

**NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**NMC/SC**

---

**Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on 23 August 2021 at 6.00pm via  
Microsoft Teams**

---

**In the Chair:** Councillor O Magennis

**In attendance:**

**(Councillors)**

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor R Burgess
Councillor P Byrne	Councillor C Enright
Councillor A Finnegan	Councillor M Gibbons
Councillor O Hanlon	Councillor R Howell
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor D McAteer	Councillor L McEvoy
Councillor H McKee	Councillor A McMurray
Councillor R Mulgrew	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor K Owen	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor D Taylor	Councillor W Walker

**(Officials)**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and  
Tourism  
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager  
Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in attendance:**

**DFI Roads**

Mr M McPeak, Southern Division Roads Manager  
Mr I Campbell, West Office Section Engineer  
Mr S Duffy, East Office Section Engineer

**SC/20/2021**

**APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

An apology was received from Councillor Curran, Devlin, Gallagher, Hanna, Mason, Savage, Stokes, Tinnelly and Trainor. The Chairperson advised Councillor Finnegan would be joining the meeting late and Councillor Byrne also advised Councillor McAteer would join late.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr M McPeak, Mr S Duffy and Mr I Campbell from DfI Roads to the meeting, outlining the procedure for the evening advising that once Mr McPeak had presented the report, there would be an opportunity for Members to ask any questions only related to the presentation. She stated that all Members had the opportunity to attend the clinics and submit questions to DfI in recent weeks. If Members had any further queries not already addressed in the clinics, they should complete the proforma and send to Democratic Services who would forward to DfI Roads for a response. The Chairperson asked if DfI on behalf of all the Members, if they could respond to any queries as quickly as possible.

**SC/21/2020**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was none declared.

**SC/22/2021**

**PRESENTATION FROM DFI ROADS**

Mr M McPeak thanked Members for the opportunity to present the report and stated this was his first meeting with Members, introducing his two colleagues, Mr S Duffy and Mr I Campbell, Mr McPeak then directed Members to the last page of the report where the contact details for the business areas was listed which Members may find useful, he then proceeded to make his presentation. (copy of annual report attached)

Following the presentation there was a question and answer session and the following points were raised:

- Ballynahinch Bypass –Members welcomed the news that the scheme was now finally at a stage where it was ready to progress. There was still some money in budget this year to accommodate the potential purchase of any land and if instructed to move to the procurement stage. Mr McPeak highlighted that Dfi Roads had taken it as far as they could and were awaiting a decision from the Minister on the go ahead and on further funding so that it could move to the next stage of procurement and construction which would probably take 18 months to prepare contract documents, with the construction stage taking a further 2 years.
- Doran’s Rock – A review of larger plan of schemes across the division had been undertaken and any large minor works would be given priority if the spend could be justified.
- Resurfacing – Dfi would revert back to Councillor Walker regarding Comber Road and Coylelyhill, Killyleagh, and to Councillor Andrews regarding Crossgar sunken areas. Capital resurfacing allocation had increased significantly this year from 75 million to 125 million which will be used to maximise improvements to the roads. There had been a delay in not having a resurfacing contractor, but the intention was to put forward a new procurement strategy and deliver resurfacing in the area. This was currently out for consultation and there was no specific timescale but hoping to get something done by end of this year or start of next year. The division in the meantime had commissioned consultants to take forward a second strand to put together a series of large resurfacing schemes into a one off contract and hoped to go to procurement as quickly as possible.
- Main Street Saintfield – S Duffy will take away and look at to see if it would be considered as a priority for a new scheme, however responsibility is with the utility company to repair and temporary repairs may be required. The delay in having a resurfacing contractor may have an impact.
- Strangford Ferry – Dfi Roads would make contact with Translink to find out difficulties they are having with buses getting into Strangford, however the arrangement of the road infrastructure in Strangford and tightness of the town restricts what can be done in general to help alleviate the build up of traffic especially at peak times.
- Park and Ride – Consultants had now been commissioned to work on a

detailed design to take through the statutory procedures to take to planning permission stage, there was no timescale at present.

- 20mph School Schemes – The Minister intends on rolling out a second tranche of the scheme and all remaining schools would be considered through a priority system depending on the level of funding available. There was a number of permanent 20mph zone trial sites in Belfast and a draft report was being prepared to consider the conclusions and benefits and if there was an anticipated change in policy. DfI will report back the outcome of this.
- Active Travel – Members welcomed the new scheme and more funding had been made available for a phase 2 of the scheme to allow strategic links with phase 1.
- Mr Duffy and Mr Campbell would look at areas flagged up in relation cleaning of gullies and drains and arrange cleaning of same.
- Report a Fault – A number of defects on the system had recently been identified and rectified, a plan was in place to improve the service and create a more proactive response.
- Road Safety Funding – Working on a 1 year budget, difficult to plan ahead. Try to prioritise according to resources and funding available.
- Replenishing of Grit piles – These are replenished on a schedule on a regular basis.
- Distinct lack of resource budget to maintain what we have and is suffering across all areas. A limited service policy had been put in place to inspect and fix roads causing further backlog of maintenance work being carried out. Staffing and resource issues had also impacted this had now been resolved and hopefully will see an improvement going forward. A fair policy is applied across all areas, the section engineer would see if there is anything else can be improved on in the South Armagh area.
- Ballylone Road, Saintfield – Section engineer would inspect site and revert back to Councillor Burgess.
- Chapel View, Crossmaglen – Mr McPeak would contact Councillor Finnegan directly.

Mr McPeak thanked the members for their kinds comments and feedback in dealing with staff in the local offices. He emphasised the importance of keeping good relationships with members to gain more knowledge to further improve the road network and help gather programmes to improve the safety of the roads, suggesting it would be beneficial to hold another clinic later in the year to gather more information to make further improvements.

The Chairperson thanked Mr McPeak and the representatives from DfI for their very informed presentation and reminded Members any queries that were raised outside of the report could be sent to Democratic Services via the proforma and responded to accordingly by DfI Roads.

**There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 19.58pm.**

For adoption at Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to be held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**Signed:**

---

**Chairperson**

---

**Chief Executive**