

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/AGM/

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Council held on Monday 05 June 2023 at 5.30pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor M Savage 5.30pm - 6.06pm
Councillor V Harte 6.06pm – 6.23pm

In attendance:

(Councillors)

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor C Bowsie	Councillor O Magennis
Councillor J Brennan	Councillor A Mathers
Councillor P Byrne	Councillor D McAteer
Councillor P Campbell	Councillor L McEvoy
Councillor W Clarke	Councillor A McMurray
Councillor L Devlin	Councillor S O Hare
Councillor C Enright	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor D Finn	Councillor K Murphy
Councillor A Finnegan	Councillor S Murphy
Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor A Quinn
Councillor R Howell	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor J Jackson	Councillor M Rice
Councillor G Kearns	Councillor G Sharvin
Councillor T Kelly	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor C King	Councillor J Tinnelly
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor J Truesdale
Councillor D Lee-Surginor	

(Officials)

Ms J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism
Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Ms V Keegan, Head of Communications & Marketing
Ms L Dillon, Democratic Services Officer
Ms L Cummins, Democratic Services Officer

AGM/001/2023

APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The following apologies were received:

Ms M Ward, Chief Executive
Councillor G Hanna
Councillor C Galbraith
Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor M Ruane

The Chairperson, Councillor Savage, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Councillor Jackson said he wanted to officially forward an apology for Council colleague Councillor Hanna, who had been admitted to hospital and he asked that all colleagues join in wishing him a healthy and speedy recovery.

Councillor Savage echoed the sentiments expressed by Councillor Jackson and expressed warm wishes to Councillor Hanna.

Councillor Savage said this evening had drawn to a close what had been one of the most memorable and enjoyable years and said that to wear the chain of office for the Council had been an honour indeed.

He referred to the responsibilities of the role of Chairperson and the opportunity it gave him to connect with citizens across the entire District, some of who were most remarkable indeed, stating that "the sense of community, belonging, pride and basic humanity shone through like a beacon everywhere he went".

He referred to local festivals from Ardglass to Hilltown and paid tribute to community groups, volunteers, sports coaches, and local leaders of all ages, for their efforts working selflessly on the ground across our community.

Of the many highlights throughout his year in office, Councillor Savage expressed how the memories of the evening of the Chairperson's Civic Awards would stay with him forever, paying tribute to the truly remarkable people he met during the event.

He also referred to the Chairperson's Charity Ball, another highlight of which he was extremely proud and which raised £22,000 for his 4 chosen local charities, the Southern Area Hospice, Suicide Down to Zero, St Vincent De Paul and Simon Community and he expressed his thanks to everyone who attended and contributed.

He said on reflection he felt his year had been about people, the people he worked with, or met for the first time, and with whom he shared a laugh and a tear in equal measure and who have all filled him with the fondest of memories.

Councillor Savage expressed thanks to the Democratic Services Team, including Sheila for her guidance and support and to Sarah, Louise, Linda, Donna, Patricia and Colette for their support and willingness to help and he wished Patricia and Colette every happiness in their retirement.

He thanked Marie and the Management Team for their guidance, support and patience throughout the year.

He also extended thanks to the Members for the courtesy and respect they had shown for him throughout his term of office. He said he vowed to be a Chairperson for everyone and hoped he had been fair in doing so.

He paid tribute to former colleagues who either stood down or did not make re-election and wished them the very best for the future and he wished all new Councillors every success.

Councillor Savage extended thanks to outgoing Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Aoife Finnegan, for her support and willingness to step in when needed.

He paid tribute to his wife Noreen, who despite her own considerable challenges this year, had fully supported him in his role as Chair, and to his children Caolan, Tara and Ella adding he hoped he made them proud.

Finally Councillor Savage wished the new Chair every success for the year ahead.

Outgoing Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Aoife Finnegan extended her thanks to everyone for their support throughout her term in office. She extended thanks to Councillor Savage and wished the incoming Chair every success in their year ahead.

