

September 5th, 2025

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Monday, 8th September 2025** at **6:00 pm** in **Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall.**

Committee Membership 2025-26

Councillor D Lee-Surginor **Chairperson**

Councillor K Feehan **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor T Andrews

Councillor W Clarke

Councillor C Galbraith

Councillor O Hanlon

Councillor G Hanna

Councillor V Harte

Councillor G Kearns

Councillor A Lewis

Councillor S Murphy

Councillor A Quinn

Councillor M Ruane

Councillor J Tinnelly

Councillor H Young

Agenda

1.0 Introduction and Apologies

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet: Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism - Committee Meeting Monday 11 August 2025

 [ERT Action Sheet - 11.08.2025.pdf](#)

Page 1

For Discussion/Decision

4.0 Establishment of Arts Working Group – Notice of Motion

For Decision

 [ERT Report - NoM Arts Working Group.pdf](#)

Page 4

5.0 PEACEPLUS

For Decision

 [ERT Report - PEACEPLUS.pdf](#)

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Exempt Appendices

5.1 PEACEPLUS Appendices

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 [Appx 1. PeacePlus 2.5 Cross-community Festival Programme Business Case.pdf](#) **Not included**

For Discussion/Decision

6.0 Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) Planning Functions

For Decision

 [ERT Report Statement of Community Involvement \(SCI\) Rev.2.pdf](#)

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 [Appx. SCI Revision 2 Sept 2025 01_09_25.pdf](#)

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7.0 Tourism Events, Facilities and Visitor Servicing Procurements

Exempt Appendices

7.1 Tourism Events, Facilities and Visitor Servicing Procurements Appendices

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 Appx 1 PA and Lighting Business Case.pdf	<i>Not included</i>
 Appx 2 Marquees Business Case.pdf	<i>Not included</i>
 Appx 3 Staging Business Case.pdf	<i>Not included</i>
 Appx 4 Stewarding, Event Safety & Safeguarding Business Case.pdf	<i>Not included</i>
 Appx 5 Digital Services for Tourism Culture and Events - Business Case.pdf	<i>Not included</i>
 Appx 6 Caravan Park Security 2026-2028 Business Case.pdf	<i>Not included</i>

For Discussion/Decision

8.0 Local Economic Partnership Action Plan

For Decision

 **ERT Report - Local Economic Partnership.pdf**

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Exempt Appendices

8.1 Local Economic Partnership Action Plan - Appendices

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 Appex 1 - LEP Action Plan.pdf	<i>Not included</i>
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Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

9.0 Newry Chamber Music Arts & Outreach Programme

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **ERT Report - NCM Arts & Out Reach prog.pdf**

Not included

For Noting

10.0 Heritage Projects Update

For Information

 **ERT Report - Heritage Projects Update.pdf**

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Exempt Appendices

10.1 Heritage Projects Update Appendices

For Information

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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 the information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **Appx Heritage Projects Update (restricted).pdf**

Not included

For Noting

11.0 NMD Museums Update

For Information

 **ERT Report - NMD Museums Update.pdf**

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Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Mr Caolain Boyd

Ms Michelle Boyle

Cllr Jim Brennan

Ms Sonya Burns

Lorraine/Emma Burns/McParland

Cllr Pete Byrne

Mr Gerard Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Cllr Doire Finn

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Mr Conor Haughey

Cllr Martin Hearty

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tierna Howie

Ms Catherine Hughes

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Joanne/Noelle Johnston

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Josephine Kelly

Mrs Sheila Kieran

Cllr Cathal King

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Ms Carol McClean

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Jonathan McGilly

Ms Tracie McLoughlin
.....
Ms Aveen McVeigh
.....
Cllr Kate Murphy
.....
Cllr Selina Murphy
.....
Sinead Murphy
.....
Cllr Declan Murphy
.....
Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
.....
Mr Andy Patterson
.....
Cllr Áine Quinn
.....
Cllr Henry Reilly
.....
Cllr Michael Rice
.....
Ms Alison Robb
.....
Cllr Michael Ruane
.....
Mr Conor Sage
.....
Cllr Gareth Sharvin
.....
Mrs Amanda Smyth
.....
Cllr David Taylor
.....
Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
.....
Ms Sinead Trainor
.....
Cllr Jill Truesdale
.....
Mrs Marie Ward
.....
Cllr Helena Young
.....

ACTION SHEETECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING – MONDAY 11th August 2025

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
ERT/069/2025	Action Sheet Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting Monday 9 June 2025	it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 9 June 2025.	A Smyth	Complete	Y
ERT/070/2025	Officer Report on Notice Of Motion – Establishment Of Arts Working Group	it was agreed to defer the item.	A Smyth	On Sept 25 ERT agenda.	Y
ERT/071/2025	Financial Assistance	the following was agreed, - To approve that Financial Assistance Call 1, Revenue for 2026/2027 will open in November 2025. The call will be opened, and managed subject to confirmation of budgets both internal and external for 2026/27 - To approve the outcome of the updated assessment in Financial Assistance 2025/2026 call - themes VJ Day and Arts and Culture which are summarised at appendix 1.	A Smyth	Underway	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
ERT/072/2025	PEACEPLUS	The following was agreed: - To approve the minutes of the PEACEPLUS Partnership on 24 July 2025 which are attached at Appendix 1 to this report. - To approve the business case for procurement of a First Level Controller to provide management verification services under the SEUPB framework. Approval for business cases: - Strand 1.2 Enhancement of community facilities. - Strand 1.3 Development of shared outdoor spaces. - Strand 1.3 Development of walking trails.	A Smyth	Underway	Y
ERT/073/2025	Artisan Markets	it was agreed to: - Note attendance figures of the three Council Artisan Markets. - Note Council will deliver a Make it Local campaign highlighting artisan crafters. - Approve that Council continues to focus delivery and growth of the artisan markets provided in Downpatrick, Newcastle and Warrenpoint.	A Smyth	Underway	Y
ERT/074/2025	BRCD ANNUAL REPORT	it was agreed to accept the BRCD Annual Report 2024/25 which has been approved by the BRCD Executive Board.	A Smyth	Completed	Y

Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken/ Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet Y/N
ERT/075/2025	Rural Business Development Grants Scheme	it was agreed that, pending DAERA approval of the Rural Business Development Scheme for 2025/26, Council to administer the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme in line with the terms and conditions set by the Department.	A Smyth	Progressed; further update can be provided on opening of call when determined.	Y
ERT/076/2025	Eats & Beats Grant Application	it was agreed to note the report.	A Smyth		Y
ERT/077/2025	ERT Scheme Of Delegation 2024-2025	it was agreed to note the document.	A Smyth		Y
ERT/078/2025	Heritage, Culture And Creativity Programme	it was agreed to note the report.	A Smyth		Y
ERT/079/2025	Kilkeel Lower Square/River Walk EI Scheme	it was agreed to note the report.	A Smyth		Y
ERT/080/2025	Multiply Programme Delivery	it was agreed to note the report.	A Smyth		Y
ERT/081/2025	Museum Accreditation	it was agreed to note the report.	A Smyth		Y
ERT/082/2025	China – NI Sister-City Cooperation Seminar	it was agreed to note the report.	A Smyth	Council has been advised the event is no longer proceeding	Y

Report to:	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday 8 th September 2025
Subject:	Notice of Motion: Establishment of Arts Working Group
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director: Economy Growth and Tourism
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director: Economy Growth and Tourism

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-			
For decision	X	For noting only	

1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> - To approve the recommendation for the establishment of an Arts Working Group <u>Background</u> Notice of Motion – Establishment of Arts Working Group C/097/2025 Motion received from Councillor Finn: - That NMDDC recognises the impact that regional inequalities in funding has had on our district’s arts sector, acknowledges the support that artists, creatives and groups require and the gap in what they will need in the future, particularly given the closure of Newry Town Hall, and seek to establish an arts working group to provide support and create a roadmap for the sector across our district. The Motion was referred to Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.6
2.0	Key issues
2.1	- Nominations from party leaders have been sought for the establishment of an Arts Working Group. - The Arts Working Group will include elected members and officers of Council; - Terms of Reference will be developed for consideration at the first meeting of this Working Group

	The in line with the context of the above Notice of Motion, the working group will also be engaged on the implementation and future operation of the new Theatre and Conference facility
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To approve the recommendation for the establishment of an Arts Working Group
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Nil
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service

	Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
	n/a
8.0	Background Documents
	n/a

Report to:	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday 8 th September 2025
Subject:	PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director Economy, Growth and Tourism
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Sonya Stephenson – Head of Programmes Sarah McClory – Project Coordinator

<table> <tr> <td>For decision</td><td>X</td><td>For noting only</td><td></td></tr> </table>				For decision	X	For noting only	
For decision	X	For noting only					
1.0	Purpose and Background						
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> To approve the business case and procure the related elements of the Action Plan for: Strand 2.5 Cross-community Festival Programme - "Celebrating Languages Together" <u>Background</u> The PEACEPLUS Partnership met on 22nd May 2025 to recommend the delivery of Strand 2.5 of the Co-designed Local Action Plan for the delivery of the cross-community festivals programme. The recommendations arising from these meetings require ERT Committee approval.						
2.0	Key issues						
2.1	<u>Local Action Plan – Implementation</u> • The implementation of the Action Plan has commenced. • SEUPB's electronic management system, JEMS, has transferred from application stage to claims and reporting function.						
2.2	<u>Project delivery</u> The Peace team will commence procurement against strand 2.5 of delivery of which the business plan is attached. • Strand 2.5 Cross-community Festival Programme "Celebrating Languages Together". ○ Under the programme area of Events and Festivals it will utilise the area's diverse range of communities, cultures, languages, history and other assets which will be celebrated through a range of cross community festivals and will help to develop stronger relationships and connections between communities.						

