

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 8 December 2025 at 6.00pm in Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall

Chairperson: Councillor D Lee-Surginor

**Committee Members
in attendance:** Councillor T Andrews Councillor K Feehan
Councillor G Hanna Councillor G Kearns
Councillor A Lewis Councillor S Murphy
Councillor M Ruane Councillor H Young

**Committee Members
in attendance via Teams:** Councillor W Clarke Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor O Hanlon Councillor A Quinn

Officials in attendance: Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth and Tourism
Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director of Regeneration
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in attendance
via Teams:** Ms F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer

ERT/120/2025

APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillor Tinnelly.

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.

ERT/121/2025

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

ERT/122/2025

ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING MONDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2025

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 10 November 2025 (**Copy circulated**)

ERT/109/2025 – Friends of Castlewellan Arboretum and Annesley Walled Garden

In response to a query from Councillor Lewis regarding interested parties joining the group, Mr Mallon advised that work would take place in the coming weeks to establish terms of

reference and membership, with an update being provided at the next Committee.

ERT/098/2025 – Summit of the Cities 2026

ERT/116/2025 – Labour Market Action Plan

In response to a query on the above items from Councillor Andrews Mr Mallon advised that an update for both items would be provided at the next Committee.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 10 November 2025.

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

ERT/123/2025

OFFICER REPORT ON NOTICE OF MOTION – REVITALISATION PROJECT

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Officer Report on Notice of Motion – Revitalisation Project. (**Copy circulated**)

Councillor Feehan expressed gratitude to officers for preparing the report and for the comprehensive detail provided regarding the ongoing work. He commended the efforts of the Local Economic Partnership, Council officers, and Mr Mallon for driving the initiative forward. He proposed that the recommendations outlined in the report be adopted, and this proposal was seconded by Councillor Andrews.

Councillor Kearns stated she was pleased to note the securing of a letter of offer from the Department for the Economy and welcomed that the plan would be resourced centrally through collaboration between the Council and the Department. She observed that by addressing issues of dereliction and vacancy, the initiative would support both new and existing businesses.

Councillor Young referred to the recent introduction of the Dilapidation Bill by the Minister and noted that many town centres had fallen into disrepair, emphasising that those responsible should be held accountable.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Feehan, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve that the revitalisation of derelict and dilapidated buildings can be addressed through delivery of the Local Economic Partnership Action Plan.

ERT/124/2025

BELFAST CITY & REGION PLACE PARTNERSHIP

Read:

Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, presented by Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Belfast City & Region Place Partnership. (**Copy circulated**)

Mrs Smyth outlined the report, which detailed the renewal of the Council's partnership and membership agreement with the Belfast City Region Place Partnership. She advised that section

2.1 specified the benefits of membership, including partnership-focused events, engagement, advocacy, and research.

In proposing the report, Councillor Andrews highlighted that this represented an opportunity to showcase the district to a wider audience. He enquired whether membership would be offered to DBEC members working alongside the Council and this committee.

Mr Mallon advised that DBEC was a separate forum, and that the group would be officer-led and include representation from both the public and private sectors.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed to approve membership with Belfast City & Region Place Partnership.

ERT/125/2025

PEACEPLUS

Read:

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

Mrs Smyth outlined that the report concerned ongoing community engagement events, that included dates and registration details, to inform activities under the PEACEPLUS plan. She stated the business case that was attached at Appendix 1, was to support delivery of actions under Theme 2.6 of the PEACEPLUS Action Plan and recommended approval which would enable procurement to commence and allow the programme to be delivered in the next financial year.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to approve the procurement and delivery plan of the below activities under Strand 3 of the co-designed Local Action Plan:

- **Strand 2.6 – Social and Emotional Support Programmes**
- **3.2 Minority Support Programme: Discovering the sites of Northern Ireland and Council District.**
- **3.7 Shared History and Culture Programme Steps through time**

ERT/126/2025

ST PATRICKS DAY 2026 SLAs

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding St Patrick's Day 2026 SLAs. (**Copy circulated**)

Mrs Smyth outlined that each year the Council sought the support of two arts-based organisations in developing the St Patrick's Day parades in Newry and Downpatrick. She advised that the paper proposed establishing Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with the two organisations, whose remit would include community arts engagement with schools and the enhancement of float and parade content. The proposals for the SLAs were attached at Appendix 1.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Young, it was agreed to approve the issue of Service Level Agreements to Beat Carnival and Down Community Arts to undertake schools and community engagement to create float and parade content for Downpatrick and Newry St Patrick's Day 2026 events.

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

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor S Murphy, seconded by Councillor Kearns, 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 Kearns, seconded by Councillor S Murphy, it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

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

ERT/127/2025

DELAMONT CARAVAN PARK & TOURING THE TREES KILBRONEY PARK

Read:

Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Delamont Caravan Park & Touring the Trees Kilbroney Park. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Ruane, the following was agreed:

- To approve the renewed lease agreement with the Camping & Caravan Club for lands at Delamont Country Caravan Park, for a further term of one year under the current lease arrangements and valuation.**
- To approve that the Touring in the Trees site at Kilbroney Park continues to be operated as a site for registered youth groups.**

ERT/128/2025

ULSTER FLEADH 2026

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Ulster Fleadh 2026. (**Copy circulated**)

As there was dissent within the Chamber, Councillor Ruane requested a recorded vote on the item, results of which are appended to these minutes. The results of the vote were as follows:

FOR	11
AGAINST	2
ABSTENTIONS	0

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Kearns, it was agreed that Council support the Warrenpoint Comhaltas for the hosting of the Ulster Fleadh in Warrenpoint in July 2026, subject to funding being agreed in the rates setting process.

FOR NOTING

ERT/129/2025

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FLEXIBLE FUND

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Digital Transformation Flexible Fund. (**Copy circulated**)

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to note the update provided on the performance and delivery of the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund programme.

ERT/130/2025

GO SUCCEED NI UPDATE

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

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Feehan, it was agreed to note the update provided on the implementation of go Succeed NI Update.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.30pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 12 January 2026

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

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

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 8 December 2025 VENUE: Warrenpoint Town Hall MEETING: ERT Committee

SUBJECT OF VOTE: Ulster Fleadh

OUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews	1			
W Clarke	2			
K Feehan	3			
C Galbraith	4			
O Hanlon	5			
G Hanna		1		
V Harte				1
G Kearns	6			
D Lee-Surginor	7			
A Lewis		2		
S Murphy	8			
A Quinn	9			
M Ruane	10			
J Tinnelly				2
H Young	11			
TOTALS	11	2	0	2