Councillor Sharvin, on behalf of the SDLP party grouping on Council, congratulated Councillor Savage on his year as Chairperson paying tribute to the Civic Awards and Charity Ball events. He also congratulated Councillor Finnegan on her year as Deputy Chair.

Councillor Taylor extended a genuine and personal thanks to the outgoing Chairperson on how he carried out his role and said he had been a first citizen for all, who when asked to participate, did so, and for this Councillor Savage was highly respected. He said the role of Chairperson was one with many demands in particular time away from family and he wished him a well earned break with his family.

Councillor Taylor also extended congratulations to Slieve Gullion colleague Councillor Finnegan on her role as Deputy Chair paying tribute to the energy she gave to the role and wished her enjoyable time with her family.

Councillor McMurray on behalf of the Alliance party grouping on Council, thanked both the outgoing Chair and outgoing Deputy Chair for their contribution throughout their term of office and wished them both good luck for the future.

Councillor Hanlon on behalf of the Sinn Fein party grouping on Council, congratulated both the outgoing Chair and outgoing Deputy Chair for a successful year working across the District for everyone and wished them well in future endeavors.

Councillor Jackson on behalf of the DUP party grouping on Council, congratulated both the outgoing Chair and outgoing Deputy Chair on their year in office and extended best wishes to them for the future.

Councillor Savage thanked the Members for their kind comments.

AGM/002/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest.

AGM/003/2023 **TO AGREE THE METHOD FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY USING D'HONDT BY QUALIFIED MAJORITY VOTE**

Read: Order of Pick by d'Hondt. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was unanimously agreed on the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, to approve the method for the appointment of statutory responsibility using d'Hondt by qualified majority vote.**
(Copy of Recorded Vote appended to Minutes)

AGM/004/2023 **TO AGREE THE METHOD FOR THE APPOINTMENT TO STATUTORY COMMITTEES FOR 2023/24 USING QUOTA OF GREATEST REMAINDER BY QUALIFIED MAJORITY VOTE**

Read: Appointment of Councillors to Committees – Quota Greatest Remainder. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was unanimously agreed on the proposal of Councillor McAteer, seconded by Councillor Andrews, to approve the method for the appointment to Statutory Committees for 2023/24 using Quota of Greatest Remainder with the remaining 7 positions determined using d'Hondt.**
(Copy of Recorded Vote appended to Minutes)

AGM/005/2023 **APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Read: Appointment to Committees 2023. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms Taggart explained the Appointments to Committees had been allocated and agreed at the Mock AGM held on Thursday 01 June 2023 and after approval at tonight's meeting, the nominating officers would be requested to reiterate their selections for Year One only.

Agreed: **It was unanimously agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanlon seconded by Councillor McAteer to approve the Appointments to Committees 2023.**

Ms Taggart called upon Councillor Hanlon as nominating officer for Sinn Féin to nominate a Councillor for the position of Chairperson of Council for Year One 2023/24.

Councillor Hanlon nominated Councillor Valerie Harte for the position of Chairperson of Council for 2023/2024, which was seconded by Councillor McEvoy.

Councillor Harte subsequently accepted the post of Chairperson of Council for 2023-2024.

Ms Taggart called upon Councillor Devlin as nominating officer for SDLP to nominate a Councillor for the position of Deputy-Chairperson of Council for 2023/2024.

Councillor Devlin nominated Councillor Gareth Sharvin, which was seconded by Councillor Andrews.

Councillor Sharvin subsequently accepted the post of Deputy Chairperson of Council for 2023-2024.

Councillor Harte and Councillor Sharvin were duly nominated as Chairperson and Deputy-Chairperson respectively of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council for the year 2023-2024.

Ms Taggart called upon the nominating officers of each of the parties to nominate to the following statutory positions of responsibility and the following nominations were made by the respective nominating officers and formally accepted by the nominees:

Chair of AHC	Councillor R Howell
Deputy Chair of AHC	Councillor P Campbell
Chair of ERT	Councillor M Ruane
Deputy Chair of ERT	Councillor G Kearns
Chair of S&E	Councillor T Andrews
Deputy Chair of NS	Councillor W Clarke
Chair of SPR	Councillor L McEvoy
Deputy Chair of SPR	Councillor C Enright
Chair of Planning	Councillor D Murphy
Deputy Chair of Planning	Councillor J Tinnelly

Councillor Savage vacated the Chair at this point in the meeting.