3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To approve the business case and procure the related elements of the Action Plan for: Strand 2.5 Cross-community Festival Programme - "Celebrating Languages Together"
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Revenue/Payroll: Project 85% funded by the EU and 15% by the two Governments
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following:

	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed □
7.0	Appendices
	The below items are deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business. Appx. 1 Business case for Strand 2.5 Cross-community Festival Programme - "Celebrating Languages Together"
8.0	Background Documents
	n/a

Report to:	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday 8 September 2025
Subject:	Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - Revision 2
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Jonathan McGilly – Assistant Director Regeneration
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Lois Jackson – Development Plan Manager

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

For decision	x	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a revision to the Planning Unit's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI outlines how the Council proposes to engage the community and stakeholders in exercising its planning functions.
1.2	<u>Background</u> The SCI explains how the community and stakeholders can get involved in the preparation of the Local Development Plan as well as the development management and enforcement process. The SCI sets out the steps that the Council will take to facilitate community involvement and sets out the vision and strategy for involving the community and stakeholders at various stages of the planning process.
1.3	The SCI was revised in April 2025 to reflect amendments to the LDP process so that it was accurate and up-to-date. This was agreed by ERT Committee in April 2025 and approved by DfI on 5 June 2025 in advance of publication of the draft Plan Strategy on 27 June 2025.
1.4	As of 1st September 2025, Planning staff in Monaghan Row, Newry, will be relocated within the Council's facility at Haughey House, Unit 19, Rampart Road, Greenbank Industrial Estate, BT34 2QU. However, the draft Plan Strategy and its associated documents will still be available for inspection in Monaghan Row up until Friday 31st October 2025.
1.5	A further revision is therefore now required to the SCI to update the following: 1 The change of location of the Newry Planning Office to Greenbank Industrial Estate as of 1st September 2025

	2 The 'new' location as of 3 rd November 2025 where the LDP, representations and counter representations can be viewed at Warrenpoint Town Hall (as there is currently a limited reception facility in Greenbank for the public to inspect documents.)
2.0	Key issues
2.1	The Local Development Plan is subject to a test of soundness as part of the Independent Examination process. Soundness involves testing the principles, content and preparation process of the Plan against a list of criteria. The Department for Infrastructure sets out a series of soundness tests within its Development Plan Practice Notes ¹ .
2.2	Within DfI Practice Note 6: Soundness, Procedural Test P1 requires the council to ensure that the LDP has been prepared in accordance with the council's timetable and the <u>Statement of Community Involvement</u> .
2.3	In order to ensure that the Council's SCI and LDP process are fully aligned, the SCI needs to be further revised to reflect the revised locations outlined under 1.5 to ensure openness and transparency at all times.
2.4	The finalised draft of the SCI must be approved by resolution of the Council prior to submission to the DfI for its agreement.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	It is recommended that the Committee agree to the following:- 1. The amendments to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) as set out within the Report and within the attached SCI (Appendix 1). 2. The submission of the revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to the Department for Infrastructure for their agreement and carrying out any legislative requirements in terms of publication of the revised SCI.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	None
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>

¹ <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/development-plan-practice-notes>

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1: Revised Statement of Community Involvement
8.0	Background Documents
	n/a



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**
**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Statement of Community Involvement

A guide to community engagement in the planning process

Revision ~~21~~ May~~September~~ 2025

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Statement of Community Involvement

A guide to community engagement in the planning process

The Council’s Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Planning (Statement of Community Involvement) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. In accordance with Section 4 (3) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and Regulation 6 of the Planning (Statement of Community Involvement) Regulations (Northern Ireland), the Statement of Community Involvement was approved by the Council on 5 June 2017, and agreed by the Department for Infrastructure on 30 June 2017.

This revision 12 to the SCI is in respect of the change of location (as of Monday 1st September 2025) of the Newry Planning Office to Haughey House, Unit 19, Rampart Road, Greenbank Industrial Estate, BT34 2QU LDP only and new location where the LDP, representations and counter-representations can be inspected at Warrenpoint Town Hall (as of Monday 3rd November 2025). Further revisions will be brought forward as necessary.

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Getting in touch

You can contact the Council’s Planning Department in the following ways:

By email: planning@nmandd.org

By post: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Newry Planning Office or Downpatrick Planning Office
Haughey House
Greenbank Industrial Estate Monaghan Row Downshire
Unit 19 Rampart Road Civic Centre
Newry BT345 8DJ2QU Downshire Estate, Ardglass Rd
Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

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By telephone: 0330 137 4000 (or 0330 137 4036)

Further information on the Council’s Planning functions is provided on the Council’s website at www.newrymournedown.org/planning from where this and other planning documents can be viewed and downloaded.

To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, copies of this document in alternative formats are available on request. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

If you have any queries regarding this document please contact us using the details above.

Advisory Note:

This Statement of Community Involvement in the planning process is not intended to be a source of definitive legal advice. Reference should be made to the actual legislation referred

to in this statement and if any discrepancy exists the provisions of the legislation will prevail.
The legislation is available to view online at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

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1.0 Introduction

Our Statement of Community Involvement: Background and Purpose

- 1.1 Following the transfer of planning powers to local councils on the 1st April 2015 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council became the main decision maker on the majority of planning applications within its district and assumed responsibility for the production of its local development plan.
- 1.2 The purpose of this statement is to set out policy for involving the community in the production of the Newry, Mourne and Down Local Development Plan and the consideration of planning applications. It describes who, together with how and when the community will be invited to participate in the different stages of both plan formulation and the determination of planning applications.
- 1.3 The term 'community' embraces all the individuals, groups and organisations that make Newry, Mourne and Down what it is and extends to local residents, business, voluntary and community groups and local and national organisations with interests in planning matters.
- 1.4 The requirement to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was introduced in the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. The Planning (Statement of Community Involvement) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 came into operation on the 1st April 2015 and set out the process that the Council must follow in preparation of its SCI. The Council do not however see community involvement as just a statutory requirement, it has a positive role to play in helping to identify local issues, inform policy-making, provide feedback on service delivery and create a sense of local ownership.

Why is Planning Important?

- 1.5 The planning system directly affects the environment that we live in, where we live, work, shop and spend our leisure time. Planning decisions determine where new homes, offices, shops and leisure facilities go and what happens to our countryside, open spaces and historic environment. In doing so it influences our quality of life and general well-being.
- 1.6 Planning has to balance competing land uses, shaping places by setting out the vision for how communities will change. For many people planning is something they only get involved with when a development directly affects them, this can sometimes be too late to really influence the process. By getting involved in the early stages of local planning policy formulation as well as the end stage of specific planning applications, you can help to shape the way your local environment looks and works. This document sets out how you can do this.

A Vision of Participation

- 1.7 The Council is committed to ensuring that all council engagement is meaningful, inclusive and fit for purpose and that all its citizens share a sense of effective participation in the decision making process. The Council therefore aims to ensure that:
- (i) Everyone has an early and informed opportunity to express their views on the development of the area and have it considered before decisions are made; and
 - (ii) All groups in our community, regardless of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, sex, marital status, physical ability, sexual orientation, and those with and without dependants are enabled and empowered to participate.
- 1.8 It is intended to adopt a proactive and timely approach to community involvement through a process of providing clear information and encouraging participation throughout the planning process. The process must therefore be informative, user friendly, as inclusive as possible, and conducted in an open and transparent way. Every effort is to be made to engage the community, record views and provide feedback throughout the process.

Principles of Community Involvement

- 1.9 The Council's approach to community involvement is based on a number of key principles.
- **Culture of engagement.** People should know that they are encouraged to take part in the planning process, and that decision makers are interested in their views;
 - **Early involvement.** The community should be involved at an early stage in the preparation of local development documents and major development proposals;
 - **Appropriate Consultation Methods.** Methods used to encourage involvement should be appropriate to people's experience and needs. Arrangements for consultation need to be appropriate for the type of document or application being considered and realistic in terms of available resources.
 - **Clarity.** The planning process and timetables for producing or reviewing local development documents should be clear so that people are able to participate in a timely and effective manner.

What are the benefits of community involvement in Planning?

- 1.10 There are many benefits to involving local communities in the consideration of planning applications, and in the development of plans and policies for their local council area, including:
- a greater focus on the priorities identified by local communities;
 - a greater influence on the provision of local services to ensure they are better able to meet local needs;
 - the consideration of new ways and ideas;
 - a shared ownership of key policy documents;
 - an increased support for local planning policies; and
 - an increased understanding of how planning policies are developed and how they are linked to each other and other documents produced by the Council.
- 1.11 Community involvement is important to the Council to ensure that the services being delivered tackle issues identified by local communities. It also helps to set priorities, in the context of limited resources, and to ensure that the Council's services are customer focused.

Alignment to the Community Plan

- 1.12 Sections 8 (5) (aa) and 9 (6) (aa) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 introduce a statutory link between the Council's Community Plan and its Local Development Plan (LDP), in that the preparation of the LDP must take account of the Community Plan.
- 1.13 Community Planning is "a process led by a council in conjunction with partners and communities to develop and implement a shared vision for their area, a long term vision which relates to all aspects of community life and which also involves working together to plan and deliver better services which make a real difference to people's lives."¹
- 1.14 The Council's Community Plan will identify long term objectives for improving:
- (i) the social well-being of the District;
 - (ii) the economic well-being of the District; and
 - (iii) the environmental well-being of the District.

Review of the Council's SCI

- 1.15 This SCI will be reviewed regularly to ensure fitness of purpose. It may also be necessary to review the SCI to take account of major legislative changes.

¹ Extract from Northern Ireland Community Planning Foundation Programme Version 1 October 2013.

2.0 The Local Development Plan

Purpose, Structure and Process

- 2.1 The purpose of the Newry, Mourne and Down LDP, is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested bodies of the policy framework and land use proposals that will guide development decisions within Newry, Mourne and Down District up to 2035.
- 2.2 The LDP will be prepared within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and Community Plan. It will also take account of regional policy context set by the Northern Ireland Executive and Central Government Departments. This includes, amongst others, The Programme for Government, The Everyone's Involved - Sustainable Development Strategy, The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS).
- 2.3 At the outset of the plan process a timetable will be prepared and published. The timetable will set out the Council's programme for production of the LDP, and will include key milestones and timelines for plan preparation, covering all elements of the process through to adoption. Revisions to the LDP Timetable will be made as necessary.
- 2.4 The LDP will comprise two separate documents, the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan. Prior to development of these documents key planning issues will be identified and a range of options for addressing these issues will be brought forward through a Preferred Options Paper².
- 2.5 The Plan Strategy will be developed first and will define the strategic objectives for the future development of the District. It will include a range of strategic policies to facilitate and manage development and a spatial strategy that will indicate where different types of development will be promoted. Once the Plan Strategy is adopted the Local Policies Plan will be prepared. This will include site specific proposals, policy designations and land use zonings required to deliver the Plan Strategy, objectives, and strategic policies.
- 2.6 The LDP will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal² which will run in parallel with preparation of the Preferred Options Paper, Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal process aims to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which policies and proposals in the LDP, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve social, economic and environmental objectives.
- 2.7 The LDP will, on adoption, replace the current development plans for the District (the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 and the Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015)

² This stage of the Local Development Plan preparation has already taken place and is unlikely to be repeated in the current plan cycle.

and operational planning policies that were produced by the Department of the Environment.

Who can get involved?

- 2.8 Anyone who wishes to get involved in the preparation of the LDP will be encouraged to do so during the public consultation stages. In particular the Council will welcome the views of the following groups:

- people living within the Newry, Mourne and Down District;
- elected representatives;
- voluntary groups;
- community forums / groups / umbrella organisations;
- environmental groups;
- residents groups;
- business interests; and
- developers / landowners.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive nor is it intended to restrict any individual group, or organisation from participating in the plan making process.

- 2.9 Elected members, forums, community and residents groups provide a voice for the local community. Other voluntary and interest groups also bring a special knowledge and can ensure that important concerns are addressed.

Empowering disadvantaged and under-represented groups

- 2.10 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires a public authority, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without.

- 2.11 In addition, without prejudice to the above obligations, public authorities are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or race. The above "Section 75 groups" are important participants within the planning process and include people who traditionally have been under represented or disadvantaged. These groups will be targeted through the consultation process on the local development plan in order to obtain their views and contribute to the consideration of equality issues under Section 75. Their views on any equality screening documents or draft Equality Impact Assessments will also be

sought within the specified period for comment along with the draft Plan Strategy and draft Local Policies Plan.

- 2.12 To ensure that LDP and consultation documents are accessible to everyone they will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

How and when will the Community be involved?

- 2.13 The preparation of a LDP involves a number of key stages each presenting opportunities for community involvement. These stages are: formal notice of LDP (including publication of the Preferred Options Paper); publication and adoption of the Plan Strategy; publication and adoption of the Local Policies Plan and Monitoring and Review. The actions will fulfil and may in some cases exceed the statutory requirements on public consultation, as set out in the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.
- 2.14 The LDP Timetable will outline an indicative timeframe for each of the stages. Council will give notice, by local advertisement, of the availability of the timetable, which can be viewed on the Council’s website and at the Council’s Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall, Church Street BT34 3HN from Monday 3rd November 2025 (in lieu of at Monaghan Row, Newry) and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate).

