

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting
held on Monday 10 May 2021 at 6.00pm remotely via Microsoft Teams**

Chairperson: Councillor A McMurray

In attendance: (Committee Members)

Councillor R Burgess
Councillor W Clarke
Councillor D Curran
Councillor G Hanna
Councillor V Harte
Councillor R Howell
Councillor M Larkin
Councillor D McAteer
Councillor R Mulgrew
Councillor H Reilly
Councillor M Ruane
Councillor M Savage
Councillor G Stokes
Councillor J Tinnelly

Non Members: Councillor T Andrews
Councillor P Brown
Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor C Enright

Officials in attendance: Ms M Ward Chief Executive
Mr C Mallon Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism
Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events
Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration
Mr A McKay Chief Planning Officer
Mr C Jackson Assistant Director Building Control & Regulations
Ms L Dillon Democratic Services Officer
Ms P McKeever Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance: Ms Angela Reavey Independent Economic Assessor

ERT/086/2021: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

No apologies.

The Chairperson said he was saddened to learn of the passing of former Councillor Michael Carr. He said he always found Michael to be a true gentleman who contributed and engaged in a thoughtful way both within the Council Chamber and outside. He referred to Michael's love of golf and spoke of the many interactions they had discussing the economic benefits of golf and mountain biking.

On behalf of the South Down Alliance and himself, Councillor McMurray extended his deepest sympathy to the Carr family and to the wider SDLP fraternity.

Councillor McAteer asked to be associated with the Chairperson's comments regarding the passing of their late colleague Michael Carr. He said Michael was a very keen contributor to this particular committee over many years in terms of Warrenpoint and the wider area and was instrumental in bringing many golf tournaments and tours to the area. He described Michael as being a great contributor to Council who was extremely well respected among Councillors and Council staff. He said his passing will be a deep loss for his family and community and he requested a letter of condolence be sent from the ERT Committee to the Carr family.

Councillor Reilly asked to be associated with the Chairperson's comments regarding the passing of former Councillor Michael Carr. He said Michael was an outstanding Councillor who cared deeply for the area he lived in, describing him as extremely helpful who was a great contributor to local politics and a true gentleman, and he extended condolences to Michael's family.

Councillor Ruane asked to be associated with the Chairperson's remarks regarding the passing of former Councillor Michael Carr. He said he served on the Council alongside Michael for 18 years and he had the upmost respect for him, describing him as a gentleman.

Councillor Ruane, on behalf of himself and the Sinn Fein grouping, extended deepest condolences to Michael's family, friends and colleagues.

Councillor Hanna asked to be associated with all previous comments from Members regarding the passing of former Councillor Michael Carr. He said he always found Michael to be very thorough and supportive when carrying out Council business AND added that both he and the DUP grouping would like to be associated with all comments.

Councillor Burgess asked to be associated with all comments regarding Michael

Carr. He said Michael was a true gentleman who was always helpful and supportive and who believed in the Council and what it stood for and on behalf of the Ulster Unionist Party grouping he extended sympathy to Michael's family at this time.

Councillor Tinnelly said as a Crotlieve Councillor and former colleague of the late Michael Carr asked to be associated with all comments. He said he found Michael to a man of the highest integrity and decency, who was a friend and confidant, and who would be sadly missed by the people of Warrenpoint and wider Crotlieve area. He said it was a sad day to receive such news and he extended deepest condolences to Michael's wife Kay, and his family.

Councillor Enright concurred with all that had been said regarding the late Michael Carr describing him as a gentleman and who was never party political about Council finances, and grateful for his help when he was appointed to the Board of the NI Fire Service.

Councillor McMurray said this was the last meeting of the ERT Committee for the current term. He referred to the challenges of the past year and extended thanks to everyone including the Council officers and Director for their help.

Councillor Tinnelly thanked the Chair for his efforts throughout the year.

He referred to an urgent matter regarding the ongoing and escalating incidents of anti-social behaviour within the confines of the wider Kilbroney Forest Park which culminated in an incident whereby a family were intimidated out of the Caravan Site at this location.

The Chairperson acknowledged the matter raised by Councillor Tinnelly, and said this subject would be raised under Item 19 on the agenda.

