

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on
Thursday 12 November 2020 at 6.00pm via Microsoft Teams & Downshire Civic Centre
(Hybrid)**

In the Chair: Councillor G Sharvin

In Attendance:

Councillor P Brown	Councillor P Byrne
Councillor C Enright	Councillor H Gallagher
Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor R Howell
Councillor A Lewis	Councillor H McKee
Councillor D Murphy	Councillor B Ó Muirí
Councillor M Savage	Councillor W Walker

Also in attendance:

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor A Finnegan
Councillor C Mason	Councillor G Stokes

Officials in Attendance:

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism
Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director
Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy
Mr A McKay, Chief Planning Officer
Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director Estates & Project Management
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services
(Administration)
Mr A Grimshaw, Project Director
Mr F O'Connor, Legal Advisor
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/163/2020: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Doran and Magennis.

SPR/164/2020: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Savage declared an interest in item 6 – Councils Statutory Advertising

SPR/165/2020: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2020 & SPECIAL STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 23 OCTOBER 2020

Read: Action Sheets of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 15 October 2020 & Special Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Friday 23 October 2020. **(Copy circulated)**

SPR/160/2020 Request to use Monaghan Row

Councillor Byrne asked for an update in relation to the request to use Monaghan Row. Mr Quinn confirmed that he had been liaising with the Trust and at this stage they had not responded with any firm proposals. He advised it was being discussed with their senior management team and he would continue to keep members updated.

Councillor Byrne asked that the item remained on the action sheet until a response was received.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Gallagher, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed that the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 15 October 2020 & Special Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee held on 23 October 2020, be noted, and actions removed as marked with SPR/160/2020 - Request to use Monaghan Row to remain on the action sheet.**

CORPORATE SERVICES

SPR/166/2020 NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 NOVEMBER 2020 – ‘STAND ALONE’ WOMEN’S SUB-COMMITTEE

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Stand Alone Women’s Sub-Committee **(Copy circulated)**

The following Notice of Motion came forward for discussion in the name of Councillor Mason:

"That this Council establishes a stand-alone ‘Women’s sub-committee’ made up of female representatives of this council to discuss and promote women’s issues, to build the skills and confidence of female representatives and to promote women getting involved in local politics to aim to achieve proportionality."

Councillor Mason highlighted the importance of having a non- restrictive informal structure comprising female representatives, along with male counterparts to attend and become champions on women’s issues. She stated that only 26% of councillors in the north were female which was well below the European average of 33%. Newry Mourne and Down is ranked 8th out of 11 councils in terms of percentages of female representatives with 27% compared to Causeway Coast and Glens who had 40% female representation in their chamber. She stated that women in politics were under-represented across the board partly due to a lack of confidence and self-assurance in a male dominated sphere. Training and mentoring programmes were needed to help women attain knowledge, skills and confidence to stand for election and be more respected to break down some of the barriers for political representatives.

Although Councillor Magennis had previously seconded the motion at the Council Meeting, in her absence, Councillor Finnegan spoke to the motion on her behalf.

Members spoke in support of the motion stating it was crucial in terms of equality and respect for women especially in a political environment where women seemed to be more open to abuse and welcomed the fact that it was not going to be a closed-door group to promote gender equality.

Councillor Andrews highlighted the work currently ongoing within the National Association of Councillors with regard to Councillor conditions, their role and unsocial hours.

Mrs Carville highlighted that the report recommended the establishment of a working group rather than a women's sub-committee with the terms of reference to be established on that basis.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that Members agree to the following recommendations:

- To establish a 'Women's Working Group' and;
- Officers prepare a Terms of Reference which sets out the working group's scope, purpose and proposed membership.

CORPORATE PLANNING AND POLICY

SPR/167/2020: **DRAFT POLICIES – NAMING COUNCIL FACILITIES/ARTWORKS & SCULPTURES/TREE PLANTING**

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy regarding, Draft Policies – Naming Council Facilities/Artworks & Sculptures/Tree Planting (**Copy circulated**)

Councillor Ó Muirí welcomed the report and queried if future decisions on naming of Council facilities were to be taken, would there be an opportunity to have bi-lingual signage or naming something bi-lingually. He also pointed out that someone could plant a tree in their own premises if Council could not facilitate.