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Stages in the LDP Process

Stage 1: Data Collection

- 2.15 The purpose of the data collection stage is to establish the key issues to be addressed and the options for addressing them in the preparation of the LDP. This will be undertaken using a topic based approach accompanied with a Countryside Assessment. By the end of this stage a timetable for plan preparation will be agreed. This stage will inform the Preferred Options Paper³ (POP) which will be prepared together with Scoping Reports for the Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Appraisal and Equality Impact Assessment.

What we will do:

- This SCI is prepared at this initial stage, listing the key consultees, Community Groups and under-represented (Section 75) groups who will be actively encouraged to participate in the process. These lists will be kept under review and written requests for inclusion from additional bodies will be considered.
- Following the approval of the LDP Timetable by the Council and the agreement by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) we will make the LDP Timetable available on our website and publish a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks. We will also publish the notice on our website. This notice will confirm details of the following:
 - (i) When the LDP Timetable is available for public inspection; and
 - (ii) the locations and times it can be inspected.
- Set up a Steering Group comprising elected members of the Council (Elected Members) and Senior Council Officers (to be determined by the Council). This is the high-level co-ordinating body that will ensure overview and strategic input on behalf of the whole community, as well as from the planning professionals.
- Set up a Project Management Team comprising Senior Council Officers, representatives from the key statutory/government departments will also be invited. The purpose of the Project Management Team is to facilitate key consultee co-operation in the plan making process. The Project Management Team will be consulted on and act as the screening and scoping group for the Sustainability Appraisal, including Strategic Environmental Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment.

³ This stage of the Local Development Plan preparation has already taken place and is unlikely to be repeated in the current plan cycle.

- Notify our statutory consultees (see Appendix B) requesting them to participate in the plan making process by providing information on the key strategic issues that the LDP should address.
- Invite under represented (Section 75) groups to identify whether there are any types of planning policies which are likely to have a significant impact on the groups they represent. They will also be provided an opportunity to identify any particular issues or needs which they feel the LDP should address. Where requested this can be done through a face to face meeting with a planning officer. Any comments received will be taken into account when screening and scoping the Equality Impact Assessment.
- Send the Scoping Report of the Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) as the statutory consultation body.

Stage 2: Formal Notice of LDP Preparation (including publication of the Preferred Options Paper)

- 2.16 This stage represents the formal commencement of work on the LDP. It commences with the publication of the Preferred Options Paper⁴ (POP) which will set out the key plan issues, identify a range of options available to address them and define our preferred options. The POP will be subject to a period of public consultation to promote debate on issues of strategic significance which are likely to influence the shape of future development within the Newry, Mourne and Down District. The intention is to stimulate a wide-ranging, yet focused, debate and encourage feedback from a wide variety of interests. Any representations or views received as a consequence of its publication will be considered whilst formulating the draft Plan Strategy.
- 2.17 The POP is subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). An SA Interim Report, consisting of SA Scoping Report and assessment of alternatives, will be published with the POP. It will be issued for public consultation as a key part of the community involvement and public participation process.

What we will do:

- Issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see appendix G) for two consecutive weeks and on the Council's website. This notice will confirm:
 - (i) the Council's intention to prepare a LDP;
 - (ii) publication of the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report (consisting of a Scoping Report and assessment of alternatives), and screening reports for Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) and Equality Impact Assessments;

⁴ This stage of the Local Development Plan preparation has already taken place and is unlikely to be repeated in the current plan cycle.

- (iii) publication of the LDP Timetable;
 - (iv) publication of the POP inviting comment within the 12 week consultation period⁵; and
 - (v) details of public engagement events including a launch event and public exhibitions.
- Make the POP and any other supporting documents the Council considers relevant to the preparation of the POP, available for inspection on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies can also be provided upon request (at a specified price).
- Issue a Press Release about the intention to prepare a new LDP and drawing attention to the POP and the public consultation.
- Hold a launch event to announce the publication of the POP.
- Hold public exhibitions where planning officers will be available to answer any questions.
- Write to key consultees and Elected Members informing them of:
 - (i) the publication of the POP and providing them a copy;
 - (ii) the dates of the public exhibitions;
 - (iii) the 12 week consultation period; and
 - (iv) the closing date for receipt of representations.
- Write to local community groups and under-represented (Section 75) groups inviting them to; comment within the next 12 weeks; attend a public engagement event; and offering the opportunity of a meeting with a planning officer to record their views.
- Present a Public Consultation Report to Elected Members following the 12 week consultation on the POP. This will contain a summary of each representation and plan team comment, recording where members take a different view and the rationale for that view. This will be taken into account whilst formulating the draft LDP.
- Provide the Project Management Team with the opportunity to comment on emerging policy for inclusion in the draft Plan Strategy, an integral part of testing emerging policy through the Sustainability Appraisal process and Equality Impact Assessment.

⁵ Regulation 11(3) of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 states that, in relation to a Preferred Options Paper; this "must be a period of not less than 8 weeks or more than 12 weeks".

Stage 3: Publication of draft Plan Strategy

- 2.18 The Plan Strategy will define the strategic objectives for the future development of the District. It will include a range of strategic policies to facilitate and manage development together with a spatial strategy that indicates in broad strategic terms the locations where different types of development will be promoted. Under Regulation 11 (4) of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 the Council must take account of any representations made about the Council's POP before it prepares a development plan document⁶.
- 2.19 The draft Plan Strategy will provide an indication of our intentions regarding future development of the District. It will be issued for public consultation as a key part of the community involvement and public participation process.

What we will do:

- Issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks, in the Belfast Gazette⁷ and on the Council's website. This notice will confirm:
 - (i) publication of draft Plan Strategy and other supporting documents required under legislation (e.g. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) including the SEA Environmental Report), and how to view or obtain copies;
 - (ii) the dates and locations of public engagement events;
 - (iii) the period⁸ for public consultation (specified as 8 weeks in legislation which may be extended) and closing date for receipt of representations to the draft Plan Strategy and other supporting documents;
 - (iv) notification of the address to which representations can be sent and the closing date for receipt of representations.
- Make the draft Plan Strategy and any other supporting documents which are required under legislation (e.g. SA), or as the Council considers relevant to the preparation of the LDP, available for inspection on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies can also be provided upon request. From Monday 3rd November 2025 onwards, the draft Plan Strategy and any other supporting documents will be available for inspection at Warrenpoint Town Hall (in lieu of Monaghan Row, Newry) and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick.

⁶ Under Regulation 12 (1) (a) a Development Plan Document is either the Plan Strategy or Local Policies Plan.

⁷ The Belfast Gazette is the official Newspaper of Record for Northern Ireland. It consists of legal and official announcements from HM Government, the NI Executive, the Armed Forces, local authorities, churches, companies and private citizens.

⁸ Regulation 16(2)(a) of The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 states that, in relation to a Development Plan Document, "representations must be made with a period of 8 weeks".

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- Issue a Press Release and hold a launch event to announce the publication of the draft Plan Strategy.
- Hold public drop-in sessions where planning officers will be available to answer any questions.
- Write to key consultees, and Elected Members informing them of:
 - (i) the publication of the draft Plan Strategy and providing them a copy;
 - (ii) the dates and locations of the public drop-in sessions;
 - (iii) the consultation period for receipt of representations; and
 - (iv) the closing date for receipt of representations.
- Report representations to the Elected Members before forwarding these to the DfI prior to the Independent Examination.

Stage 4: Public Inspection of Representations received to the draft Plan Strategy

- 2.20 All representations are to be made available for public inspection as part of the public consultation process. Interested parties may also comment on the representations that have been received, these are known as counter representations.
- 2.21 All representations and counter representations will be fully considered by the Council before it submits the draft Plan Strategy to the DfI prior to the Independent Examination.

What we will do:

- Issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks, in the Belfast Gazette, and on the Council's website. This notice will confirm:
 - (i) the availability of representations for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected; and
 - (ii) the 8 week period for public consultation, notification of the address to which counter representations can be sent and the closing date for receipt of counter representations.
- Make representations available for inspection on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall, Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies of representations can also be provided upon request (at a specified price).

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- Notify any person who has made (and not withdrawn) a representation to the draft Plan Strategy that representations are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected.
- Write to key consultees and Elected Members informing them that representations are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected.
- Make the counter representations available for inspection on the Council's website, and at the **Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall Monaghan Row, Newry and Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick** during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies of counter representations can also be provided upon request (at a specified price).
- Report counter representations to the Elected Members before forwarding them to the DfI prior to the Independent Examination.
- Prior to submission to the Department we may make proposed changes to the draft Plan Strategy. In such instances, we will issue a public notice in the Belfast Gazette, a local advertisement for two consecutive weeks and publish on the Council website, of the availability of the proposed changes for inspection and the consultation period (8 weeks).

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Stage 5: Submission of the Plan Strategy (and associated documents) for Independent Examination

- 2.22 The Council will only submit the draft Plan Strategy, associated documents and supporting evidence to the DfI if it considers it has complied with relevant legislation requirements and that the draft Plan Strategy is ready for examination. The DfI will then cause an Independent Examination to be held, by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) or a person appointed by the DfI, unless it issues a Direction to the Council to withdraw the draft Plan Strategy, or intervenes to direct the Council to modify it.
- 2.23 If DfI does not intend to cause an Independent Examination it must give reasons for its decision.

What we will do:

- Submit the following documents to DfI:
 - (i) draft Plan Strategy;
 - (ii) Statement of Community Involvement;
 - (iii) evidence of compliance with SCI;

- (iv) LDP Timetable;
 - (v) Sustainability Appraisal;
 - (vi) a statement setting out the main issues raised in representations to the Preferred Options Paper (POP) and how these have been taken into account in the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy;
 - (vii) a statement setting out the number of representations and counter representations made (where applicable) to the draft Plan Strategy and a summary of the main issues; and
 - (viii) such other supporting documents that are required or as Council considers relevant to the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy.
- As soon as reasonably practicable after the submission of the draft Plan Strategy and associated documents (see above) to DfI we will:
 - (i) issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks, in the Belfast Gazette and on the Council's website, advising of the fact that the draft Plan Strategy has been submitted to the DfI;
 - (ii) notify the consultation bodies of the fact that the draft Plan Strategy and the accompanying documents are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected;
 - (iii) notify any person who has made (and not withdrawn) representations or counter representations; and
 - (iv) make the draft Plan Strategy and all associated documentation that are required under legislation, or as the Council considers relevant to the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy, available on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies can also be provided upon request.

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Stage 6: Independent Examination of the draft Plan Strategy

- 2.24 The purpose of the Independent Examination is to determine whether the draft Plan Strategy satisfies statutory requirements and whether it is sound, taking into account all representations received.
- 2.25 The Independent Examination will be carried out by either the PAC or a person appointed by DfI. They must consider all representations before they send the recommendations and reasons for recommendations to the DfI.
- 2.26 Under Section 10 (7) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 any person who makes representations seeking to change a development plan must (if that person so

requests) be given the opportunity to appear before and be heard by the person carrying out the examination.

- 2.27 Council Planning Officers will be available at the examination to answer questions and provide comment on representations and counter representations.

