **Invitation received from Dalaradia Cultural & Historical Society to attend Tour to Gallipoli and participate in an Act of Remembrance.**

Response from South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust regarding C/058/2025 Notice of Motion on Enhancement of Services at the Downe

Councillor Hanlon asked that Sinn Féin's disappointment at the response received from the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Health and Social Trust be noted. She referred to the success of a petition circulated by the Down Health Committee and how that demonstrated the depth of concern within the local community about the perceived reduction of services at the Downe.

Councillor Hanlon stated that the response from the Trust was completely dismissive of the voice of local community and that she hoped that when the petition was submitted that the Trust examined more detail and took on the concerns of the people of the District.

Councillor Galbraith expressed his disappointment with the minimal response received from the Chief Executive of Trust regarding the future of Downe Hospital adding that it was unacceptable at continually being told there were no plans to reopen the Emergency Department despite repeated calls from Council and the community. He said it was even more concerning the lack of response on how Downe Hospital was being classified within the wider Future Hospital Reconfiguration Policy.

Councillor Galbraith proposed Council write formally once again to the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and go further by requesting clear consideration to enhance services at Downe Hospital, not just maintain the status quo.

Councillor Sharvin seconded Councillor Galbraith's proposal.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Galbraith, seconded by Councillor Sharvin that Council write formally once again to the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and go further by requesting clear consideration to enhance services at Downe Hospital, not just maintain the status quo.**

Invitation received from Dalaradia Cultural & Historical Society to attend Tour to Gallipoli and participate in an Act of Remembrance

Councillor Lewis proposed officers examine a more economical and better value for money method for attending the commemoration of the 110th Anniversary of the 10th Division's actions on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Councillor Reilly seconded Councillor Lewis's proposal.

Councillor Harte said that Sinn Féin agreed in principle however would like to have sight of costings involved.

The Chief Executive confirmed a report would be brought back to the August Strategy Policy and Resources Committee including costs for consideration.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Reilly that officers examine a more economical and better value for money to attend the commemoration of the 110th Anniversary of the 10th Division's actions on the Gallipoli Peninsula.**

It was agreed a report would be brought back to the August Strategy Policy and Resources Committee including costs for consideration.

In response to a query from Councillor Bowsie as to whether a response had been received from the National Trust regarding meeting with Council in relation to the Gondola project the Chief Executive advised officers were in the process of coordinating dates with the National Trust.

C/109/2025

NOTICE OF MOTION – NUTRIENT ACTION PLAN

The following Motion was received from Councillor Hanlon:

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

The current proposals would decimate the local farming industry.

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

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

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Rice.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor Hanlon said Sinn Féin had raised concerns with the proposals set out in the Nutrient Action Programme which was out for Public Consultation and although there had been some progress since submitting the Motion, the Party's concerns were still relevant. She advised that she had recently met with representatives for local farmers and that for many, the proposals to reduce the P balance to 8kg/ha 2029 would force them to either reduce their livestock or increase the amount of land they farm and this could put many farmers out of business, impacting the rural and wider economy.

Concerns had been raised that DAERA was aligning the NAP proposals for the UK Fertiliser Manual BB209 which was previously rejected here as it failed to take out the account of local grass growing conditions.

Farmers had a vital role to play in protecting waterways, but they needed to be properly supported to do that and the timelines currently set out would be very difficult for many farmers. Whilst new technologies such as Sustainable Use of Livestock Slurry Project were showing promising results it was relatively new and not yet in widespread use.

Likewise, DAERA had linked the NAP proposals to the Soil Nutrient Health Scheme, which is was not as yet completed across the North.

The NAP review proposals for the mandatory use of the Low Emissions Slurry Spreading Equipment (LESSE) by 2030 was hugely challenging with most LESSE equipment not accessible or affordable, especially for small hill farmers in the areas of natural constraint.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Rice stated proposals as they stood could risk putting their farms out of business and that farmers were not just vital to protecting waterways, but also vital stakeholders in protecting rural habitats.

Councillor Rice encouraged everyone to share their views through the Public Consultation on the NAP review, before it closed on 24 July 2025.