ERT/087/20201: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of Interest.

**ERT/088/2021: ACTION SHEET
MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION &
TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING
- MONDAY 12 APRIL 2021**

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 12 April 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was unanimously agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 12 April 2021.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS

**ERT/089/2021: NOTICE OF MOTION
RE: DOWNPATRICK TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT**

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the names of Councillor C Enright and Councillor P Brown:

“Council welcomes the change of tone in the Downpatrick Town Centre Development Project. The Department has accepted that there has been a market failure on these lands and that some public investment may be required to make the project happen. Council lauds the cross party consensus that made this change possible. It is no longer a fire sale of the public land bank to the private sector and notes that there will be public money invested in this realm project as is proposed in Newry.

Council now directs Management to ensure the original footprint of this vital town centre development is included in the project to protect Downpatrick’s options for the long-term. In particular:

- 1. That the land that will be required for access out onto Saint Patrick’s Avenue as envisaged in the Downpatrick Master Plan is acquired and protected as part of this project, and;*
- 2. That the public investment also deals with the upgrade and integration of the private car parks abutting the development to ensure that the Town Centre Development is not left half done. This would not require acquisition of this land but assistance to ensure the public realm is brought up to standard while allowing those retail outlets to reserve their own parking areas.*

This should either be done as part of the existing project, or as part of a 'Stage 2' for which the planning should start now so the Town Centre Upgrade will be a coherent overall credit to the people of Downpatrick”.

Councillor Enright presented the Notice of Motion. He said the Downpatrick Town Centre Development project was a shadow of what was originally contained within the Council’s Downpatrick Masterplan, and nor was it what was originally envisaged by the District Electoral Area.

He said the purpose of the Motion was to highlight what should be included in a Stage 2 of the project which would address the omissions in Stage 1 as it was felt

Stage 1 of the project did not address the site in its entirety. He pointed out the Motion did not suggest a delay or postponement of Stage 1, however there were important issues which needed to be addressed in a Stage 2.

He referred to a diagram which he circulated to Members that day, showing the Downpatrick town car park illustrating how the car parks and the private car parks could be separated by bollards thus enabling people to walk to shops, and access Market Street / Irish Street / St Patrick's Avenue and he made reference to the wall around the Police Station and the deteriorating state of other walls in the area.

He referred to the exit onto St Patrick's Avenue, which he felt should be addressed in Stage 2 of the project, and to the three portacabins on St Patrick's Avenue which would site the proposed New Road. He said previous lobbying had been made to acquire the Police Station site in order to create the possibility of a new street and the improved access this would bring. He said the 3 portacabins had not been developed in line with the Area Plan unlike all other sites on St Patrick's Avenue which have been developed, as this had been envisaged as the exit route onto St Patrick's Avenue.

He said the Downpatrick Masterplan had envisaged the pedestrianisation and connectivity of the centre of the town without the huge dividing walls, providing improved access for parking and connecting Irish Street and St Patrick's Avenue.

Councillor Enright again reiterated support for Stage 1 going forward but felt planning needed to commence for Stage 2 as Stage 1 did not address the need for connectivity, pedestrianisation or access to town centre parking.

He said if proposals from bidders included addressing pedestrianisation, connectivity with the other car parks and the original access out onto St Patrick's Avenue this could be supported, however should bids not include these aspects it was important for the future of Downpatrick that these matters be addressed as part of Stage 2 of the project to maximise the benefit of the town centre development.

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding Downpatrick Town Centre Development. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr McGilly presented the above report which provided a background on how the project has reached this stage, highlighting the following points:

- Following a Feasibility Study regarding the purchase of the former PSNI Station site the preferred option was a mixed use development of the site. The site was procured by Department for Communities

- Council have acquired an adjoining strip of land between Council car park former PSNI Station site
- The Development Brief includes the land which is within the ownership of Council and Department for Communities.
- A project Board comprising of Council, stakeholders and Department for Communities has been established to bring the project forward.
- A Soft Market test has been completed demonstrating local community and developer interest and the Development Brief has been developed around this.
- The draft Development Brief will be presented to the Project Board late May 2021 for approval, however it will not exclude the opportunity for developers to come forward with proposals involving other lands which may potentially be available to realise additional benefits to the project. A prior information notice will be issued to the public this week.
- To pursue the development of additional lands at this time would delay the process as Council as a development brief cannot be carried out on lands that are not within Council or Department ownership, however this could be possible through a private sector proposal.
- Public realm works are being explored but can only be carried on land within Council and Department ownership.