What we will do:

- Request key consultees to provide comment on the representations for consideration at the Independent Examination.
- At least 4 weeks before the opening of the Independent Examination we will:
 - (i) Issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G), in the Belfast Gazette and on the Council's website advising of the arrangements for the Independent Examination (dates, times and venues) and who will carry out the Independent Examination (the PAC or another person appointed by DfI);
 - (ii) Notify consultation bodies of the arrangements for the Independent Examination (dates, times and venues) and who will carry out the Independent Examination (the PAC or another person appointed by DfI); and
 - (iii) Notify all persons who submitted (and have not withdrawn) representations and counter representations of the arrangements for the Independent Examination (dates, times and venues) and who will carry out the Independent Examination (the PAC or another person appointed by DfI).
- Continue to make the draft Plan Strategy and all associated documentation available on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies can also be provided upon request.

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Stage 7: Adoption of the Plan Strategy

- 2.28 Following the Independent Examination, the PAC, or other person appointed by DfI, will send their recommendations and reasoning to DfI.
- 2.29 DfI will issue a Direction to the Council, requiring us to adopt the draft Plan Strategy as originally prepared or with modifications. The DfI may also direct the Council to withdraw the draft Plan Strategy. In either scenario, DfI will be expected to give reasons for its decision.

- 2.30 Council must comply with the Direction within such timeframes as may be prescribed by DfI. The Plan Strategy must be adopted by resolution of the Council.

What we will do:

- Adopt the Plan Strategy, as originally prepared or with modifications, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of the Direction from DfI.
- Issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks, in the Belfast Gazette and on the Council's website. This notice will confirm:
 - (i) the date of adoption of our Plan Strategy; and
 - (ii) where and times to inspect and get copies of the Plan Strategy and any accompanying documents.
- On the date of adoption make the Plan Strategy and any accompanying documents including the DfI Direction and accompanying Independent Examiner's Report available on the Council's website. Hard copies will be available on request for a specified price from the Council's Planning Offices.
- Write to key consultees and those who have submitted and not subsequently withdrawn representations and counter representations advising of the adoption of the Plan Strategy, and where to get hold of copies together with the DfI Direction and the Independent Examiner's Report.
- Send DfI a copy of the Plan Strategy and other necessary documents.
- Notify any person who has asked to be notified of the adoption of the Plan Strategy.

Stage 8: Publication of the draft Local Policies Plan

- 2.31 The Local Policies Plan is the second document comprising the LDP. This must be consistent with the Plan Strategy and will contain the Council's detailed land use policies and proposals regarding the future development of the District. This draft document is a key part of the public participation process.
- 2.32 The draft Local Policies Plan will provide detailed zonings and designations for the District. The Plan Strategy must be adopted before the draft Local Policies Plan is published for consultation, subjected to Independent Examination and adopted.

What we will do:

- Issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks, in the Belfast Gazette and on the Council's website. This notice will confirm:
 - (i) publication of draft Local Policies Plan and other supporting documents required under legislation (e.g. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) including SEA Environmental Report and how to view or obtain copies;
 - (ii) the dates and locations of public drop-in sessions; and
 - (iii) the period for public consultation (specified as 8 weeks in legislation which may be extended) and closing date for receipt of representations to the draft Local Policies Plan and other supporting documents; and
 - (iv) notification of the address to which representations can be sent and the closing date for receipt of representations.
- Make the draft Local Policies Plan and any other supporting documentation, which are required under legislation (e.g. SA) or as the Council considers relevant to the preparation of the LDP, available for inspection on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies can also be provided upon request.
- Issue a Press Release and hold a launch event to announce the publication of the draft Local Policies Plan.
- Hold public exhibitions where planning officers will be available to answer any questions.
- Write to key consultees, and Elected Members informing them of:
 - (i) the publication of the draft Local Policies Plan and providing them a copy;
 - (ii) the dates and the locations of the public drop-in sessions;
 - (iii) the consultation period for receipt of representations; and
 - (iv) the closing date for receipt of representations.
- Report representations to the Elected Members before forwarding these to the DfI prior to the Independent Examination.

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Stage 9: Public Inspection of Representations received to the draft Local Policies Plan

- 2.33 All representations to the draft Local Policies Plan will be made available for public inspection as part of the public consultation process. Interested parties may also comment on the representations that have been received, these are known as counter representations.

- 2.34 All representations and counter representations will be fully considered by the Council before it submits the draft Local Policies Plan to the DfI for Independent Examination.

What we will do:

- Issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks, in the Belfast Gazette, and on the Council's website. This notice will confirm:
 - (i) the availability of representations for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected; and
 - (ii) the 8 week period for public consultation, notification of the address to which counter representations can be sent and the closing date for receipt of counter representations.
- Make representations available for inspection on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies of representations can also be provided upon request (at a specified price).
- Notify any person who has made (and not withdrawn) a representation to the draft Local Policies Plan that representations are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected.
- Write to key consultees and Elected Members informing them that representations are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected.
- Make counter representations available for inspection on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies of counter representations can also be provided upon request (at a specified price).
- Report counter representations to the Elected Members before forwarding these to the DfI prior to the Independent Examination.
- Prior to submission to the Department we may make proposed changes to the draft Plan Strategy. In such instances, we will issue a public notice in the Belfast Gazette, a local advertisement for two consecutive weeks and publish on the Council website, of the availability of the proposed changes for inspection and the consultation period (8 weeks).

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Stage 10: Submission of the draft Local Policies Plan, and associated documents, for Independent Examination

- 2.35 The Council will only submit the draft Local Policies Plan , associated documents and supporting evidence to the DfI if it considers it has complied with relevant legislation requirements and that the draft Local Policies Plan is ready for Independent Examination. The DfI will then cause an Independent Examination to be held, by the PAC or a person appointed by the DfI, unless it issues a Direction to the Council to withdraw the draft Local Policies Plan, or intervenes to direct the Council to modify it.
- 2.36 If DfI does not intend to cause an Independent Examination it must give reasons for its decision.

What we will do:

- Submit the following documents to DfI:
 - (i) draft Local Policies Plan;
 - (ii) Statement of Community Involvement (SCI);
 - (iii) evidence of compliance with SCI;
 - (iv) LDP Timetable;
 - (v) Sustainability Appraisal;
 - (vi) statement setting out the number of representations and counter representations made (where applicable) to the draft Local Policies Plan and a summary of the main issues; and
 - (vii) such other supporting documents that are required or as Council considers relevant to the preparation of the draft Local Policies Plan.
- As soon as reasonably practicable after the submission of the draft Local Policies Plan and associated documents (see above) to DfI we will:
 - (i) issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks, in the Belfast Gazette and on the Council's website, advising of the fact that the draft Local Policies Plan has been submitted to the DfI ;
 - (ii) notify the consultation bodies of the fact that the draft Local Policies Plan and the accompanying documents are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected;
 - (iii) notify any person who has made (and not withdrawn) representations or counter representations; and
 - (iv) make the draft Local Policies Plan and all associated documentation, that are required under legislation or as the Council considers relevant to the preparation of the draft Local Policies Plan, available on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall Monaghan Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

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(and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies can also be provided upon request.

Stage 11: Independent Examination of the draft Local Policies Plan

- 2.37 The purpose of the Independent Examination is to determine whether the draft Local Policies Plan satisfies statutory requirements and whether it is sound, taking into account all representations received.
- 2.38 The Independent Examination will be carried out by either the PAC or a person appointed by DfI. They must consider all representations before they send the recommendations and reasons for recommendations to the Department.
- 2.39 Under Section 10 (7) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 any person who makes representations seeking to change a development plan must (if that person so requests) be given the opportunity to appear before and be heard by the person carrying out the examination.
- 2.40 Council Planning Officers will be available at the examination to answer questions and provide comment on the representations and counter representations.

What we will do:

- Request key consultees to provide comment on the representations for consideration at the Independent Examination.
- At least 4 weeks before the opening of the Independent Examination we will:
 - (i) issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G), in the Belfast Gazette and on the Council's website advising the arrangements for the Independent Examination (dates, times and venues) and who will carry out the Independent Examination (the PAC or another person appointed by DfI);
 - (ii) notify the consultation bodies of the arrangements for the Independent Examination (dates, times and venues) and who will carry out the Independent Examination (the PAC or another person appointed by DfI); and
 - (iii) notify all persons who submitted (and have not withdrawn) representations and counter representations of the arrangements for the Independent Examination (dates, times and venues) and who will carry out the Independent Examination (the PAC or another person appointed by DfI).
- Continue to make the draft Local Policies Plan and all associated documentation available on the Council's website and at the Council's Planning Offices at Warrenpoint Town Hall, Menaghaw Row, Newry and the Downshire Civic Centre,

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Downpatrick during normal working hours (and at any other places within the District that the Council considers appropriate). Hard copies can also be provided upon request.

Stage 12: Adoption of the Local Policies Plan

- 2.41 Following the Independent Examination, the PAC, or other person appointed by DfI, will send their recommendations and reasoning to DfI.
- 2.42 DfI will issue a Direction to the Council, requiring it to adopt the draft Local Policies Plan as originally prepared or with modifications. DfI may also direct the Council to withdraw the draft Local Policies Plan. In either scenario, the DfI will be expected to give reasons for their decisions.
- 2.43 Council must comply with the Direction within such timeframes as may be prescribed by DfI. The Local Policies Plan must be adopted by resolution of the Council.

What we will do:

- Adopt the Local Policies Plan as originally prepared or with modifications, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of the Direction from DfI.
- Issue a public notice in the local newspapers (see Appendix G) for two consecutive weeks, in the Belfast Gazette and on the Council's website. This notice will confirm:
 - (i) the date of adoption of the Local Policies Plan; and
 - (ii) where and times to inspect and get copies of the Local Policies Plan and any accompanying documents
- On the date of adoption make the Local Policies Plan and any accompanying documents including the DfI Direction and accompanying Independent Examiner's Report available on the Council website. Hard copies will be available on request for a specified price from the Council's Planning Offices;
- Write to key consultees and those who have submitted and not subsequently withdrawn representations and counter representations advising of the adoption of the Local Policies Plan, and where to get hold of copies together with the DfI Direction and the Independent Examiners Report;
- Send DfI a copy of the Local Policies Plan and other necessary documents; and
- Notify any person who has asked to be notified of the adoption of the Local Policies Plan.

Next Steps

- 2.44 Following the adoption of the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan, the Council will identify its work priorities for the next five years in a new LDP Timetable. It may also issue a new SCI to accompany these if considered appropriate. In addition the Council will engage in monitoring and review which are essential in establishing how the objectives in the LDP are being achieved and whether any changes are required. Any changes will be subject to the same procedural and publicity requirements as previously set out for the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan. The Council must carry out a review of its LDP every five years and no later than five years from the date that the Local Policies Plan was first adopted or approved. A report on the findings of the review must be sent to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

3.0 Development Management

Purpose

- 3.1 The Council as the local planning authority for the area deals with the majority of planning and Listed Building applications in the district. It also deals with applications for works in conservation areas, works to protected trees, advertising consent and hazardous substances consent.
- 3.2 Development management is the process through which such applications are considered. An important part of the process is to provide information and advice to applicants and to seek and take into account the views of the general public and statutory consultees on all planning applications. The statutory requirements for consultation on planning applications are set out in legislation. These requirements vary according to the type of proposal but include notification to specified bodies and general publicity.
- 3.3 All planning applications are now categorised on receipt as local, major or regionally significant, with the Council responsible for determining all local and major applications, unless called-in⁹ by the DfI.
- 3.4 Regionally significant developments are those which are considered to have a critical contribution to make in regard to the economic and social success of Northern Ireland as a whole, or to a substantial part of the region. Such proposals also include developments which have significant effects beyond Northern Ireland or involve substantial departure from a Local Development Plan. Regionally significant applications are processed by the DfI.
- 3.5 Major developments have important economic, social and environmental implications for the Council. Due to the potential of these proposals to deliver important benefits to the community, major applications are prioritised to avoid undue delay and risk to investment decisions. Common examples of major development proposals include:
 - a housing development involving the construction of 50 units or more, or where the area of the site is or exceeds 2 hectares;
 - a retail development involving 1,000 square metres or more of gross floor space outside town centres, or where the area of the site is or exceeds 1 hectare; and
 - industrial development involving 5,000 square metres or more gross floor space or where the area of the site is or exceeds 1 hectare.
- 3.6 Local development proposals are those applications which are not considered to be regionally significant or major. The vast majority of planning applications are likely to

⁹ Further information on the call-in procedure is contained within the DOE's SCI, this can be viewed on the NI Planning Portal : <https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/departments-sci.htm>

constitute local developments and these will include most commercial and housing proposals as well as minor schemes and householder development.

- 3.7 The Council receives a wide variety of planning applications and therefore needs to involve the community to differing degrees, according to the scale and complexity of the application.

This section of the SCI looks at:

- how the public can become involved at the various stages of the application process; and
- how the level of community involvement will depend on the scale of the application.

Pre-Application Stage

Pre-Application Discussions (PADs)

- 3.8 Pre-application discussions are encouraged for a range of types of applications, both major and local. The objective of pre-application discussions should be to confirm whether the principle of development is acceptable and to clarify the format, type and level of detail required to enable the council to determine an application. For major applications it will also enable the applicant to discuss with the council details of how the community should be involved in the decision-making process.

Pre-Application Community Consultation (PACC)

- 3.9 The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 has introduced a requirement for applicants to inform and involve the wider community in planning applications. Greater community engagement from the outset is key to not only creating better quality developments but also improving the process of place making. Applicants submitting major applications to the Council or as the case may be the DfI are, as of the 1 July 2015, required to undertake community consultation before submitting their application.

The Council will require the following actions to be undertaken by the applicant before a major application is submitted-

- (i) notify the Council, at least 12 weeks in advance, that an application for a major planning application is to be submitted. This is referred to as a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) and will outline the detail of the proposed application and what consultation is to be undertaken;
- (ii) hold at least one public event where the community will be afforded the opportunity to make comment. This is not to be held earlier than 7 days after the notification of the date, time and place of the event;
- (iii) publish details of the proposal in the local press, outlining a description of, and the location of, the proposed development; details as to where further

information can be obtained about the proposed development; the date, time and place of the public event; a statement explaining how, and when, people who want to make comments can; and a statement that comments made to the prospective applicant are not representations to the Council but that representations may be submitted should an application be made to the Council at a later stage; and

- (iv) submit a pre-application community consultation report on submission of the planning application.

- 3.10 The Council will assess the report and determine if the consultation undertaken meets the legislative requirements. The Council may, providing it does so within 21 days of receipt of the PAN, ask the applicant to notify further individuals or organisations or advise that additional consultation is required.
- 3.11 Pre-application consultation is likely to be more successful if the applicant makes significant efforts to open lines of communication with, and provide feedback to, local communities and work with them to secure development proposals which are acceptable to everyone.
- 3.12 As previously stated the Council would recommend all applicants considering submitting development proposals that fall within the definition of major development to seek a Pre-Application Discussion with planning officers. Where applicants fail to fully meet the pre-application community consultation requirements the Council will decline to determine the application.
- 3.13 Local people are encouraged to participate in the pre-application consultation as this should help applicants better understand local concerns or circumstances and possibly take action to address these concerns before submitting a formal application. Where local concerns and issues are not adequately addressed by the applicant at pre-consultation stage they may be raised by the community again at formal application stage.

Application Stage

- 3.14 When a planning application is submitted for determination the Council will involve the community in the decision making process. If you feel you will be affected by development proposals you will have an opportunity to consider what is proposed and how it will affect you. You will also have the opportunity to make your views known before a final decision is made on the application.

The Council will inform the public of all planning applications through:

- Advertising; and
- Neighbour Notification.

- 3.15 The Council undertakes statutory publicity in accordance with current legislation. If DfI amend or change the statutory publicity requirements then our future approach will reflect any changes that are made.

Advertising

- 3.16 The Council will advertise all new applications on a weekly basis in at least one local newspaper (listed in Appendix G) in accordance with Article 8 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. The weekly list of all new applications received by the Council can also be viewed on the Planning NI web portal.¹⁰ The notice placed in the local newspapers advises that any representations to be made should be received within 14 days of publication (4 weeks in the case of EIA applications) to assist efficient processing of applications. However, it should be noted that any late representations made on an application, provided they are received before a decision is made, will be considered.

Neighbour Notification

- 3.17 The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 states that any identified occupier of land neighbouring the land to which the application relates must be notified of the proposed development by serving a notice on them. Under the Council's neighbour notification scheme, the Council will issue neighbour notification letters to occupiers of neighbouring premises which fulfil both of the following criteria:
- (i) the property in question is within 90m of the boundary of the application site;
and
 - (ii) meets the definition of neighbouring land, in that it directly adjoins the boundary of the application site, or would adjoin it but for an entry or road less than 20m in width.
- 3.18 The Planning Officer when carrying out a site inspection will also check the accuracy of the neighbour notification details supplied on the application form and may add details as considered appropriate.
- 3.19 The period for responding following receipt of a neighbour notification letter is also 14 days (4 weeks in the case of applications requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment) , though again any late representations received before a decision is made will still be considered.

EIA Development

- 3.20 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a method for ensuring that the likely effects of new development on the environment are fully understood and taken into account before consent is given for the development to proceed.

¹⁰ See http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/my_council/council_newry_mourne_down.htm

- 3.21 The Environmental Statement (ES) produced as part of an environmental impact assessment, brings together in a single document or series of documents information about a proposed development and its effects on the environment.
- 3.22 In most cases it will fall to the Council to determine if the application is an EIA application. It should be noted that if an application is an EIA application it cannot be processed until the ES is received. When a developer submits an ES in support of a planning application, the Council will publish a notice of its receipt in a local newspaper and indicate where it may be purchased and the address of the Council Office where it may be inspected. The Council will also allow 4 weeks from the date the notice is first published for representation to be made.

Obtaining further information and getting involved in planning applications

- 3.23 The weekly lists of planning applications received within the council area are also available on the Northern Ireland Planning Portal (www.planningni.gov.uk). Planning applications including supporting documents and corresponding plans can be viewed online as well at the Council offices during normal office hours. A duty Planning Officer will be available during normal office hours (9am – 5pm) to give advice on current or proposed applications (you are advised to make an appointment if you wish to speak to a particular officer). You can contact the Council's Planning Department by telephone on 0300 200 7830 or by email on planning@nmandd.org.

Public Register

- 3.24 The Council will make the application, plans and any associated environmental statement available on a public register. Each register will contain the following information:
- a copy (which may be photographic) of each application together with copies of plans and drawings submitted in relation thereto;
 - the decision notice, if any, in respect of the application, including details of any conditions subject to which permission or consent was granted;
 - the reference number, the date and effect of any decision of the PAC in respect of the application; and
 - brief details of any revocation or modification relating to any permission or consent, including date of issue.

File Inspection

- 3.25 Planning application files are open to the public, the Council will make the application file available for inspection, by appointment. The amount of information on the file, will of course, be dependent on the stages the application has completed. Certain information may be withheld on data protection grounds e.g. a person's medical information. Hard copies can also be provided upon request (at a specified price).

Submitting Comments

- 3.26
- Individuals, groups and organisations can comment on a planning application even if they have not been neighbour notified by the Council. All comments will be carefully considered. Care should be taken when making comments to the Council to ensure that no personal data is included.
- 3.27
- When a decision is made on a planning application only certain issues are taken into account, these are often referred to as 'material planning considerations'. Material considerations must be genuine planning considerations. The basic question is not whether owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties would experience financial or other loss from a particular development, but whether the proposal would unacceptably affect amenities and the existing use of land and buildings that ought to be protected in the public interest. A list of material and non-material considerations is contained in Appendix F.
- 3.28
- Generally greater weight is attached to issues which are supported by evidence rather than solely by assertion. If an identified problem can be dealt with by means of a suitable condition the Council is required to consider this as an alternative to refusing an application.
- 3.29
- You can make comments in a variety of ways, these are as follows-

By email: planning@nmandd.org (Please quote the application number)

By post: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

[Newry Planning Office](#) or [Downpatrick Planning Office](#)

[Haughey House](#)

[Unit 19 Rampart Road](#)

[Greenbank Industrial Estate](#)[O'Hagan House](#) [Downshire](#)

[Civic Centre](#)

[Monaghan Row](#) [Downshire Estate, Ardglass Rd](#)

[Newry BT3435-8D32OU](#) [Downpatrick BT30 6GQ](#)

Online through the Planning Portal. Comments can be submitted by members of the public through Public Access once they have been registered for an account on the Planning Portal.

<http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/publicaccess/>

- 3.30
- All written comments on an application will be acknowledged within five working days. The acknowledgement letter will set out who is dealing with the application and who to contact if there are any questions.

- 3.31 Whilst Planning Officers may not be able to respond to each comment made due to the large numbers received. All comments will be summarised and fully considered within the Planning Officer's report.
- 3.32 The Council will not normally contact the respondent again until after a decision is made unless the application is significantly altered or is withdrawn.
- 3.33 The Council may, if it considers it appropriate to do so, stage public exhibitions, issue press releases or arrange public meetings to provide information about major developments or proposals which are particularly significant or have wide-spread effects on communities.
- 3.34 The Council will consult with a range of Statutory Consultees (see Appendix C) to assist in the determination of an application. If a representation raises issues that are relevant to the responsibilities of the consultee (e.g. road safety) the representative will be copied to the appropriate consultee for consideration and comment. The council will carefully take any comments made into account before a decision is made. All comments are scanned and added to the web site once private email addresses, private telephone numbers and hand written signatures have been removed. Names and addresses will remain visible.
- 3.35 The Council and the applicant may negotiate changes to applications where these are expedient. Re-consultation (for 14 days), re-advertisement and further neighbour notification will take place on minor amendments if the council considers that they raise new issues that could lead to further comment. If any change is considered to be substantive, the Council may decline to treat it as an amendment and a new application may be invited.

Community Involvement at the Planning Committee Stage

- 3.36 The Planning Committee meeting is normally held every fourth week in the Boardroom of the Council offices at either Warrenpoint Town Hall or the Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick, O'Hagan House, Monaghan Row, Newry. Additional meetings of the Planning Committee may be scheduled according to business needs. The meeting commences at 10.00am (unless otherwise stated) and is open to the public.

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Scheme of Delegation

- 3.37 The majority of planning applications submitted to Council are determined by Council appointed planning officers using delegated powers. The circumstances under which an application can, or cannot, be determined using delegated powers are set out in the Council's Scheme of Delegation. It should be noted that this document will be subject to regular review. The most up to date version of the document can be accessed at : <http://www.newrymournedown.org/planning>. A copy is also available for inspection, during normal working hours, at the Council Planning Offices.

Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee

- 3.38 Applications which do not fall within the Scheme of Delegation must be presented to the Council Planning Committee for decision. Council's Protocol for the Operation of the Planning Committee sets out the detailed procedures for this Committee. It should be noted that this protocol is also subject to change. The most up-to-date version of the document can be viewed on the Council's website. A copy is also available for inspection, during normal office hours, at the Council's Planning Offices.

Pre-determination hearings and speaking at the Planning Committee

- 3.39 There may be occasions when major applications will raise particularly complex planning issues or attract a significant level of objection. In such cases the Planning Committee may decide to hold a pre-determination hearing prior to making its decision at the scheduled monthly Planning Committee meeting.
- 3.40 A pre-determination hearing will provide the opportunity for the applicant and their agent, as well as those who may have made representations, to present their case to the committee and for Members to ask questions and clarify matters. Key consultees may also be invited to report their expert views. When the Planning Committee agrees to such a hearing, the applicant will be advised and the detailed arrangements will be advertised in the local press. Any hearing will take place after the expiry of the period for making representations on the application but before the Committee hears the application.
- 3.41 For any major application that has been notified¹¹ to the Department for Infrastructure but is subsequently returned to the Council for determination, the Council is required to afford the applicant the opportunity of appearing before and being heard by the Planning Committee at a Pre-determination hearing.
- 3.42 If a member of the public wishes to speak at the Planning Committee they must contact the Council's Democratic Services by telephone or email (democratic.services@nmandd.org) at least 5 working days before the date of the meeting at which the application will be considered. Only those who have made written submissions in respect of a planning application and registered a request to speak in respect of the application shall be permitted to make oral representations before the Committee as outlined in the Planning Committee Operating Protocol (available to view on the Council's website or at local planning offices).

¹¹ Under the Planning (Notification of Applications) (Northern Ireland) Direction 2015 the Council is required to formally notify DfI where the Council is minded to grant planning permission for certain types of major development. The Direction restricts the grant of planning permission and requires the Council to send information to DfI.

Post Application Stage

Community Involvement after a Planning Application has been determined

- 3.43 A notification of decision letter is sent to the applicant/agent and all people who have responded to the consultation on the planning application, informing them of the decision and the reason for that decision. The decision is recorded in the statutory Planning Register. If it is a case that has been considered by the Planning Committee, it can be found either by contacting the Planning Department following the Committee meeting, or by viewing the minutes of the Committee meeting published on Council's website the day after they are formally approved and adopted at the following Planning Committee meeting.

Community Involvement in Planning Appeals

- 3.44 Planning appeals may be made by the applicant against the refusal of planning permission, against conditions placed on a planning approval and against an enforcement notice. Only applicants and those upon whom notices have been served have the right of appeal. There are no third party rights of appeal. Where an applicant is unhappy with the Council's decision on an application or a condition attached to a permission, he/she may appeal to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC). An applicant may also appeal to the PAC where the Council has not determined an application within the relevant period prescribed by the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015, where such an appeal is lodged, the application is deemed to have been refused. Appeals must be lodged with the PAC within four months from the date of notification of the Council's decision, or expiry of the prescribed period as the case may be.
- 3.45 All those people who responded on the original planning application that is the subject of appeal will be advised that an appeal has been received, and provided with an opportunity to make their views known. Copies of letters already submitted will be forwarded to the PAC. For hearings and public inquiries, the interested parties have the opportunity to make their views known verbally to the PAC. Guidance on Planning Appeals and the rights of applicants and objectors can be found on the PAC website www.pacni.gov.uk

4.0 Planning Enforcement

- 4.1 The Council encourages the community to report cases where they believe there has been a breach of planning control. A breach of planning control occurs when development or other certain activities take place without the necessary planning permission or consent from the Council or the Department. This may also include failure to carry out development in accordance with the approved plans or conditions.
- 4.2 Suspected breaches of planning control can be reported in the following ways:

By email: planning.enforcement@nmandd.org

By post: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Newry Planning Office or Downpatrick Planning Office

O'Hagan House

Haughey House

Unit 19 Rampart Road

Greenbank Industrial Estate Downshire Civic Centre

Monaghan-Rew Downshire Estate, Ardglass Rd

Newry BT3534 8D32QU Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

By telephone: [0330 137 4000](tel:03301374000) (or [0330 137 4036](tel:03301374036))~~0300 200 7830 (or 0300 013 2233)~~

4.3 You may also wish to raise the matter with one of the Elected Members who can bring the matter to the attention of the Planning Officers on your behalf.

4.4 All planning enforcement related complaints are treated confidentially. If the complaint results in a planning application being submitted, then this will be publicised in the normal manner and adjoining neighbours and complainants notified.

4.5 In cases where planning enforcement action is taken, complainants are informed of the action. In cases where enforcement action is not taken, a full explanation providing the Council's reasons will be sent to the complainants. Many initial complaints relate to non-enforcement issues in the district, such as householder permitted development type extensions or alterations to a dwelling house.

4.6 The Council's priorities for enforcement action will be set out within our [forthcoming Enforcement Strategy](#). ~~Once published, this strategy will be subject to regular review as necessary, and a public consultation exercise will form part of this review process.~~
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5.0 Community Involvement in Other Planning Functions

Community Involvement in Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 5.1 The Council may also prepare non-statutory planning guidance to support its development plan. Supplementary planning guidance includes for example design guides and advice notes. These will be published for public consultation and comment prior to the publication of the final draft. Comments received will be published on the Council web site. It is not necessary for Supplementary planning guidance to go through the public examination process.

Community Involvement in Conservation Area Designation

- 5.2 A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance. The Council considers that consultation with, and the involvement of local people is important when undertaking work associated with Conservation Areas. This will help encourage greater ownership of the concept and greater co-operation and commitment to achieving the aims of the designation.
- 5.3 The Council will involve the community in the designation or variation or cancellation of a Conservation Area. This will entail formal consultation with the Historic Buildings Council, the Department for Communities, the Department for Infrastructure and any water and sewerage undertaker. Any alterations to existing Conservation Areas or designation of new Conservation Areas will be advertised by way of a public notice in the local press. Where appropriate public meetings will be held to discuss and present proposals. Upon formal designation the Council will publish a public notice in the local press and hold a public launch and exhibition.

Community Involvement in the Designation of a Simplified Planning Zone

- 5.4 If the Council proposes to commence work on a simplified planning zone (see Appendix A Glossary of Planning Terms) it will undertake consultations with the neighbouring district council, the land owner and occupier, the Department for Communities and will notify the Department for Infrastructure.
- 5.5 Once details of a scheme have been prepared the Council will make copies available for inspection at the Council's office, give notice by way of an advertisement in the local press and on the Council's website, and will serve a notice on those it has consulted with.
- 5.6 Following advertising of the proposed planning zone(s) details there will be an 8 week period when representations can be made to the Council. If the Council subsequently

decides not to proceed with the proposed planning zone it will publish a further advertisement to that effect and will notify all those have made representations.

- 5.7 The Council may cause an independent examination to be held to consider the representations received. Where it is proposed to hold an independent examination details including the time and place of the examination will be published in the local press. Where it is decided not to hold an independent examination the Council will notify all those who have made representations.
- 5.8 Following the independent examination the Council will produce a report and statement detailing its decision and outlining reasons for its decision. Notice of publication will be advertised in the local press and the report and statement will be available for public inspection in the Council offices.

Appendices

Appendix A – Glossary of Planning Terms

Development Management: The process for a Council to decide on planning applications.

Development Plan: Local Development Plans apply regional policies at the appropriate level and inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested bodies of the policy framework and land use proposals that will guide development decisions within a specified area.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): A procedure to be followed for certain types of planning application to ensure that decisions are made in the full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA): An assessment of the likely impact of policies and proposals on the promotion of equality of opportunity. Carried out on all local development plans to fulfil the obligations imposed on the Council by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Independent Examination: The independent examination conducted by the Planning Appeals Commission to test the soundness of the Local Development Plan.

Local Policies Plan: This provides detailed plans and policies for the development of specific geographical area.

Major Development: Large scale developed proposals that meet the thresholds contained within The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Material Consideration: A material consideration is any planning matter which is relevant to a particular case.

Planning Appeals Commission: The body which provides a Commissioner to carry out an independent assessment of the soundness of a Development Plan Document or Statement of Community Involvement. The Commission also processes planning, listed building consent, advertisement and enforcement appeals.

Planning Committee: the planning committee is responsible for making decisions on the bigger and more sensitive planning applications received by the Council. The planning committee is made up of a number councillors who are responsible for deciding planning applications, listed building and conservation area consents. Which items are considered by the committee is decided through the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

Plan-led System: The principle that decisions upon planning applications should be made in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless there are other material considerations that may indicate otherwise.

Plan Strategy: This is the first part of the development plan and provides a framework or overview to guide the direction of the local plan.

Preferred Options Paper (POP): Ideas, possibilities and alternative proposals produced at any early stage in the production of the Local Plan and issued for public consultation and have not been endorsed by the Council.

Scheme of Delegation: a scheme where decision making on local applications is delegated to an appointed officer rather than through the Council's Planning Committee thereby enabling speedier decisions and improved efficiency. Section 31(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires the Council to produce such a scheme.

SEA Scoping Report: A report which sets out how the Council will ensure that the likely significant effects of the development plan will be assessed including the environmental effects and alternatives that need to be considered, the assessment methods to be used as well as the scope and level of detail of information that will be included in the final environmental report.

Simplified Planning Zone: An area in which the Council wishes to stimulate development and encourage development. It operates by granting a specified planning permission in the zone without the need for an application for planning permission and the payment of a planning fee.

Soundness: A Development Plan document is likely to be sound if it meets certain tests at the Examination stage. These tests require that a document is prepared according to the correct procedures, that it conforms to other policies, and its proposals are justified, consistent and effective.

Justified means that the document must be

- Founded on a robust and credible evidence base; and
- The most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives.

Effective means that the document must be

- Deliverable;
- Flexible; and
- Able to be monitored.

Stakeholders: Individuals or organisations who have a strong interest in the issue or may be affected directly by any decisions or plans. The term is used mostly to refer to bodies that will affect the delivery of a planning document's policies and proposals.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): An assessment of the probable environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained in the LDP. The assessment is carried out to ensure compliance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the "assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment" and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations(Northern Ireland) 2004.

Statutory Requirements: Actions required to be undertaken by the Council as a result of legislation.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): a sustainability appraisal assesses the likely social, economic and environmental effects of policies in the development plan documents.

Appendix B - Local Development Plan Consultation Bodies¹²

Statutory Consultation Bodies¹³

1. Northern Ireland Government Departments:
 - The Executive Office;
 - Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA);
 - Department for Infrastructure (DfI);
 - Department for the Economy (DfE);
 - Department of Education (DE);
 - Department of Finance (DoF);
 - Department of Health (DoH);
 - Department of Justice (DoJ); and
 - Department for Communities (DfC).
2. Adjoining Councils/Planning Authorities with common boundaries:
 - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council;
 - Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council;
 - Ards and North Down Borough Council;
 - Louth County Council; and
 - Monaghan County Council.
3. Water and Sewerage undertakers:
 - NI Water
4. Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).
5. Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).
6. Any person to whom the electronic communication code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3) of the Communication Act 2003.
7. Any person to whom a license has been granted under Article 10(1) of the Electricity (Northern Ireland) Order 1992.
8. Any person to whom a license has been granted under Article 8 of the Gas (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.