Councillors Harte and Sharvin assumed the Chairperson and Deputy-Chairperson roles at this point.

AGM/006/2023 NEWLY APPOINTED CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR ASSUME ROLES

Incoming Chairperson of Council, Councillor Valerie Harte, addressed the meeting stating it was with great honour and pride that she accepted the nomination for the position of Chairperson of Newry, Mourne, and Down District Council and was humbled to be entrusted with such a crucial role for the upcoming year of 2023/2024.

She extended congratulations to outgoing Chairperson, Councillor Michael Savage, for his leadership during the past year.

She expressed a special thanks to Council staff who work hard on the ground through rain, hail or snow to ensure our streets were clean and our bins are emptied.

She said she was grateful for the opportunity to serve the District in the capacity of Chairperson of Council and pledged to work hard for all, striving to uphold the values and principles that our District held dear and looked forward to representing the Council within different communities promoting tourism and economic opportunities whilst attracting much needed investment.

Councillor Harte stressed that community was at the heart of what she did and assured this would be reflected during her tenure. As a strong advocate for disability, Councillor Harte

said she would be selecting charities from across the District that provide vital support and outlets for individuals and families of those with disabilities as she believed everyone deserved equal opportunities and access to resources, and she pledged to work to ensure this is echoed in all aspects of her work.

She made reference to the recent announcements which have cast a shadow over Daisy Hill Hospital as in spite of recent positive developments in terms of investment and the expansion of Daisy Hill, the recruitment and retention crisis still remained a threat to services and added that the health and wellbeing of our citizens had to be foremost in our actions as local representatives, including the wellbeing of our excellent health care workers. She said she was committed to working with the relevant parties and statutory bodies to protect and promote services at Daisy Hill Hospital.

She spoke of the many challenges facing the District but believed that with Members support and collaboration, the Council could bring about improvements in health, education, employment, community safety, the environment and social housing.

She said the Council had opportunities to build a better District for workers and families and deliver on key projects including Newry's city centre park and the many great projects either in the pipeline or on the aspirational list, from Crossgar to Culloville, which will be brought to fruition for the people of the District and in partnership with colleagues from other parties and Independents, drive fair regeneration, attract external investment and boost tourism potential.

Finally Councillor Harte stated that the people of Newry, Mourne, Down and South Armagh had entrusted Members with the authority and responsibility to deliver high grade public services and that for their part, Sinn Féin would endeavour to exercise its authority fairly and in the interests of the people who elected them and she thanked everyone for their trust and confidence in her and she looked forward to working to make a positive impact on the District.

Councillor Sharvin thanked the people of Downpatrick and Lecale for returning him to be their Councillor for the area.

He paid tribute to outgoing Chairperson, Councillor Michael Savage and to outgoing Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Aoife Finnegan, for their work ethic ensuring they represented the whole District.

He extended thanks to his SDLP colleagues for nominating him for the role of Deputy Chair of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, and with reference to his term as Vice Chair of Down District Council in 2013/14, he said he remained committed to representing the entire community as he did back then.

He said he looked forward to the incoming year, stating that the District had a great opportunity to grow and support its tourism offering from the shores of Strangford Lough to the Mountains of Mourne and Ring of Gullion. He said while the District had the best to offer across Ireland to both residents and visitors, business and voluntary sectors continued to face an ever challenging landscape with increased costs and funding cuts.

He hoped the Council would be ambitious in developing the facilities the Council had to offer, but also supporting sporting clubs in growing their own facilities adding that the sports

hubs across DEAs had potential to provide a platform for local people to lead healthy and active lives by improving the quality of facilitates and open spaces.

As Deputy Chair of Council, he pledged to continue to provide a microphone to ensure the vulnerable are heard and issues are not ignored.

Councillor Sharvin congratulated Councillor Harte on her appointment as Chair of Council for the forthcoming year and said he would support the Chairperson in their role for the betterment of the District.