Councillor Jackson on behalf of his Party supported the Motion and called on Minister Muir to urgently withdraw the current DAERA consultation on the Nutrients Action Programme. He added that for too long farmers had been environmental scapegoats and this consultation failed to deal with the real issues and risks crippling farmers. There was growing concern across the farming and agri-food sector about the direction of the consultation and the proposals on the table would do real damage to local agriculture, risking jobs, cutting livestock numbers and threatening Northern Ireland's ability to produce food and spelt disaster not only for family farms but for the wider community. He referred to the huge pressures farmers and producers were already under and how they wanted to be part of the solution when it came to protecting the environment but stressed that they needed a fair and workable plan.

The Minister needed to realise that this was not about ignoring environmental responsibilities but finding a sensible way forward, not one that felt more like a punishment than a partnership.

Councillor Jackson advised calculations showed that farmers would potentially need more than twice their acreage to comply with slurry spreading rules and that was unrealistic and would force farms to reduce livestock numbers with beef and sheep farms being driven out of business as the compulsory use of LESSE by 2030 was beyond financial viability.

In voicing support for the Motion, Councillor Reilly spoke of how the Minister seemed to give the impression that farmers were responsible for dirty water and questioned the role of NI Water. He highlighted concerns for pig farmers for example who had quite intensive livestock facilities and would go out of business if the NAP proposals went through.

On behalf of Alliance, Councillor Truesdale spoke against the Motion stating it fundamentally misunderstood the urgent need for action. She spoke of the need for good quality produce, soil health, reduced inputs, a healthy ecosystem, clean air and clean water and that was why DAERA launched a consultation into the Nutrient Action Plan.

Councillor Truesdale said there had to be Regulations for agriculture as part of the Lough Neagh Action Plan to improve water quality across NI and that education and incentivisation was needed along with stronger regulation and more enforcement because 40% of agricultural fields had too much phosphorus. She added that difficult decisions should have been taken years ago and that there were 28 proposals overall, 12 new and 16 strengthening of existing measures.

Councillor Truesdale stated the point of consultation was collaboration and evaluation and farmers were not being punished but being asked to play their part in the recovery process alongside DAERA's legal environmental obligations. She added it was not just farmers and that there was an urgent need to invest in wastewater infrastructure, with NI Water in particular needing to play its role, given its significant contribution to water pollution.

Councillor Sharvin said Members were aware the Nutrients Action Programme was designed to reduce agricultural pollution and meet legal obligations under the Water Framework Directive but despite being in place since 2007 water quality had deteriorated in recent years, particularly in Lough Neagh. He acknowledged that something needed to be done but it had to be fair, workable and in genuine partnership with farmers tackling the challenges facing water quality.

Councillor Sharvin stated the scale of the water quality crisis could not be ignored and action was overdue and the SDLP continually highlighted the need for a dedicated Agricultural Water Quality Working Group with financial incentives, advice and education, not just regulation, and the need for a support package that mirrored the South's response to include water quality advisors, substantial grant funding for low admission spreading and slurry storage.

Councillor Taylor thanked Councillor Hanlon for bringing forward the Motion stating there were genuine concerns about the Nutrient Action Plan proposals with the responses similar to what had been raised following the changes to inheritance tax. Farmers had just come through one major threat to generational farming and this created more fear for the sustainability and viability of the farming sector. He added improving water quality and protecting the environment, must be done together, working with farmers and not against

them and that they deserved respect and partnership and policies that could be realistically implemented.

The Chairperson requested a show of hands for Councillor Hanlon's Motion, seconded by Councillor Rice and declared the Motion carried.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Rice that this Council finds the current proposals out for consultation by the DAERA minister for the Nutrient Action Plan unacceptable. The current proposals would decimate the local farming industry. Calls on the minister to collaborate with farmers rather than punish farmers. Calls on the DAERA to continue to invest in new technologies to improve farming practices, remove phosphates and work together collegiately to improve our Environment, Rivers and Loughs.**

Councillor Clarke joined the meeting online during above discussion – 6.48pm.

C/110/2025 EMERGENCY NOTICE OF MOTION – URGENT ACTION NEEDED TO ADDRESS REGEN WASTE STORAGE OPERATION AT WARRENPOINT PORT

The Chairperson advised an emergency Notice of Motion had been received, the wording of which had been emailed to all Councillors and to enable it to be heard, it would be necessary to suspend Standing Orders 16.1.1 for which a qualified majority vote was required. (80% of Members present and voting).