¹² There may be additional consultations required at specific times throughout the LDP process.

¹³ Statutory consultees are those government bodies or other organisations with whom the Council must liaise as part of the development plan process .

Appendix C – Consultation on the Development Management Process

Planning Officers frequently need to obtain specialist advice to enable them to consider the potential impacts of a development proposal before determining an application. This is referred to as the consultation process. Consultation with statutory and non-statutory bodies should be carried out only when considered necessary to inform a planning decision.

Statutory consultees¹⁴ (listed below) are those government bodies or other organisations with whom the Council must liaise. The need for consultations will vary between applications depending on the nature and scale of the proposal as well as the provision of standing advice from the consultee.

1. Department for Infrastructure (DfI);
2. Department for Communities;
3. Health and Safety Executive NI (HSENI);
4. The Department for Infrastructure or other water undertaker as defined under Article 13 of The Water and Sewerage Services (NI) Order 2006;
5. Licensed Aerodromes;
6. The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA);
7. The Department for the Economy (DfE); and
8. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).

Where the Council undertakes consultations on a planning application the consultee will be required to respond within 21 days, or any other date as agreed in writing, after which time the Council may determine the application whether or not a response has been received. The exception is those developments which are subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) where the Council cannot make a determination until 28 days have passed.

Non-Statutory Consultees

Not all information required to process an application will be from statutory consultees. There will be occasions when non-statutory consultees e.g. the Environmental health section of the Council, need to be consulted.

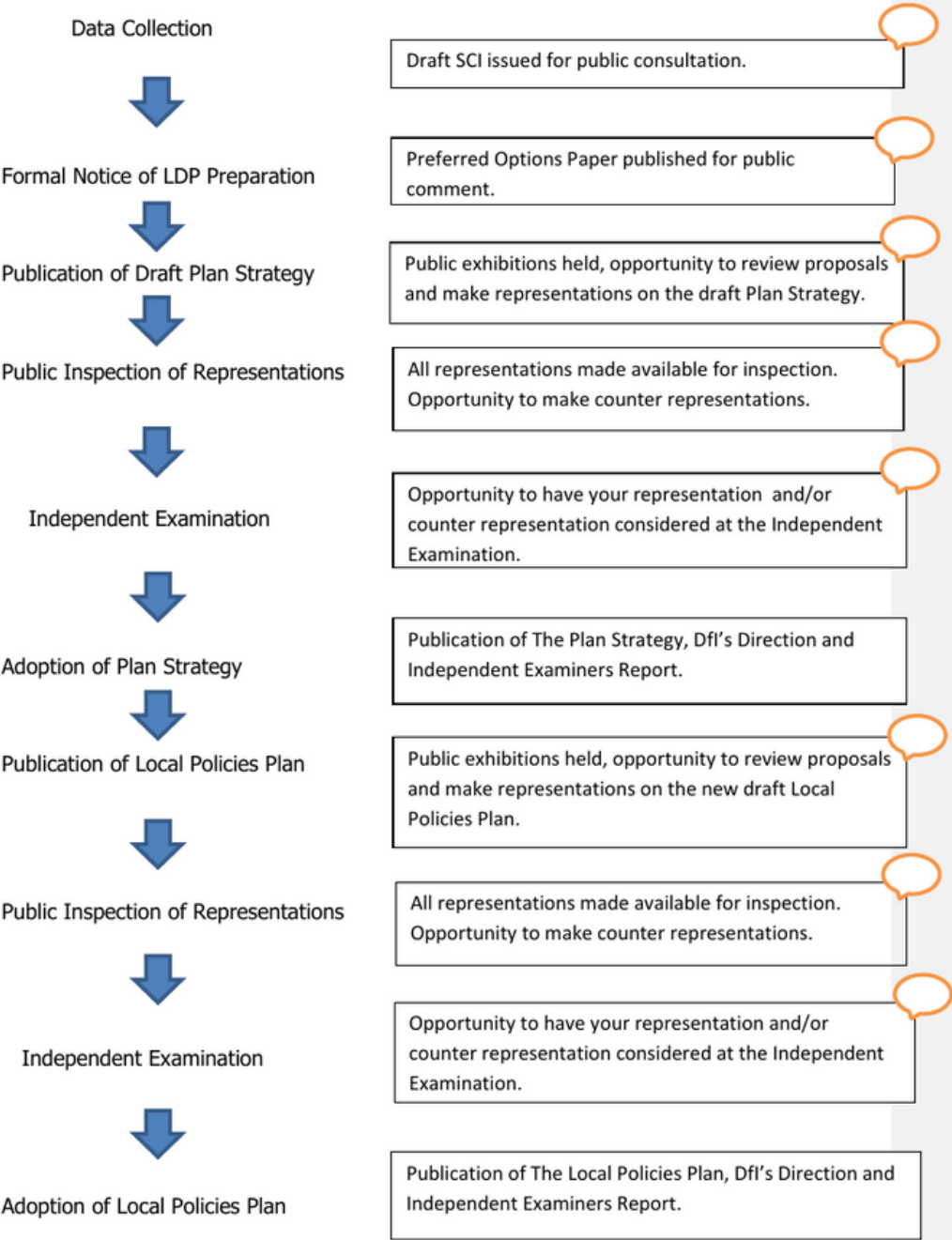
It may also include external organisations and bodies. These consultees are not bound by the 21 day response time, however, they are encouraged to respond in a timely manner so as not to delay the planning process.

Due to the wide range of development proposals submitted to Council, each application will be carefully considered and consultations will be undertaken in line with statutory requirements. The need for consultation will vary between applications depending on the nature and scale of the proposal.

¹⁴ Schedule 3 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 defines the statutory consultees and outlines the various circumstances where consultation must be undertaken.

Appendix D – Local Development Plan Process

The speech bubble indicates when you can have your say.



Appendix E – Planning Application Process

The speech bubble indicates when you can have your say.

Pre-application



The Council encourages applicants to undertake pre-application community consultation with the community. In the case of major applications community consultation is mandatory.

Application



The Council will accept or decline the application based on validation criteria.

Advertising &
Neighbour
Notification



Plans published online on the Planning Portal.
Neighbours notified.
Statutory consultees and other relevant bodies invited to make comments.
Press advert in local newspapers.

Written and emailed comments can be submitted both during the advertising/neighbour notification period and during the consultation period.

When responding it is important that your response relates to planning matters known as material considerations. Some examples of material and non-material considerations can be found in Appendix F.

Application
Review



Consultee comments and any comments from third parties can be viewed online via the planning portal

Officer Report



The case officer prepares a report on the application and provides a recommendation.

Decision



The decision will be made by the Chief Planning Officer or the Planning Committee .

If the application is decided by the Planning Committee the applicant and those who have made representations will be afforded the opportunity to speak at the Planning Committee in line with the Planning Committee Operating Protocol.

Decision Notice

Issued

The decision will be sent to the applicant or agent. It will then be published on the planning portal

Appendix F - Material and Non-Material considerations

There is no legal definition for material definitions, however they are held to include all the fundamental factors involved in land-use planning. Essentially a material consideration is one which is relevant to making a planning decision as to whether to grant or refuse an application for planning permission. Material considerations will vary depending on the specific circumstances of each case.

Generally greater weight is attached to issues raised which are supported by evidence rather than solely by assertion.

The lists below provide some examples of material and non-material considerations however it should be noted that these are not exhaustive lists.

Material considerations	Non-material considerations
Can be taken into account • Regional and local Planning Policies. • Adopted and emerging Development Plans. • Planning history on the site • Case law. • Loss of sunlight and overshadowing. • Overlooking and loss of privacy. • Roads issues (e.g. increased traffic movements). • Layout, density, design/appearance, character. • Effect on a listed building or conservation area. • Noise, smell or other disturbances. • Cumulative impact. • Capacity of infrastructure.	Cannot be taken into account • Private issues between neighbours. • Opposition to business competition. • Loss of property value. • Loss of view. • Moral objection. • History of the applicant. • Matters covered by other legislation. • Restrictive covenants. • Opposition to the principle of development if permission has been granted by an outline application or on appeal.

Appendix G – List of Local Newspapers for Advertisement

Local Newspapers which the Council currently advertises planning applications in (weekly):

- ~~Crossmaglen Examiner~~
- Down Recorder
- Mourne Observer
- ~~Newry Reporter~~
- Newry Democrat

Report to:	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday 8 th September 2025
Subject:	Tourism Events, Facilities and Visitor Servicing - Supplier procurements
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director: Economy Growth and Tourism
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Catriona Regan Head of Culture, Arts, Heritage and Events • Economy, Growth and Tourism

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

For decision	X	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> To seek approval on the recommendations set out in this report to appoint successful suppliers via a procurement process to deliver on key aspects of Council's Tourism Events programme, Tourism Facilities Operations and Visitor Servicing. <u>Background</u> A review of the procurement requirements for the delivery of the Council's Tourism Events programme has been undertaken and detailed in section 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 • Tourism Events: Four key areas have been identified that require a tender process to appoint suppliers. • Tourism Facilities Operations: A procurement is required to deliver on the renewal of Council Security Services contract for Council operated campsites • Visitor Servicing: A procurement is required for the appointment of a specialist provider to support Council in the development and delivery of high-quality digital content, online communications, website support and development for Tourism, Events, Museums and Arts Services. For all business cases presented, Officers will seek approval for annual spend via Council as part of the rates setting process each year. Business Cases for each of the requirements listed are included in appendix section for Committee approval.

2.0	Key issues
2.1	Tourism Events Newry, Mourne and Down District Council as part of its corporate goals delivers a number of tourism events. These annual signature events vary in nature, scale and location. At present, these events include Wake the Giant Festival, Eats and Beats Festival, Footsteps in the Forest, St Patrick's Day, Newry Arts Festival and Christmas Switch/Market events. To facilitate event management, tenders are being raised for specific elements of event management over a three- year period. • <u>PA and Lighting</u> Appoint a supplier to deliver Public Address & Lighting Systems for Tourism, Arts & Culture Department Events. The Contract will be for an initial period of three years from the date of the award of the Contract, and subject to satisfactory performance, budget availability and agreement between the parties, there is the possibility of two further one-year extensions giving a possible total contract period of five years. • <u>Marquees</u> Appoint a supplier to deliver the Provision of Marquees for Tourism, Arts & Culture Department Events. The Contract will be for an initial period of three years from the date of the award of the Contract, and subject to satisfactory performance, budget availability and agreement between the parties, there is the possibility of two further one-year extensions giving a possible total contract period of five years. • <u>Staging</u> Appoint a supplier to deliver the provision of staging for Tourism, Arts & Culture Department Events. The Contract will be for an initial period of three years from the date of the award of the Contract, and subject to satisfactory performance, budget availability and agreement between the parties, there is the possibility of two further one-year extensions giving a possible total contract period of five years. • <u>Professional Stewarding, event safety and safeguarding</u> Appoint a supplier to deliver the provision of stewarding, event safety and safeguarding for Tourism, Arts & Culture Department Events. The Contract will be for an initial period of three years from the date of the award of the Contract, and subject to satisfactory performance, budget availability and agreement between the parties, there is the possibility of two further one-year extensions giving a possible total contract period of five years.

2.2	Visitor Servicing - Digital Services for Tourism, Culture & Events: Integrated marketing, digital engagement, and content development To support continued investment in our online presence the Council propose to procure and appoint a specialist provider to support Council in the development and delivery of high-quality digital content, online communications, website support and development for Visitor Services, Tourism Giant Event Programme and Arts Events The Contract will be for an initial period of three years from the date of the award of the Contract, renewed annually subject to budget and performance. Visitors and tourists are increasingly using new digital channels to research, book and share their holiday experiences. As the Council continues to develop the high quality tourism offering in our tourism events, forest parks, museums and arts service, etc, it is essential that our digital channels continue to evolve, to reach new customers and to help grow our share of key growth markets (such as GB and RoI).
2.3	Tourism Facilities – Security Services The Council-managed parks offers key visitor facilities with the opportunity to offer overnight stays in caravan / camping provision. The campsites operate between St. Patrick's Day and Halloween each year. The peak times for the sites are weekends, bank holidays, the Easter holidays and daily throughout July and August. Throughout the campsite season, Council staff are on duty no later than 9.30pm. This leaves the campsites unattended until their return at 8.30am the following morning. Historically, anti-social behaviour, unauthorised access and non-compliance with site regulations has been experienced overnight. It is paramount that these facilities best represent both Council and the wider district. Key to this is the provision of a safe and secure 'holiday' environment for visitors staying overnight. To date, Council has appointed suitably qualified and experienced contractors to supply and manage certified security personnel throughout peak periods. Contractors were most recently appointed via a competitive tender process. These appointments are due to terminate completely in November 2025. A new procurement is therefore required.
3.0	Recommendations

3.1	Approval of the recommendations set out in this report to appoint successful suppliers via a procurement process to deliver on key aspects of Council's Tourism Events programme, Tourism Facilities Operations and Visitor Servicing: 1) PA & Lighting 2) Marquees 3) Event Staging 4) Professional Stewarding, Event Safety & Safeguarding 5) Digital Services for Tourism, Culture & Events 6) Security Services for Tourism Facilities
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	As set out in the attached business cases. Multi-year spend is projected only and may be subject to change according to requirements and / or budgets
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> <i>N/A</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐

	Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
	The below items are deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business 1. Business Case - PA and Lighting 2. Business Case – Marquees 3. Business Case - Event Staging 4. Business Case - Professional Stewarding, event safe and safeguarding 5. Business Case – Digital Services for Tourism Culture and Events 6. Business Case - Tourism Facilities – Security Services
8.0	Background Documents
	n/a

Report to:	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday 8 th September 2025
Subject:	Local Economic Partnership
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism.
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Aveen McVeigh Head of Regeneration and Business Development

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

For decision	X	For noting only	
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> Council to note NMD Local Economic Partnership approval of an action plan and approve submission of the action plan to DfE for consideration. <u>Background</u> Council's Local Economic Partnership (LEP) was formed on 27th January 2025 and to date have hosted six meetings. The aim of the Partnership is to deliver on a Regional Balance Fund focusing on creating good jobs, increasing productivity, improving regional balance and decarbonisation. The budget announced by Department for Economy (DfE) Minister on 27th January 2025 for LEPs across NI, was £45 Million, with approx. £4.5 Million allocated to Newry, Mourne and Down over a 3 year period.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	LEP's have been tasked with the creation on an action plan for submission and consideration by DfE, for deliverability against the ambitions of Regional Balance. NMD Local Economic Partnership have met monthly, with a workshop in May 2025 to identify key themes and priority interventions that will assist in DfE's realisation of Regional Balance. A draft action plan (appendix 1) was developed, which Officers conducted consultation on the proposed activities with all LEP members, including DfE and Invest NI. Feedback was received, and the action plan was revised where appropriate. The final proposed action plan was presented to LEP members on 4th September 2025 for consideration, at which Members of the LEP approved the action plan. Council has commenced the recruitment process and continues to engage with DfE regarding MoU, targets and financial projections.

3.0	Recommendations
3.1	Council to note NMD Local Economic Partnership approval of an action plan and approve submission of the action plan to Department for Economy for consideration.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	LEP is 100% funded by DfE.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>

6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
	These items are deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of Business. Appendix 1 – LEP Action Plan
8.0	Background Documents
	N/A

Report to:	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday 8 September 2025
Subject:	NMD Heritage projects Update
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Catriona Regan, Head of Culture, Arts, Heritage & Events

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

For decision	For noting only	X
1.0	Purpose and Background	
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> - To note funding applications being brought forward for delivery against the Culture, Arts and Heritage strategy <u>Background</u> - To highlight funding being sought for heritage projects - To update members on heritage projects progressed by the Council's Heritage Officer across the District. - To raise awareness of activities that promote the positive conservation and interpretation of the district's built heritage.	
2.0	Key issues	
2.1	<u>Funding application: The GROVE (Growing Relationships Over Vibrant Environments)</u> As part of a Council funding application to Change Makers, provision has been made for inclusion of a project proposal for the GROVE. The Grove is an important urban park bequeathed to the citizens of Downpatrick almost 300 years ago. It links the town centre to its surrounding green spaces and heritage assets. The GROVE project aims to revitalize and reactivate the Grove as a shared civic space. It will bring communities together to contribute to the creation, management and positive utilisation of the Grove. Subject to funding being awarded, the project will commence Autumn 2025 and run for 24 months. The project will progress preliminary site investigations and build community awareness and engagement by establishing a network of local groups ("Friends	

	of the Grove”); developing proposals for enhanced access; and promoting the positive use of the park for events and activities.
2.2	<u>Funding Application: Mobile Heritage Hub – NMD Conservation Areas (Historic Environment Fund, Research and Revival Stream)</u> A funding application has been submitted to Historic Environment Fund, Research and Revival Stream (Department for Communities) for funding to allow the council to carry out heritage development activity. This project will implement a pilot scheme to support practical engagement that enables communities to appreciate the heritage of their Conservation Area, identify opportunities for heritage-led development and understand how to bring proposals forward. Subject to funding, an initial pilot project will commence Winter 2025 and run for 6 months. Complementary funding streams are being pursued to increase the remit of the programme. There are 10 conservation areas in the district, following an expression of interest exercise two projects will be selected for the pilot phase. Projects will be selected based on scale, deliverability and geographical location.
2.3	The Heritage Officer assisted the PEACEPLUS Team in developing specifications for several heritage projects under the PEACEPLUS Programme. Projects cover a range of DEA areas. Projects are anticipated to commence Winter 2025 and be completed over 18 months. The Heritage Officer continues to build and maintain wide range of connections with national and local stakeholders with the aim of establishing a NMDD Heritage Forum.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To note two funding applications being brought forward for delivery against the Culture, Arts and Heritage strategy
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	Outcome of funding applications – pending
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>

	It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☒
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐ The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation ☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves ☐ Consultation period will be 12 weeks ☐ Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) ☐ <i>Rationale:</i>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed ☐
7.0	Appendices
	This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business. Funding Requested

8.0	Background Documents
	N/A

Report to:	Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday 8 th September 2025
Subject:	NMD Museums Update (Q1 25/26 Apr-Jun)
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director: Economy, Growth and Tourism
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Alan Freeburn Museum and Heritage Services Manager

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

For decision	☐	For noting only	☒
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> To provide an update on the activities delivered by NMD Museums across Q1 2025/2026 <u>Background</u> NMD Museums consists of Down County Museum, Downpatrick and Newry and Mourne Museum, Newry. Together they provide a museum service for the whole of NMDDC
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<u>Summary of Initiatives delivered Q1 2025/2026</u> <u>Exhibitions</u> • Display marking the 80th anniversary of VE Day & VJ Day - NMM • Downpatrick Workhouse exhibition launched in May • 'Expressions of Down: Portraits for the Down County Museum Collection' was held at Down Arts Centre in in June • Object of the Month display is refreshed monthly with items from the museum's stores • Loaned a Victory Bell to NMM for VE & VJ Day display • Loaned anti-slavery medal to the North West Migrants Forum's "Hidden History of Black Heritage in Northern Ireland" exhibition. <u>Donations/Acquisitions</u> <u>NMM</u> • Acquisition at auction of a drawing by Newry Artist, Margaret Clarke • Donation of objects from a rural shop and linen "flowering" agent • Donation of historic shoe samples • A donation of objects from the family of William Cronin, Town Clerk.

- Transfer of paintings from Newry Town Hall and Monaghan Row to Museum Collection

DCM

- Donation of a painting of Downpatrick by Olive Davidson
- Acquisition of a 19th century serving platter from the former Down District Hospital

Funding

- NMM – One of 6 organisations across the UK to make a successful application to the Natural History Museum's Fixing Our Broken Planet: Interconnected project.
 - Fixing Our Broken Planet is a new gallery at the Natural History Museum in London, and a programme with global reach. The maximum grant of £2,500 was awarded and will be one of 3 organisations supported to deliver events and programming on the planetary emergency aimed at a youth audience, to coincide with events at NHM in Spring 2026.
- NMM - Peaceplus funding was also secured for the following projects:
 - A Place to Call Home: 2-year project working with six community groups to explore the history and impact of social housing - £20,000 - Commencing January 2026
 - Flowering in the Mournes: 6-month project working with local communities to explore the history skills, and working conditions of women embroiderers - £8,000 – commencing January 2026
 - Our Sporting Lives: 6-month project working with local communities to explore the history of sporting events and identify subjects in our photographic archive - £8,000 – commencing January 2026
- DCM - £5,000 PEACE Plus funding secured for an artist-led mental health project linked to the museum's collection.
 - This project aims to engage an artist/art therapist to collaborate with minority communities in exploring the shared history and cultural legacy of mental health in Northern Ireland. Using the 19th-century Downshire Hospital as a focal point, the project will bring together intergenerational and cross-community minority groups to creatively examine experiences of mental health care in the past and present.

Events

- Easter activities
- VE Day talk
- Drawing Day
- Heritage Walks Festival - DCM
- 1798 talk - DCM

	<u>Visitor Nos</u> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>DCM</th><th>NMM</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Schools</td><td>129</td><td>177</td></tr> <tr> <td>Other Groups</td><td>315</td><td>287</td></tr> <tr> <td>General Visitors</td><td>2156</td><td>864</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>2600</td><td>1328</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <u>Misc</u> • The museum contributes weekly articles to the local press and topics have included: Celtic Crosses, J.F. Small – Newriensis, Newry Curfews, VE Day, Drawings in NMM, Quakers in Bessbrook, Cronin Family, Newrys Around the World, Newry Newspapers, Newry Barracks, Downshire Road, and Postcards. • Follow up enquiries from these articles have included UTV and BBC NI as well as a number of item donations. • Over 30 research enquires and visits have been facilitated		DCM	NMM	Schools	129	177	Other Groups	315	287	General Visitors	2156	864	Total	2600	1328
	DCM	NMM														
Schools	129	177														
Other Groups	315	287														
General Visitors	2156	864														
Total	2600	1328														
3.0	Recommendations															
3.1	To note the update on the activities delivered by NMD Museums across Q1 2025/2026															
4.0	Resource implications															
4.1	As per agreed budgets															
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)															
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i> It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations ☐															
5.2	<i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i> Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened ☐															

	The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation	☐
5.3	<i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves Consultation period will be 12 weeks Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <i>Rationale:</i>	☐ ☐ ☐
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)	
6.1	Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please complete the following: Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed	☐
7.0	Appendices	
	n/a	
8.0	Background Documents	
	n/a	