Finally, Councillor Sharvin expressed thanks to his family and friends for their support, the SDLP team both now and before, paying particular tribute to the late Eddie McGrady, Peter Craig, John Doris, Michael Carr, Geraldine Donnelly, Brian Quinn and Patsy Toman, who provided him with such knowledge and the ethos of being on the ground and in your community.

AGM/007/2023 APPOINTMENTS TO STATUTORY COMMITTEES 2023/24

Read: List of Committee picks 2023-24 **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Devlin, seconded by Councillor Andrews to approve the appointments to Committees using Quota of Greatest Remainder. (Copy of Committee List 2024/23 appended to these Minutes)**

AGM/008/2023 TO AGREE THE METHOD AND TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO EXTERNAL BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS (EXCLUDING STATUTORY POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY)

Read: List of External Bodies and Organisations 2023/24. **(Copy circulated)**

Noted: Working Group Terms of Reference will require updating at their first meeting.

Ms Taggart said nominations were required for the following external bodies:

- APSE NI Executive Board
- Belfast Region City Deal
- Diversity Ambassadors
- East Border Region
- Somme Advisory Committee

Agreed: **It was unanimously agreed to make the following nominations to the External Bodies below:**

APSE NI Executive Board:
- Councillor T Andrews (SDLP)

Belfast Region City Deal:
- Councillor Clarke (Sinn Fein)
- Councillor D Murphy (Sinn Fein)
- Councillor P Byrne (SDLP)
- DUP – to be forwarded

Diversity Ambassadors:
- Councillor P Byrne (SDLP)
- Councillor A Quinn (SF)
- Councillor D Lee-Surginor (Alliance)
- DUP – to be forwarded
- Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy

East Border Region:
- Councillor T Andrews (SDLP)
- Councillor M Larkin (Sinn Fein)

Somme Advisory Council:
On the proposal of Councillor Devlin seconded by Councillor Lewis it was agreed to appoint Councillor Andrews to the Somme Advisory Council in years 1 and 3.

AGM/009/2023 CHAMBER SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

Read: Proposed plan for seating arrangements in Council Chamber.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: **It was unanimously agreed to accept the proposal plan for seating arrangements within Council Chamber.**

AGM/010/2023 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR INCOMING YEAR

Read: Schedule of Meetings for the year 2023/24.
(Copy circulated)

It was agreed the start times for the Schedule of Meetings for the year June 2023 - May 2024 be agreed at the first Meeting of each Committee.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed to approve the Schedule of Meetings for the year 2023/24.**

AGM/011/2023 PAYMENT OF SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

Read: Newry Mourne & Down District Council Scheme of Allowances payable to Councillors. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed to approve the Newry Mourne & Down District Council Scheme of Allowances payable to Councillors.**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 6.23pm.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Signed: _____
Chief Executive

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 05 June 2023 VENUE: Chamber Downshire Estate MEETING: Annual Meeting

SUBJECT OF VOTE: ITEM 3 : To agree the method for the Appointment of Statutory Responsibility using D'Hondt by qualified Majority Vote

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews	√			
C Bowsie	√			
J Brennan	√			
P Byrne	√			
P Campbell	√			
W Clarke	√			
L Devlin	√			
C Enright	√			
D Finn	√			
A Finnegan	√			
C Galbraith	Apology			
M Gibbons	Apology			
O Hanlon	√			
G Hanna	Apology			
V Harte	√			
R Howell	√			
J Jackson	√			
G Kearns	√			
T Kelly	√			
C King	√			
M Larkin	√			
D Lee-Surginor	√			
A Lewis	√			
O Magennis	√			
A Mathers	√			
D McAteer	√			
L McEvoy	√			
A McMurray	√			
S O'Hare	√			
D Murphy	√			
K Murphy	√			
S Murphy	√			
A Quinn	√			
H Reilly	√			
M Rice	√			
M Ruane	Ruane			
M Savage	√			
G Sharvin	√			
D Taylor	√			

J Tinnelly				
J Truesdale	√			
TOTALS	36	0	0	

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL
RECORDED VOTE

DATE: 05 June 2023 VENUE: Chamber Downshire Estate MEETING: Annual Meeting

SUBJECT OF VOTE: ITEM 4 : To agree the method for the appointment to Statutory Committees for 2023/24 using a quota of greatest remainder by qualified majority vote.