A lengthy discussion then ensued during which the following issues were raised:

- Concerns that to purchase additional land at this stage would result in delays in the development brief. The Motion should support proceeding with Stage 1.
- Stage 2 to go ahead in the future if land becomes available and which would provide access to St Patrick's Avenue.
- Concerns from owners of the private car parks that these car parks would no longer remain private. Negotiation should take place with the owners of the private car parks as part of a Stage 2.
- Sufficient stakeholder's consultation.
- Issues regarding St Patrick's Avenue had been discussed at Board meetings.
- A Stage 1 and Stage 2 had not been discussed at Board Meetings.

Councillor Enright confirmed the Motion reflected any concerns regarding losing the opportunity of Phase 1 development.

Mr Mallon asked for clarity on whether or not an amendment had been proposed to the Motion as some of the proposals and suggestions that arose during discussion did not fully align with the wording of the Motion.

Councillor Enright confirmed the last paragraph in the Motion clearly refers to a Stage 2, and that he would agree to amending the wording to reflect “exclusively” as part of Stage 2.

Councillor Mulgrew asked for clarity regarding the Motion and asked did it reflect allowing the Development Brief to proceed and hold Stage 2 to a later stage as that was not her understanding of the Motion as it read as it made reference to the acquisition of land and private car parking. She suggested deferring any proposal to look at a Stage 2 until after receipt of the Development Brief.

Councillor Enright said the Motion suggested agreeing a Stage 2 now, which would not in any way interfere with Stage 1, and to look at the issue of the existing walls which separate the car parks, and consider the original plan for access to St Patrick’s Avenue, at a later stage, and not as part of the Stage 1 development.

Councillor Curran indicated he could only support the Motion if he had a commitment from the proposer of the Motion that nowhere along the line would Stage 1 be hampered, and should additional development be possible, at a later date, he would be supportive of exploring this.

Councillor Enright suggested an amendment to the 3rd paragraph of the Motion, to remove the wording “part of the existing project, or as part of a” and replace with: “This should be done as a Stage 2”.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew seconded by Councillor Curran it was agreed to defer the Notice of Motion until such times as the Development Brief has been submitted to the Downpatrick DEA Councillors for consideration and allow a more informed decision thereafter.**

EXEMPT INFORMATION

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess seconded by Councillor Savage it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the following matter 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).

ERT/090/2021: ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OF WATER BASED ACTIVITIES

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr C Mallon Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism, regarding reconsidering the findings of the independent economic assessment on potential future economic benefit a lifting bridge would bring to Newry City, as part of the Southern Relief Road proposals, as per decision arising from ERT Committee Meeting April 2021.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Savage seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed to come out of Closed Session.

(7.37pm – the Meeting adjourned)

(7.50pm – the Meeting resumed)

When the Committee came out of closed session the Chairperson invited Mr Mallon Director, to report the following decision taken:

ERT/090/2021: Economic Assessment of Water Based Activities

AGREED: Following a vote of For 12, Against 2, it was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Stokes seconded by Councillor McAteer, to reconsider the findings of the independent economic assessment on the potential future economic benefit a lifting bridge would bring to Newry City as part of the Southern Relief Road proposals, and to submit this assessment to Department for Infrastructure officials, together with the following:

- 1. Advise the Department for Infrastructure in writing that Newry Mourne and Down District Council's preferred option is for a**

Lifting Bridge over the Newry Canal as part of the Southern Relief Road project.