It was agreed to suspend Standing orders 16.1.1 at this point in the meeting to allow for the tabling of the emergency motion.

The Chairperson put the matter to a recorded vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR:	30
AGAINST:	0
ABSTENTIONS:	0

It was agreed by a qualified majority vote to suspend Standing Orders 16.1.1 (copy attached).

The following Emergency Motion was received from Councillor Ruane:

"That this Council condemns in the strongest possible terms the ongoing and escalating negative impact that the storage and handling of household waste by ReGen at Warrenpoint Port is having on the people of Warrenpoint and the surrounding area; Highlights with deep concern the serious and persistent deterioration in environmental and public health conditions, including overwhelming odours, an increased presence of flies and vermin; Notes that these conditions are not only a major nuisance but represent a growing public health risk to residents, particularly those living in close proximity to the port, including families with young children and vulnerable individuals; Further condemns the reappearance of these unacceptable environmental nuisances during the recent Wake the Giant Festival, an event central to the district's cultural and tourism offering, and warns of the likely disruption to

other summer festivals and community activities should this issue remain unresolved; Asserts that the ongoing presence of RDF waste in a densely populated, residential and recreational area is wholly inappropriate and has resulted in residents being forced to endure foul smells, an inability to open windows, enjoy outdoor spaces, or run local businesses without disruption; Warns that Warrenpoint's economic prosperity, social wellbeing, and long-term reputation are under serious threat if immediate action is not taken to end this situation, which has persisted for over two years; Agrees to write urgently to the Chair of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Board, the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Andrew Muir MLA, and the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) to make clear this council's position: that the handling and storage of RDF waste in such close proximity to homes, community and public spaces is unacceptable and unsuitable; And calls on them to initiate formal discussions with ReGen".

The Motion was seconded by Councillor K Murphy.

In presenting the Motion, Councillor Ruane said that this had not just been a reaction to the most recent smells obvious within the town but had been ongoing for a number of years. He advised that he along with colleagues had met with the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority and ReGen both separately and together where it had been said from the outset that if a solution to the issue could not be reached there would be a call for the RDF waste to be removed from the Port.

Councillor Ruane spoke of the anger and disappointment of people living within Warrenpoint that this matter was continuing to interrupt their lives. He referred to the recent Wake the Giant festival which had brought many people to the town and how everybody commented on the smell as it was so obvious. He pointed out the Ulster Fleadh was coming to Warrenpoint in less than a few weeks, with many visitors expected to flock to the town and stressed that the reputation of the town would be in tatters, potentially putting future events at risk.

Councillor Ruane advised that from the outset space and time had been given to both the Harbour Authority and ReGen to come up with solutions and asked Members for their support for the Motion.

Councillor Reilly agreed that the smell in Warrenpoint was atrocious and questioned why storage could not be well away from a densely populated area. He spoke of how the Minister for Infrastructure should be added to the list of those to be written to as she held responsibility for the Port.

Councillor Ruane agreed to accept the amendment to the Motion to include writing to the Minister for Infrastructure.

Councillor Sharvin proposed a 15-minute recess to allow Members time to consider the Emergency Motion and to ensure that the Council was supportive of alleviating, rather than adding, to the problems. He questioned the inclusion of the wording of close proximity to homes and communities and what that would mean for other sites across the District.

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Feehan to have an adjournment.

**The meeting was adjourned – 7.12pm
The meeting did then resume - 7.30pm.**

Councillor Ruane advised he wished to amend the Motion to include Warrenpoint to read as follows: *"that the handling and storage of RDF waste in Warrenpoint in such close proximity to homes, community and public spaces is unacceptable and unsuitable;"*

Councillor McAteer spoke in support of the Motion and reflected back to a meeting held in March 2024 with the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority, NIE and ReGen and yet 18 months on the issue had still not been resolved and the problems were unacceptable.

Councillor McAteer proposed an amendment to the Motion to include inviting the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority to Council to provide an update on the ongoing situation.