Mrs Mackin responded stating that section 2.4 of Newry Mourne and Down District Council 'Brand Identity Guidelines and Associated Procedures' in relation to the naming of and renaming of facilities set out that all signs should comply with Council corporate branding guidelines in relation to signage and specialist naming signage should not be permitted.

Councillor McKee highlighted 4.1 of the report in relation to park benches and plaques stating that trees had not been mentioned and should be included. Mrs Mackin confirmed original policy had been amended to reflect that there were new draft policies of which tree policy was now included.

In response to a query from Councillor McKee regarding costs, Mrs Carville confirmed that if Council had to remove a tree, the original requester of the tree would not be out of pocket and reimbursed what they had paid initially.

Councillor Hanlon welcomed the report and highlighted that memorial tree planting had previously been brought to Council and, although there was a certain amount of bureaucracy involved, it was welcomed overall.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that Members approve the draft policies, associated guidelines and procedures and application forms.

SPR/168/2020: **COUNCIL'S STATUTORY ADVERTISING**

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy regarding, Council's Statutory Advertising

(Copy circulated)

Councillor Brown proposed that consideration be given to using online newspapers and asked officers to ensure the advertising provider is doing this, this was seconded by Councillor Walker.

Mrs Mackin confirmed that the Strategy Policy and Resources Committee had previously taken the decision not to look at online providers, however this could be reinvestigated. The framework agreement with the advertising agency looked at providing advertising solutions and media advice for multiple end users, utilising all means possible to ensure the message was circulated as widely as possible.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Walker, to continue to use the services of the Council's appointed Advertisement Agency under the current ESPO Framework Agreement for Advertising Solutions to produce, manage and place advertisements in the local weekly press titles on behalf of the Council thus ensuring the Council's corporate identity is protected and geographical spread, reach and value for money can be achieved.

It was also agreed that consideration be given to using online newspapers to get the message out digitally and to ensure the advertising provider is doing this.

FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION

SPR/169/2020: REQUEST FROM PHA FOR NATIONAL TESTING PARTNERSHIP VENUE IN NEWRY (WALK IN TEST FACILITY)

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates and Project Management regarding, Request from PHA for National Testing Partnership venue in Newry (Walk in test facility) **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Savage welcomed the officer's report and asked for reassurance that the request would have no impact on the plans for the development of the 15-acre park on the site given the timeline.

Mr Quinn confirmed that although the request was for a minimum of 3 months, there was no indication of how long it was likely to last, however plans for the park could continue in parallel with this essential project and there would be parameters built into the agreement to ensure there would be no impact on the site.

Councillor Andrews asked whether the Public Health Agency could be asked to offer similar services in other locations within the District, given the huge geographical spread of the District.

Mr Quinn advised he had already been in contact with the PHA regarding other locations being added as walk-in facilities. They had responded stating at this point it would only be Newry, however, they would keep this under review.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Walker, that Members agree to offer PHA additional space at Albert Basin for a temporary structure/s.

FOR NOTING

SPR/170/2020

**MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME
BOARD MEETING – 20 OCTOBER 2020**

Read: Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting – 20 October 2020 **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed to note the contents of the report.**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Gallagher, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the next matter which related to exempt information by virtue of para. 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.**

At this point in the meeting it was agreed to take item 13

SPR/171/2020 SURPLUS ASSET UPDATE

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director Estates and Project Management regarding, Surplus Asset Update **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Walker proposed to accept the officer's recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Savage.

Councillor Murphy proposed an amendment that a decision be deferred on the play area at Blearly Bungalows, Newry for 1 month to allow the neighbouring landowners to make a bid.

Councillors Walker and Savage were content to accept the amendment.

Councillor Savage asked that his disappointment be noted with regard to the fact that neither a Housing Association nor NIHE had progressed their interest on the 60 Cecil Street, Newry site which would be perfect for social housing and encouraged elected representatives to ask NIHE or Housing Associations to consider the site.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed to approve the following recommendations:**

3.1 Members to note the content of this Report and associated Appendices.

3.2 Members approval to formally proceed with the sale of

Newry Sports Centre to the Southern Regional College, for the value stated in the officer's report, on receipt of SRC receiving their business case approval.

3.3 Members approval to formally proceed with the sale of the following surplus assets to bidders listed at the values stated in the officer's report, which were on the open market between 29th September – 3rd November 2020:

- Play Area at Ashtree Cottages, Newry
- Former Refuse Disposal Site, Croreagh, Newry
- Lockkeepers Cottage, Newry
- Play Area at Crown Villas, Crieve, Newry

3.4 Members approval for the next stages of the conveyancing process listed in 3.3 to proceed immediately.

3.5 Members formal approval to commence the D1 process for the following surplus assets:

- The Clock Recreation Area Shrigley
- Lands at Mourne Esplanade, Kilkeel, BT34 4DB and
- It was agreed that the Play area at the Bleary Bungalows Newry decision be deferred for 1 month.

SPR/172/2020 EMERGENCY BUSINESS PLANS OCTOBER 2020 – MARCH 2021

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive regarding, Emergency Business Plans October 2020 – March 2021 **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Gallagher it was agreed that members approve the following recommendations:**

- **Chief Executive's Departmental Emergency Business Plans October 2020 – March 2021.**
- **Corporate Services Emergency Business Plans October 2020 – March 2021**

SPR/173/2020 OFFICE FOR PRODUCT SAFETY & STANDARDS FUNDING OFFER

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mr E Devlin, Assistant Director Health and Wellbeing regarding, Office for Products Safety & Standards Funding offer **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Byrne, that Elected Members agree to the recruitment of an Environmental Officer until 31 March 2021 to carry out the work as detailed in the report.**

SPR/174/2020: STAGE 2 TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT & CAR PARKING

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Stage 2 Traffic Transport & Car Parking **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Savage, that Elected Members agree to consider the contents of the report and approve the recommendation to appoint White Young Green via the Councils Multi-Disciplinary Framework to undertake a desk top analysis of walking, cycling and public transport arrangements that exist within Newry, to identify opportunities to improve multimodal transport, and to undertake consultation with key stakeholders in regard to same.**

SPR/175/2020 PROPOSED PLANNING DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 Mr Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding proposed Planning Department Structure. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Murphy, that Elected Members agree the new Planning Department Structure in Appendix 1 allowing all the positions to be filled permanently through the necessary recruitment processes.**

SPR/176/2020 ALBERT BASIN CITY PARK – GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mr M Lipsett Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Albert Basin City Park – Governance Structures **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Ó Muirí, to approve the following recommendations:**
1. 15-Arce City Park Project at the Albert Basin in Newry becomes part of the Newry City Centre Regeneration Scheme Project and associated governance

- arrangements as per appendix 1.
2. The Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group being discontinued, and the project progressed as per the above point 1 recommendation.
 3. The Stakeholder Forum for the Albert Basin continue to meet as required.

FOR NOTING

SPR/177/2020 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Strategy Policy & Resources, regarding Management Accounts to 30 September 2020
(Copy circulated)

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

Noted: It was agreed to note the content of the officer's report.

SPR/178/2020 UPDATE ON COUNCIL FINANCES

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Strategy Policy & Resources, regarding update on Council Finances **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

Noted: It was agreed to note the content of the officer's report.

SPR/179/2020 UPDATE ON BREXIT PLANNING

Read: Report dated 12 November 2020 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Strategy Policy & Resources, regarding update on Brexit Planning **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

Noted: It was agreed to note the content of the officer's report.

SPR/180/2020 STRATEGIC FINANCE WORKING GROUP ACTION SHEET - 9 NOVEMBER 2020

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

Noted: It was agreed to note the contents of the Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet – 9 November 2020.