- 2. Include the correspondence from Warrenpoint Port on the potential for the future berthing of tall ships.**

ENTERPRISE EMPLOYMENT & REGENERATION

ERT/091/2021: UPDATE RE: BUSINESS PROGRAMMES

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment and Regeneration regarding an update on Business Development Programmes. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McMurray seconded by Councillor Ruane it was agreed:**

- 1. To note the update provided under the following business development initiatives:**
 - Go For It**
 - NMD Growth**
 - Digital Growth**
 - Tender for Growth**
- 2. To approve the signing of a Deed of Variation for the extension of NIBSUP Central Services team between April 2023 and September 2023 at a cost of £8,490.**

ERT/092/2021: COVID 19 RECOVERY WORKING GROUP

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr C Mallon Director Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism regarding recommendations arising from the Covid 19 Working Group. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Stokes seconded by Councillor Howell it was agreed the Corporate Planning and Policy Department/Communications and Marketing Section, to continue with a prioritisation approach to media which is agreed on and signed off by the Director/Chief Executive (similar to the last 12 months approximately) – this approach provided clear and simple direction and**

prioritisation for the most important communications work to be developed and delivered during the crisis.

Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism to recommend the funding of an Economic study led by UJJ Economic Policy Unit to understand the impact of Covid 19 on the future travel to work behaviour of our working population across the District.

ERT/093/2021: LEVELLING UP FUND

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding the Levelling Up Fund which will invest in local infrastructure.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Burgess seconded by Councillor Savage it was agreed as follows:**

- 1. The Council do not submit an application in the current call for 18 June 2021 Levelling Up Fund, but explore and develop initiatives that best fit the criteria utilising the Development fund that will become available early summer.**
- 2. In respect of CRF, the Council explore potential joint funding bids with FE sector aligned to economic development and regeneration strategy.**

Noted: With regard the Department of Infrastructure Blue and Green Fund, Mr Mallon confirmed a meeting had been held with Walk & Cycle Champion and that officials were in the process of putting together proposals and concepts around blue greenways to be progressed through this fund with work ongoing to establish the required criteria and move forward in presenting a bid.

Mr Mallon drew Members attention to the FAQs section appended to the Report which provided an understanding of the complexities of the fund.

ERT/094/2021: NEWRY CHAMBER CORPORATE PATRONS

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding renewal of

Council membership of the Corporate Patron Programme for the period 2021-2024. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Stokes seconded by Councillor Savage it was agreed Newry Mourne and Down District Council renew membership of the Corporate Patrons Programme for 2021-2024.

BUILDING CONTROL AND LICENSING

**ERT/095/2021: NORTHERN IRELAND FOOD & DRINK ASSOCIATION
(NIFDA) MEMBERSHIP**

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding membership of the Northern Ireland Food & Drink Association (NIFDA).
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McAteer seconded by Councillor Hanna it was agreed Newry Mourne and Down District Council subscribe to the 2021 membership of the Northern Ireland Food & Drink Association.

**ERT/096/2021: SMALL RURAL BUSINESS
MICRO GRANT PROGRAMME 2021**

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding the DAERA Rural Small Business Grants Scheme 2021/2022.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess seconded by Councillor McAteer it was agreed the Council will participate in a 2021/2022 Small Rural Business Grant Scheme, including the implementation of the next steps as follows:

- **Officers will continue to work a regional basis to agree the new programme formation, including completion of a business case, eligibility criteria and programme application and assessment processes.**

- **When received, Council will sign and accept a Letter of Offer from DAERA to enable implementation of the programme, with detail of final grant aid awarded to be presented to a later Council Meeting.**
- **Council to open and administrate the grant process which will be agreed within the programme business case.**

FOR NOTING

ERT/097/2021: BREXIT FORUM ACTION SHEET

Read: Action Sheet arising from Brexit Forum Meeting held on Wednesday 21 April 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: To note the Action Sheet arising from the Brexit Forum Meeting held on Wednesday 21 April 2021.

ERT/098/2021: ERT HISTORIC ACTION TRACKER

Read: Action Tracker Report for Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: To note the Historic Action Tracker Report for Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee.

