

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 11 December 2023 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, Monaghan Row, and remotely via Microsoft Teams

Chairperson: Councillor M Ruane

**Committee Members
in attendance in chamber:**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor P Campbell
Councillor G Kearns	Councillor S Murphy
Councillor A Quinn	Councillor J Tinnelly

**Committee Members
in attendance via Teams:**

Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor K Feehan	Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor C King
Councillor D Lee-Surginor	Councillor J Truesdale

**Non-Committee Members
Members via Teams:**

Councillor O Hanlon

Officials in attendance: Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration
Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism
Ms Sonya Burns, Head of Programmes – Community Engagement
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer
Ms Linda Cummins, Democratic Services Officer

ERT/150/2023: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

There were no apologies.

ERT/151/2023: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**ERT/152/2023: ACTION SHEET ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION & TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2023**

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 13 November 2023.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held**

on Monday 13 November 2023.

NOTICE OF MOTION

ERT/153/2023 – NOTICE OF MOTION – OPEN WATER SWIMMING

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director – Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Notice of Motion – C/219/2023 Open Water Swimming **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Truesdale presented the motion stating the risk was assessed continually by swimmers and costings within the report may never be reached if an executive was restored. She advised that DAERA had agreed to year-round testing, but it needed ministerial approval to go ahead. She asked that Committee consider the decision to test water as an interim decision by Council until an executive was restored.

Councillor Truesdale referenced a publication in May 2023 regarding Individual Bathing Water Profile Bathing, that detailed beaches within the District and their standards. She stated that only the standards at Newcastle out of six beaches across the District had fallen.

In summing up, Councillor Truesdale proposed the following amendment to the motion:

AMENDMENT:

“Council starts interim temporary measure testing at the worst location, which is Newcastle”.

Mr Patterson responded that DAERA had statutory responsibility for water quality monitoring, advising that, with Members approval, Council could write to the Department on the consultation regarding water testing. He drew Members attention to the costs that was not included in the budget, reminding Members that testing that was not remit of Council.

With regard to Councillor Truesdale’s amendment, Councillor Hanna queried whether the cost for one beach would be divisible by the number of beaches across the District. Mr Patterson advised that clarification would need to be sought on costing for one beach rather than all.

Councillor Clarke stated that responsibility sits with DAERA and although he saw merit in the proposed amendment, pressure needed to be kept on the Department with statutory responsibility.

Councillor Truesdale reminded Members that the Department had already agreed to the changes to water testing but can take no action without a restored executive.

Following discussions, the amended proposal was put to a vote by a show of hands, and voting was as follows:

FOR:	7
AGAINST:	8
ABSTENTION:	0

The amendment was not carried.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed Council engage with DAERA who have the statutory responsibility for water quality monitoring, to follow up**

on the 22/23 review which recommended extending the monitoring season to year-round.

ERT/154/2023 – NOTICE OF MOTION – CHILDCARE STRATEGY

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director – Economy, Growth and Tourism regarding Notice of Motion – C/220/2023 Childcare Strategy **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor S Murphy presented the motion stating quality childcare and early education provision that puts the best interest of a child at its core, addresses disadvantage, promotes wellbeing and improves the life chances of the next generation was paramount. She highlighted the implications of increasing costs of childcare with a cost-of-living crisis, and the need for two parents to be working, without the childcare infrastructure to support this.

She discussed the requirement of a strategy to consider both the costs for parents, and support for a sector that is already under pressure. Supporting parents was also about supporting sustainability amongst providers, and affordability must be accompanied by accessibility.

Councillor S Murphy reiterated that childcare not only underpinned women’s access to employment and professional advancement but was also the largest employer of women here. She stated that the development of a strategy for sustainable childcare by the Department of Education was long overdue; however, the restoration of the executive was imperative to make change happen.

Mr Patterson spoke to the report, detailing the current labour market partnership implementing a Childcare employment academy in the financial year, and next, if budget permitted.

Councillor Andrews agreed with the motion, and proposed the following amendment, seconded by Councillor Feehan:

AMENDMENT:

“That Council write to the Department for Communities to seek an assessment of the impact the lack of an anti-poverty strategy has had on families’ access to childcare over the last five years. Assess availability and demand for childcare in the district, to identify areas of most need”.

Following discussions, the amended proposal was put to a vote by a show of hands, and voting was as follows:

FOR:	6
AGAINST:	7
ABSTAIN:	2

The amendment was not carried.

Councillor Bowsie spoke of the importance of the issue, however reiterated that DUP position on restoring the executive means they could not support the motion.

Following further discussions, the officer's recommendation was put to a vote by a show of hands, and voting was as follows:

FOR: 13
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAIN: 2

The motion was carried.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor S Murphy, seconded by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed Council write to the Department of Education urging them to progress a comprehensive childcare strategy and to note the inclusion of a Childcare Employment Academy in the NMD Labour Market Partnership Action Plan 2023-2024.

FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

ERT/155/2023: LETTER FROM CARRICKMACROSS – CASTLEBLANEY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Read: Letter dated 2 November 2023 from Carrickmacross – Castleblaney Municipal District. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Quinn welcomed the letter, speaking of Councillor's duties to their border communities to ensure the safety of the road both sides of the border. She advised that Shared Island funding would be ideal for this work, and proposed writing to the Department of Infrastructure and Permanent Secretary to implement a funding stream to work with Irish Government to complete these works. She mentioned that the lack of an Executive hindered the work to ensure the safety of communities.

Councillor Andrews seconded the proposal.

Following discussions, the proposal was put to a vote by a show of hands, and voting was as follows:

FOR: 13
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAIN: 2

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to write to the Department of Infrastructure and the Permanent Secretary to encourage them to work with the Irish Government to secure a funding stream to continue with these works on Ballynacarry Bridge.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matters which related to exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1

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

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

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

RESTRICTED – FOR DECISION

ERT/156/2023: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CALL 3 2024-2025

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director, Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding Financial Assistance Call 3 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Tinnelly, seconded by Councillor Hanna it was agreed to approve the following:

- 1. To offer funding to applicant 4825 as noted above, as per Council's approved Financial Assistance procedures, subject to applicant meeting all the conditions of the fund.**
- 2. To open Financial Assistance Call 1 for the 2024/25.Financial Year in January 2024 for the themes detailed in this report.**
- 3. To include the multi-sports hub theme in financial assistance call 2.**

ERT/157/2023: FILE MANAGEMENT AND RETENTION CONTRACT

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director: Regeneration, regarding File Management and Retention Contract **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve the following recommendations:

- 1. Council proceed to procure a provider to store and provide files on recall on a weekly basis for 5 year period utilising EPSO framework.**
- 2. Council approve attached Business Case.**

FOR NOTING

ERT/158/2023: PEACE PLUS

Read: Report dated 11 December 2023 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director: Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Service Level Agreement UUEPC **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor
Tinnelly, it was agreed to note the contents of the report.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 19:14.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 8 January 2024.

**Signed: Councillor M Ruane
Chairperson
Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee**

**Signed: Mr C Mallon
Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism**
