

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 11 August 2025 at 6.00pm in Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre

Chairperson: Councillor D Lee-Surginor

**Committee Members
in attendance:**

Councillor T Andrews
Councillor G Hanna

Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor A Lewis

**Committee Members
in attendance via Teams:**

Councillor V Harte
Councillor S Murphy
Councillor M Ruane

Councillor G Kearns
Councillor A Quinn
Councillor H Young

Officials in attendance:

Ms A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism
Ms S Stephenson, Head of Programmes
Ms F Brannagh, Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

ERT/052/2025

APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Feehan and Hanlon, and Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism and Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration.

The Chairperson advised that in an effort to be more transparent, many of the reports were tabled in open session while the appendices were in closed session. He asked that should Members have any questions regarding an appendix that they wait until the meeting was in closed session to raise any queries.

Councillor Galbraith expressed sincere condolences to the victim of the recent tragedy in Downpatrick and extended best wishes for a full and speedy recovery to Canon Murray. The Chairperson and Councillor Andrews echoed these sentiments.

ERT/068/2025

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

ERT/069/2025

**ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 9 JUNE 2025**

Read:

Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Economy,
Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 9
June 2025 **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

**On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by
Councillor Galbraith, it was agreed to note the**

**Action Sheet arising from the Economy,
Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held
on Monday 9 June 2025.**

ERT/080/2024 – Down County Museum Café,

Councillor Andrews enquired about an update on the above item. Ms Smyth advised that works at Down County Museum were ongoing and expected to be completed within the next few weeks, after which an expression of interest would be issued to appoint a suitable provider.

ERT/056/2025 – Outdoor revamp of Delamont Country Park

Councillor Andrews enquired about an update on the above item. Ms Smyth confirmed that, as the outdoor revamp of Delamont Country Park had been approved at the July Council meeting, officers would proceed to implement the actions and appoint an agent to progress the works.

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

ERT/070/2025

**OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION –
ESTABLISHMENT OF ARTS WORKING GROUP**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Arts Working Group. **(Copy circulated)**

The Chairperson stated that a request had been received from Councillor Finn to defer this item until September's meeting.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, it was agreed to defer the item.

ERT/071/2025

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Financial Assistance. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Stephenson advised that the report sought approval for financial assistance under Call One for 2026/2027, proposed to open in November 2025, subject to internal and external budget confirmation. She confirmed that relevant approval was also being sought for the updated assessment of financial assistance for the VJ Day Arts and Culture theme, as detailed in Appendix 1.

Members were informed that the capital call for Community Capital Works and minor capital items would open on 26 August 2025 for six weeks. Two in-person workshops were scheduled for early September, followed by an online session.

Councillor Hanna noted that several groups had missed out on Christmas funding last year due to being unaware of changes to the process, including the requirement to submit information by mid-January and raised concern this may occur again this year. In response, Ms Stephenson confirmed that all relevant financial assistance information was advertised annually through local press and Council social media channels. She also confirmed that she had spoken with the group in question and outlined the amended timeframes, which the group acknowledged.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, 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.**

ERT/072/2025

PEACEPLUS

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1.
(Copy circulated)

Ms Stephenson advised that the paper was presented for members to note the minutes of the PEACEPLUS Partnership Board Meeting held on 20 July 2025. She reported that several business cases required approval before progressing to procurement, including enhancements to community facilities, development of shared outdoor spaces and walking trails, and management of verification services under the SEUPB framework.

Ms Stephenson noted that SEUPB had established a framework for appointing first-level control to verify all expenditure under the PEACEPLUS programme, highlighting capital project strands 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, which were selected through an expression of interest process conducted last year. She confirmed that the aim was to complete these projects by this time next year.

Councillor Hanna stated that his party had concerns regarding an individuals' role working on the PEACEPLUS programme. Ms Stephenson and Ms Smyth clarified that this was a HR consideration and that the person in question was not an employee of the Council.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, 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:**
 - 1. Strand 1.2 Enhancement of community facilities.**
 - 2. Strand 1.3 Development of shared outdoor spaces.**
 - 3. Strand 1.3 Development of walking trails.**

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

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

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

ERT/073/2025

ARTISAN MARKETS

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Artisan Market Update. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, 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.

ERT/074/2025

BRCD ANNUAL REPORT

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism, regarding Belfast Region City Deal – Annual Report. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Galbraith, it was agreed to accept the BRCD Annual Report 2024/25 which has been approved by the BRCD Executive Board.

ERT/075/2025

RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANTS SCHEME

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth

& Tourism, regarding Labour Market Partnership. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, 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.

FOR NOTING

ERT/076/2025

EATS & BEATS GRANT APPLICATION

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Eats and Beats Grant Application to DAERA (Northern Ireland Regional Food Programme). **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the report.

ERT/077/2025

ERT SCHEME OF DELEGATION 2024-2025

Read:

ERT Scheme of Delegation 2024-2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the document.

ERT/078/2025

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY PROGRAMME

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Heritage, Culture and Creativity Programme: Framework document. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the report.

ERT/079/2025

KILKEEL LOWER SQUARE/RIVER WALK EI SCHEME

Read:

Report from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Kilkeel Lower Square/River Walk EI Scheme. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the report.

ERT/080/2025

MULTIPLY PROGRAMME DELIVERY

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Multiply Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the report.**

ERT/081/2025

MUSEUM ACCREDITATION

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding NMD's Museum' Accreditation. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the report.**

ERT/082/2025

CHINA – NI SISTER-CITY COOPERATION SEMINAR

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding China-NI Sister-City Cooperation Seminar. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to note the report.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.36pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 1 September 2025

Signed: **Councillor D Lee-Surginor**
Chairperson
Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee

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