ERT/099/2021: UPDATE RE:

- **AONB**
- **GEPARK**

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding updates on the AONB and the Geopark. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: To note the update provided in Section 2.1 on the following AONB initiatives:

- **Ring of Gullion AONB and Strangford and Lecale AONB Environment Fund Project implementation.**
- **Ring of Gullion Landscape Partnership Scheme Legacy**

Phase

- **Atlantic CultureScape**
- **Geopark**
- **Shared History Fund – My Townlands Story 1921-2021**
- **AONB Management Review implementation**
- **Other**

ERT/100/2021: RE-OPENING OF TOURISM FACILITIES

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events regarding the phased re-opening of a range of outdoor facilities including Campsites, Harbours and Slipways. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **To note the update regarding the phased re-opening of a range of outdoor facilities including Campsites, Harbours and Slipways as per Section 2.0 contained in Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events.**

Anti-Social Behaviour: Kilbroney Forest Park

Councillor Ruane referred to an incident at Kilbroney Forest Park which resulted in a customer leaving the park due to anti-social behaviour.

He spoke of the issue of antisocial problems in the wider Kilbroney Park area and although wardens have been in the area together with a visible police presence this does not appear to address the problem and that action was needed from the police. He expressed concern as details of the incident had been posted on a motor home site at a time when the Council want to encourage visitors to the District.

Councillor Tinnelly concurred with remarks from Councillor Ruane. He said the incident referred to was part of a wider issue occurring in Kilbroney every weekend whereby large numbers of young people were arriving in Rostrevor village and entering the forest end of Kilbroney Park where alcohol is being taken. He said he has spoken with Mr Mallon Director, and engaged with the PCSP and PSNI and although the agencies were working within the resources available he said robust and direct action was required to tackle antisocial elements in order that residents and visitors to our District are not intimidated and asked for emergency measures to be taken this week.

Mr Mallon confirmed officers had discussed measures to be put in place on a multi-agency approach to include PCSP, PSNI, Council Wardens and security provision.

Mr Patterson confirmed as a direct result of the incident, officers were reviewing the security detail at Kilbroney Park with the view to increasing security. He confirmed

staff were on site till 9.30pm Sunday night and clear contact details are provided to customers on arrival.

The following issues were also raised:

- Reports of antisocial behaviour on Council owned property at Cranfield, Ameracam Lane.
- Scottish caravaners camping in the Cranfield area - do Council have any facilities for Camper vans to empty tanks.
- Council to issue an urgent PR message to reassure Council Parks and sites are safe and that Council will protect site users.
- Campers staying at Mourne Esplanade Kilkeel including the Leisure Centre Car Park – no facilities for waste water.

- AGREED:**
- 1. To note Council Officials would be available to further discuss with Members proposals to ensure the issues on the Kilbroney Forest site are addressed and prevent such incidents reoccurring and a meeting would be arranged in the coming week to discuss these matters.**
 - 2. To note PCSP have been engaged with regard to antisocial issues at Cranfield and Ameracam Lane and Members can further discuss this matter with Council officials.**
 - 3. Council Officials will discuss with Members proposals regarding provision of facilities.**
 - 4. Council Officials to issue PR message to reassure visitors regarding the safety of its parks and sites for users.**

ERT/101/2021: UPDATE RE: TRADING PITCHES

Read: Report dated 10 May 2021 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events regarding completion of the tendering process for the provision of mobile vendor at 4 No. Tourism Amenity locations across the District, and successful appointment of mobile traders. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: To note a successful appointment was made for each respective Tourism Amenity location to service mobile trading requirements requested by Council, with successful awards based on a 3 year term, and annual income to

Council across the 4 No. sites, as a result of this procurement process, is in the sum of £43,700.

ERT/102/2021: PLANNING PERFORMANCE

Read: Report regarding Planning Performance Figures for April 2021.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: To note the Planning Performance Figures for April 2021.

Ms Ward Chief Executive, explained she would be attending all Committee meetings this month from a legislative perspective and made the following statement:

“Due to the current legislative uncertainty around remote meetings and the restrictions on indoor gatherings, the Chief Executive also agrees to exercise her delegated authority under Standing Orders to implement the resolution of the Committee once ratified by Council subject to any conflict of interest or legal advice that the decision is unlawful.”

Councillor Savage extended his thanks to Councillor McMurray for his term as Chair of the ERT Committee. He thanked him for his interaction with the party groupings on the Council in advance of the meetings and said Councillor McMurray chaired the meetings remarkably well throughout what was a difficult year.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 8.30pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 07 June 2021.

Signed: Councillor A McMurray

Chairperson of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee

Signed: Mr C Mallon

Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee

