

NEWRY MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting
held on Monday 14 March 2022 at 6.00pm in the Chamber Council Offices
Monaghan Row Newry, and remotely via Microsoft Teams**

Chairperson: Councillor R Howell (Chamber)

Deputy Chairperson: Councillor T Andrews (Chamber)

In attendance: **(Committee Members)**
Councillor R Burgess (via Teams)
Councillor D Curran (Chamber)
Councillor M Gibbons (Teams)
Councillor G Hanna (via Teams)
Councillor V Harte (Chamber)
Councillor M Larkin (via Teams)
Councillor R Mulgrew (Chamber)
Councillor A McMurray (Teams)
Councillor H Reilly (via Teams)
Councillor M Ruane (via Teams)
Councillor M Savage (via Teams)

Non Members: Councillor P Brown (via Teams)
Councillor P Byrne (via Teams)
Councillor A Finnegan (via Teams)
Councillor O Hanlon (via Teams)
Councillor J Tinnelly (via Teams)

Officials in Attendance: 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 C McAteer Democratic Services Officer

ERT/047/2022: APOLOGIES / CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were recorded for:
Councillor W Clarke
Councillor G Stokes

The Chairperson, Councillor Howell, extended her deepest sympathy to Councillor Clarke on the sad passing of his mother.

The Deputy Chairperson, Councillor Andrews, on behalf of the SDLP grouping on Council, extended sincere sympathy to Councillor Clarke and his family on the passing of his mother.

ERT/048/2022: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hanna declared an interest in Item 10 regarding a Service Level Agreement with Mourne Heritage Trust for Ranger Services.

**ERT/049/2022: ACTION SHEET
MINUTES OF ENTERPRISE, REGENERATION &
TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2022**

Read: Action Sheet arising out of the Minutes of the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 14 February 2022. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed to note the Action Sheet arising from the Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism Committee Meeting held on Monday 14 February 2022.**

BUILDING CONTROL & LICENSING

**ERT/050/2022: NOTICE OF MOTION
RE: ANIMAL WELFARE FORUM**

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr C Jackson Assistant Director Building Control & Licensing, regarding a Notice of Motion tabled at Council Meeting on 07 February 2022 regarding the establishment of

an Animal Welfare Forum.
(Copy circulated)

The following Notice of Motion had been previously tabled at Council Meeting on 07 February 2022:

"This Council notes the increasing and worrying prevalence of puppy farming and pet abandonment in recent years, and the high levels of public interest in addressing this and all instances of animal cruelty. Recognising Council's responsibility for animal welfare and the importance of inter-agency and partnership working to address this issue, Council will establish an Animal Welfare Forum. This Forum will meet regularly (at least quarterly), and provide strategic direction and oversight to officers involved in animal welfare, reporting back to the AHC Committee. It will also seek representation from Elected Members, dog wardens, kennelling providers, DAERA, animal shelters, charities and the PSNI. "

Councillor Brown explained whilst he appreciated the Report prepared by Council Officers, he could not support the concluding recommendation contained therein. He said although he was aware bodies were set up to discuss animal welfare issues locally and across Northern Ireland, he however believed there were key aspects related to animal welfare that were not covered within the current set up of these bodies, ie, Paws for Thought and the NI Dog Advisory Group, in particular the absence of elected member representation and community/voluntary sector representation, and they lacked strategic direction on how the Council can do more to address issues around animal welfare, as these groups were largely based only on responding and reporting on animal welfare.

He explained he brought forward the Notice of Motion because he believed animal welfare should not only be an operational issue for Council, but one which has strategic input and oversight from elected members. He referred to the massive public interest in tackling animal abuse given the huge increase in puppy farming, illegal breeding, and the cross border and GB trade involved, which highlighted the fact this is more than an operational issue for Council.

He mentioned the Animal Welfare Act 2011 which passed responsibility for most animal welfare, in particular pets, to local Councils with much responsibility for wild and farm animals left to PSNI and DAERA, and said in his view as Councils have endeavoured to fulfil this statutory obligation, the structures and funding in place to do this were inadequate as finite budgets from DAERA that Councils must work within disincentivized having animals removed from unsuitable conditions/abusive owners due to potentially associated costly legal and veterinary fees

Councillor Brown said he had been contacted by constituents and welfare charities expressing concerns at animal welfare cases that had not been properly and fully

investigated and was concerned that officers were not sufficiently resourced and supported to fulfil the Council's statutory responsibility around animal welfare. He said accountability to local Councils was difficult due to the huge cross district areas animal welfare officers have to cover and there was little to no capacity within the District to pursue potential welfare breaches and he said spot checks should be carried out in respect of online sellers of pets.

He believed a forum with political, community and voluntary sector input would improve animal welfare outcomes in the District and carry out the following:

- collectively lobby for increased funding from DAERA
- develop a plan to proactively identify and pursue illegal and unethical breeders
- better respond to information on animal abuse
- continue partnership work to reduce dog euthanising figures
- lobby for wider legislative changes to bring tougher sentencing and introduce an abusers register.

He asked for Members support not to accept the officers recommendation and establish a forum to collectively improve animal welfare outcomes.

Mr Jackson presented the content of the above report referring to two forums already in place to deal with puppy farming and all animal welfare cases, ie, NIDAG and Paws for Thought. He gave details on the make up and reporting processes of both groups and said Officers considered there already was adequate provision in this area.

Whilst Members gave their support for the sentiments contained in the Motion, it was the consensus of the committee that rather than form another group/forum to address animal welfare, improvements should be made to the structures already in place, ie, include Elected Member representation and animal charities on Paws for Thought, and improve on the reporting process back to Council on information arising from these forums.

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

- (a) 2 No. Councillors to be included on the Paws for Thoughts forum, and as part of elected member engagement on this forum, consider options for further consultation with charity groups through the forum.**

- (b) Elected Member nominations to the Paws for Thought forum to be agreed at the next meeting of the Party Representatives Meeting.**
- (c) The ERT Committee to review Licensing Department 6 monthly reports and consider if further action is required.**

ENTERPRISE EMPLOYMENT & REGENERATION

ERT/051/2022: UPDATE RE: ARTISAN MARKET

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director Enterprise Employment and Regeneration regarding Artisan Markets in Newry and Slieve Gullion DEA. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew seconded by Councillor Harte it was agreed:**

- 1. To approve the operation of a monthly Artisan Market in Newry, held on the second Sunday per month, and the appointment, through a Memorandum of Understanding, of Downpatrick Community Collective to deliver the market on behalf of Council.**
- 2. To approve the operation of 2 pilot artisan markets in Crossmaglen in Spring/Summer 2022 in order to test the feasibility of an Artisan Market in this area.**

Noted: Officers will arrange for the Artisan Markets to be more widely advertised.

Noted: Officers will liaise with the local market group on the provision of Artisan Markets in Crossmaglen.

ERT/052/2022: BUSINESS DATABASE DOWN BUSINESS CENTRE

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment Regeneration regarding Business Database – Down Business Centre. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed Council enter into a Service Level Agreement with Down Business Centre (working in partnership with NMEA) and make a financial contribution of £8,800 towards the development, promotion and maintenance of business database that is representative of over 8,000 businesses located within the District.

ERT/053/2022: UPDATE
RE: DAERA - TACKLING RURAL POVERTY & SOCIAL ISOLATION PROGRAMME (TRPSI)

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment Regeneration regarding DAERA Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Isolation Programme (TRPSI).
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews seconded by Councillor Burgess it was agreed:

- 1. To note the update provided on the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021, regarding application numbers and total grant value awarded.**
- 2. To participate in the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2022 to include the next steps:**
 - Accept Letter of Offer when available to enable implementation of Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2022.**
 - To manage the implementation of the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2022 across the NMDDC area.**

TOURISM CULTURE & EVENTS

ERT/054/2022: ARTS CULTURE & HERITAGE STRATEGY

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Arts Culture regarding an Arts Culture & Heritage Strategy.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess seconded by Councillor Curran it was agreed to update the timelines for

the delivery of the Council Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy from 2022-2027, and to host a launch event at the end of May 2022.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew seconded by Councillor Andrews 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).

