

## **NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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### **Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 8 June 2026 at 6.00pm in Boardroom, Warrenpoint Town Hall**

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**Chairperson:** Councillor K Feehan

**Committee Members**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor G Hanna	Councillor G Kearns
Councillor N Lawlor	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor S Murphy	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor H Young

**Committee Members  
in attendance via Teams:** Councillor W Clarke Councillor D Lee-Surginor

**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/062/2026 APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

An apology was received from Councillor Galbraith.

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/063/2026 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **ERT/064/2026 ACTION SHEET ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 11 MAY 2026**

**Read:** Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Economy,  
Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2026.  
**(Copy circulated)**

*ERT/034/2026 – Action Sheet ERT Committee Meeting Monday 9 March 2026*

In response to a request from Councillor Hanlon for a progress update on the establishment of a Dedicated Events Working Group, Mr Mallon advised that all nominations had been received and that invitations would be issued for a meeting at the end of the month.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Hanna, it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2026.**

**ERT/065/2026** **TO AGREE START TIMES FOR ECONOMY, REGENERATION & TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2026-27**

Read: Proposed Start Times for Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meetings 2026-27 **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Ruane, the start times for Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meetings 2026-27 were agreed.**

**FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION**

**ERT/066/2026** **ERT BUSINESS PLANS**

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism regarding Directorate Business Plan. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Mallon presented the report, which reviewed the 2025–26 Business Plan and outlined the 2026–27 Business Plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Young regarding the breakdown of jobs created through business start-up activity, Mrs Smyth advised that the figure provided in the report had been derived using a standard ratio for jobs created for each business plan developed through the programme and confirmed that a more detailed breakdown was not available beyond the figures presented.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor S Murphy, it was agreed to approve the following:**

- **Assessment of the ERT Directorate Business Plan 2025-26.**
- **ERT Directorate Business Plan 2026-27.**

**ERT/067/2026** **CONSUMER TRADE SHOWS 2026-27**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Tourism Trade / Consumer Shows for 2026/27. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Smyth noted that the report set out a number of consumer and trade events to be attended throughout the year, which provided the Council with opportunities to engage with

trade operators, showcase the district, and work collaboratively to increase tourism visits to the area.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Ruane, it was agreed to approve participation in the tourism trade and consumer shows outlined in Section 2.1 of the officers' report, in collaboration with Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland, to support the tourism sector and promote the destination.**

**ERT/068/2026**

**PEACEPLUS**

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

Mrs Smyth noted that the report set out two items, Section 2.1 detailed projects approved under the PEACEPLUS Partnership to proceed to procurement, of which three required approval at Committee, with the relevant business cases included as appendices to the report. She stated that section 2.2 outlined that a bid had been submitted to SEUPB for additional funding, which, if successful, would be required to be expended by the end of September.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, the following was agreed;**

- **Approve the business case for procurement, appointment and delivery of activities under Strand 2 and 3 of the Co-designed Local Action Plan as set out in the officers' report.**
- **To note the minutes of PEACEPLUS Partnership on 21 May 2026.**
- **To note the submission of a bid for additional funding for summer programmes.**

**ERT/069/2026**

**RURAL NI POLICY CONSULTATION**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism regarding Rural NI: Our New Approach 2026-2041. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Smyth presented the report, advising that DAERA had been engaging with a range of stakeholders on the development of a new rural policy, details of which were set out at Section 2.1 of the report. She noted that Council officers had engaged with DAERA on its proposals, including those relating to the establishment of local partnerships, for which the Department envisaged a role for Councils in their formation and implementation. She further advised that the detail remained under development and that officers continued to work closely with the Department as proposals evolved.

Mrs Smyth confirmed that DAERA had opened a consultation on the draft policy and that the Council's response had been submitted within the required timeframe. The response was presented for Members' consideration, and approval was sought for its formal submission to the

Department.

In response to a query from Councillor Lee-Surginor regarding how the Council's response to the consultation had been coordinated, Mrs Smyth advised that officers within ERT and AHC had engaged with the Department during the policy's development, and that the response had been coordinated across those officers, with additional engagement undertaken with relevant stakeholders.

**AGREED:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ruane, seconded by Councillor Lee-Surginor, to approve the Council's submission of a response to the consultation: DAERA's Rural NI – Our New Approach 2026-2041 draft policy.**

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

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

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

**ERT/070/2026**

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM NETWORK**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Facilitation for Mourne Gullion Strangford Sustainable Tourism Network Development Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to approve the business case, procurement and appointment of a Facilitator to deliver the Mourne Gullion Strangford Sustainable Tourism Network programme of work over a 2-year term.**

**FOR NOTING**

**ERT/071/2026**

**CROSSMAGLEN IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Crossmaglen Square Improvement Plan.  
**(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Quinn expressed her thanks to the facilitators who had visited Crossmaglen to engage with the community and noted that she looked forward to further engagement and the progression of the project.

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note Crossmaglen Square Improvement Plan and its recommendations and that further information will be presented to members on opportunities arising from shaping sustainable places.**

**ERT/072/2026**

**LEP GRANTS REVIVE AND REIMAGINE**

Read: Report from Mrs A Smyth, Assistant Director of Economy, Growth & Tourism, regarding Local Economic Partnership Grants: Revive and Re-imagine. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** **On the proposal of Councillor Quinn, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to note the launch of the Revive and Reimagine: Commercial Property Grant and Property Façade Renewal Schemes.**

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.19pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 July 2026

**Signed:** **Councillor K Feehan**  
**Chairperson**  
**Economy, Regeneration & Tourism Committee**

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

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