Councillor Ruane agreed to accept Councillor McAteer's amendment to the Motion.

Councillor Truesdale proposed that Council also write to Minister for Infrastructure, seconded by Councillor Young.

Councillor Ruane agreed to accept Councillor Truesdale's amendment to the Motion.

During discussion Councillor Sharvin spoke of how it was any materials that were stored at the Harbour that could cause odour e.g. recent odours from telegraph poles being stored and therefore emphasised the need to have that taken into consideration and have them attend to address all highlighted issues and not just ReGen.

Councillor Taylor voiced support for the Motion and the need for the matter to be addressed and resolved for Warrenpoint residents and tourism.

In response to a query from Councillor Bowsie, Councillor Brennan advised he had resigned from the board as a non-executive member of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority as he could not see a credible plan to resolve the ongoing issue.

Councillor Ruane thanked Members for their support for the Motion.

The Chairperson declared the amended Emergency Motion carried.

AGREED:

It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor K Murphy that this Council condemns in the strongest possible terms the ongoing and escalating negative impact that the storage and handling of household waste by ReGen at Warrenpoint Port is having on the people of Warrenpoint and the surrounding area; Highlights with deep concern the serious and persistent deterioration in environmental and public health conditions, including overwhelming odours, an increased presence of flies and vermin; Notes that these conditions are not only a major nuisance but represent a growing public

health risk to residents, particularly those living in close proximity to the port, including families with young children and vulnerable individuals; Further condemns the reappearance of these unacceptable environmental nuisances during the recent Wake the Giant Festival, an event central to the district's cultural and tourism offering, and warns of the likely disruption to other summer festivals and community activities should this issue remain unresolved; Asserts that the ongoing presence of RDF waste in a densely populated, residential and recreational area is wholly inappropriate and has resulted in residents being forced to endure foul smells, an inability to open windows, enjoy outdoor spaces, or run local businesses without disruption; Warns that Warrenpoint's economic prosperity, social wellbeing, and long-term reputation are under serious threat if immediate action is not taken to end this situation, which has persisted for over two years; Agrees to write urgently to the Chair of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority Board, the Minister for Infrastructure, Liz Kimmins MLA; the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Andrew Muir MLA, and the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) to make clear this council's position: that the handling and storage of RDF waste in Warrenpoint in such close proximity to homes, community and public spaces is unacceptable and unsuitable; And calls on them to initiate formal discussions with ReGen. It was also agreed to invite the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority to Council to provide an update on the ongoing situation.

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

For confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 4 August 2025.

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 7 July 2025 VENUE: Downshire Civic Centre & Teams MEETING: Council Meeting

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Councillor Jackson's proposal that Council did not support the Council of Sanctuary, seconded by Councillor Lewis.

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

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 7 July 2025 **VENUE:** Downshire Civic Centre & Teams **MEETING:** Council Meeting

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Councillor Byrne's proposal proposed a report be brought back to AHC Committee on the process for Council of Sanctuary, seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

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

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 7 July 2025 **VENUE:** Downshire Civic Centre & Teams **MEETING:** Council Meeting

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Qualified Majority Vote to Suspend Standing Orders to hear Emergency Motion – Urgent action needed to address RE-Gen Waste Storage Operation at Warrenpoint Port.

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews				1
C Bowsie	1			
J Brennan	2			
P Byrne	3			
P Campbell	4			
W Clarke	5			
L Devlin				2
C Enright				3
K Feehan	6			
D Finn				4
C Galbraith	7			
M Gibbons				5
O Hanlon	8			
G Hanna				6
V Harte	9			
M Hearty	10			
R Howell				7
T Howie				8
J Jackson	11			
G Kearns	12			
C King	13			
M Larkin	14			
D Lee-Surginor	15			
A Lewis	16			
O Magennis	17			
A Mathers	18			
D McAteer	19			
L McEvoy				9
S O'Hare	20			
D Murphy				10
K Murphy	21			
S Murphy	22			
A Quinn	23			
H Reilly	24			
M Rice	25			
M Ruane	26			
G Sharvin	27			
D Taylor	28			
J Tinnelly				11
J Truesdale	29			
H Young	30			
TOTALS	30	0	0	11