ERT/055/2022: RANGER SERVICES SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events, regarding entering into a Service Level Agreement with Mourne Heritage Trust (MHT) to support an Engagement Ranger Service. **(Copy circulated)**

ERT/056/2022: NEWCASTLE HARBOUR BERTHING PROVISION

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr A Patterson Assistant Director Tourism Culture & Events regarding Newcastle Harbour Berthing Provision – installation of fixed floating pontoon system with gated access ramp to improve accessibility. **(Copy circulated)**

ERT/057/2022: SMALL SETTLEMENTS REGENERATION PROGRAMME

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr J McGilly Assistant Director Enterprise Employment & Regeneration regarding the Small Settlements Regeneration Programme. **(Copy circulated)**

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

When the Committee came out of closed session the Chairperson reported on the following decisions taken:

ERT/055/2022: Service Level Agreement – Ranger Services

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McMurray seconded by Councillor Howell it was agreed Council enter into a Service Level Agreement with Mourne Heritage Trust for the provision of Ranger services for the 2022-23 financial year.

ERT/056/2022: Newcastle Harbour Berthing Provision

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Howell seconded by Councillor Hanna it was agreed to approve the Business Case and undertake the necessary procurement exercises to install fixed floating pontoon with gated access ramp to improve accessibility at Newcastle Harbour and enhance the aesthetics of the facility.

ERT/057/2022: Update re: Small Settlement Programme

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mulgrew seconded by Councillor Andrews it was agreed as follows:

- 1. Accept Letter of Offer and its terms and conditions and proceed with relevant procurement processes/framework appointments and supporting Business Cases.**
- 2. Approve 10% Council match funding required by DfI, DAERA and DfC.**
- 3. Submit finalised detail early in 2022, following engagement with DEAs.**

FOR NOTING

ERT/058/2022: ERT HISTORIC ACTION TRACKER

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

AGREED: It was unanimously agreed to note the Historic Action Tracker Report for Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism

Committee.

**ERT/059/2022: LOUTH/NMD STRATEGIC ALLIANCE MEETING
- THURSDAY 02 DECEMBER 2021**

Read: Report of Louth/Newry Mourne & Down Strategic Alliance Meeting held on Thursday 02 December 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was unanimously agreed to note Report of Louth/Newry Mourne & Down Strategic Alliance Meeting held on Thursday 02 December 2021.

ERT/060/2022: PLANNING PERFORMANCE FIGURES

Read: Report regarding Planning Performance Figures for February 2022. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was unanimously agreed to note the Planning Performance Figures for February 2022.

ERT/061/2022: PURPLE FLAG ACCREDITATION

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration, regarding Purple Flag night-time economy initiative. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was unanimously agreed to note following a Purple Flag re-assessment, Newry City has retained the Purple Flag accreditation for Newry City.

**ERT/062/2022: DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
RE: PLANNING APPLICATION CONDITIONS**

Read: Report dated 14 March 2022 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director Enterprise, Employment and Regeneration, regarding Department for Infrastructure paper on the role of Councils in discharging conditions attached to planning permissions issues by Department for Infrastructure (DfI). **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: It was unanimously agreed the Committee note the content of the above report and correspondence dated 07 February 2022 from Department for Infrastructure regarding Planning Application Conditions.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 7.00pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 04 April 2022.

Signed: Councillor R Howell
Chairperson
Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism Committee

Signed: Mr C Mallon
Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism