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
T Andrews	√			
C Bowsie	√			
J Brennan	√			
P Byrne	√			
P Campbell	√			
W Clarke	√			
L Devlin	√			
C Enright	√			
D Finn	√			
A Finnegan	√			
C Galbraith	Apology			
M Gibbons	Apology			
O Hanlon	√			
G Hanna	Apology			
V Harte	√			
R Howell	√			
J Jackson	√			
G Kearns	√			
T Kelly	√			
C King	√			
M Larkin	√			
D Lee-Surginor	√			
A Lewis	√			
O Magennis	√			
A Mathers	√			
D McAteer	√			
L McEvoy	√			
A McMurray	√			
S O'Hare	√			
D Murphy	√			
K Murphy	√			
S Murphy	√			
A Quinn	√			
H Reilly	√			
M Rice	√			
M Ruane	Apology			
M Savage	√			
G Sharvin	√			
D Taylor	√			

J Tinnelly	√			
J Truesdale	√			
TOTALS	37	0	0	

	SF	SDLP	DUP	ALL	UUP	GIBBONS	TINNELY	TOTALS
1st Preference Votes (LG Election May 2023)	37,032	13,170	9,124	7,176	4,062	1,111	1,043	
1 Number of Councillors	20	8	5	5	1	1	1	41
2 % Full Council Membership	48.78%	19.51%	12.20%	12.20%	2.44%	2.44%	2.44%	100.00%
3 <u>Quota</u> <i>(based on 4 x Standing Committees (15 each), 1 x Planning Committee (12) & 1 x Audit Committee (10) = 82 places)</i>	0.5000	0.5000	0.5000	0.5000	0.5000	0.5000	0.5000	
4 Allocation	40.0000	16.0000	10.0000	10.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	
5 Allocation of Whole Numbers (First Stage) <i>(This can also be considered as the <u>minimum allocation</u> for each Party Grouping / Independent across the entire Committee structure)</i>	39	16	10	10	0	0	0	75
6 Greatest Residual Remainder (Second Stage) <i>Remaining places to be filled on the basis of the greatest, residual remainders at second stage, where the order of pick is determined by largest decimal number and so on, however this only works where Committees are of an equal size. At this stage six places remain to be allocated across the entire Committee structure</i>	1.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	7

	Active & Healthy Communities			Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Sustainability & Environmental Services			Strategy, Policy & Resources			Planning			Audit			CHECK
	Min No	Total	% Check	Min No	Total	% Check	Min No	Total	% Check	Min No	Total	% Check	Min No	Total	% Check	
TOTAL ALLOCATION																
SF	40	7.317	48.78%	7	7.317	48.78%	7	7.317	48.78%	5.854	6	48.78%	4.878	5	48.78%	39
SDLP	16	2.927	19.51%	3	2.927	19.51%	3	2.927	19.51%	2.341	2	19.51%	1.951	2	19.51%	16
DUP	10	1.829	12.20%	2	1.829	12.20%	2	1.830	12.20%	1.464	1	12.20%	1.22	1	12.20%	10
ALL	10	1.829	12.20%	2	1.829	12.20%	2	1.830	12.20%	1.464	1	12.20%	1.22	1	12.20%	10
UUP	2	0.366	2.44%	0	0.366	2.44%	0	0.366	2.44%	0.293	0	2.44%	0.244	0	2.44%	0
GIBBONS	2	0.366	2.44%	0	0.366	2.44%	0	0.366	2.44%	0.293	0	2.44%	0.244	0	2.44%	0
TINNELY	2	0.366	2.44%	0	0.366	2.44%	0	0.366	2.44%	0.293	0	2.44%	0.244	0	2.44%	0
82 TOTAL			14			14			14		10			9		75