

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

NMD/SC/

Minutes of Special Council Meeting held on Monday 29 October 2018 at 6pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor M Murnin

In attendance:

(Councillors)

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor R Burgess
Councillor P Byrne	Councillor M Carr
Councillor C Casey	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor D Curran	Councillor C Enright
Councillor G Fitzpatrick	Councillor G Hanna
Councillor H Harvey	Councillor T Hearty
Councillor R Howell	Councillor D Hyland
Councillor M Larkin	Councillor K Loughran
Councillor D McAteer	Councillor A McMurray
Councillor R Mulgrew	Councillor B Quinn
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor J Rice
Councillor M Ruane	Councillor M Savage
Councillor G Stokes	Councillor D Taylor
Councillor J Tinnelly	Councillor J Trainor
Councillor B Walker	

(Officials)

Ms D Carville Director of Corporate Services
Ms P McKeever Democratic Services Officer
Ms C McAteer, Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance: Mr S Richardson, DFI Roads
Mr I Campbell, DFI Roads
Mr S Duffy, DFI Roads

SC/40/2018 APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Craig, Devlin, Harte, Kimmins, Macauley and Sharvin,

SC/41/2018 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chairman welcomed the representatives from DFI Roads to the meeting and invited them to give their presentation.

**SC/42/2018 PRESENTATION FROM DFI ROADS ON
SOUTHERN DIVISION DFI ROADS INTERIM REPORT 2018/2019**

Mr Richardson introduced his two colleagues, Mr Campbell and Mr Duffy he then proceeded to give a verbal presentation on his Interim Report for 2018/2019 for work in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area. **(Interim report attached).**

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

- Mr Richardson confirmed there was no further update in terms of the capital and resource funding from that provided to Members by DFI Roads at the Special Council Meeting held on 29 May 2018.
- Mr Richardson confirmed that routine road maintenance works carried out was currently slightly above last year's budget, however potholes were continuing to be repaired in rural areas.
- Mr Richardson stated that LED street lighting was now being used, resulting in longer life span and reduction in outages.
- Winter season service was underway with gritting of roads already taking place across the district.
- Member stated that more regular maintenance needed for emptying gulleys and tackling weed eradication throughout the area. Lack of gulley maintenance resulted in pipes being blocked, consequently compromising the drainage system and resulting in water running along road surfaces and, in winter time, freezing which was hazardous as currently there were no salt supplies on some rural roads.
- Mr Richardson agreed with Members that a more joined up approach was needed to try and tackle the issues of gulleys and weed eradication and public bodies such as Transport NI, DFI Roads, Housing Executive and Council should come together to deal with these issues collectively.
- Member stated A new EU directive had called for the anti-germinating component in the weed killer used by DFI Roads to be removed, thereby making it less effective and resulting in faster regrowth of weeds.
- Several Members expressed their frustration at the lack of progression of road improvements in their areas and believed the Meeting to be little more than a box ticking exercise, in response, Mr Richardson said whilst he understood their frustrations, he was committed to working with them to try and resolve their issues, however he said he was restricted by budgetary constraints.
- DFI Roads were content to review the current format of raising concerns from Members via the DEA Co-ordinators.

- Works scheduled to be carried out in St George's Street and Burren Road – 4th Street Warrenpoint had been included under the Roads Recovery Fund and would be completed before the end of November 2018.
- The junction at the top of the Creamery Road joining the Newry Road in the Crossmaglen area was a very dangerous one and one that had been raised with DFI Roads several times. Mr Richardson said he was aware of previous requests to have works carried out on this junction, however he said the budget needed to complete this work was in the region of £350 – 400k and the budget for the whole area was just £250k. He continued, saying that whilst it was not on the list of works to be carried out, he was not dismissing it and it could be considered if more funding was made available.
- Downpatrick Master Plan – every single project seemed to be abandoned or scaled down, most recently the proposed one way traffic system for the town. Mr Richardson said there were a number of short and medium term projects planned for Downpatrick including plans for a park and ride site and the possibility of a one way system for Edward Street and the upgrading of all traffic signals around the town.
- DFI Roads were aware of the difficulty with the queuing system in Strangford when drivers were accessing the ferry from Strangford to Portaferry. Mr Richardson said it was difficult to patrol due to the roads lay out in Strangford and whilst traffic management was under the remit of DFI Roads, it was not something that could be patrolled all the times due to lack of resources. Mr Richardson acknowledged this was a difficult situation to resolve.
- The announcement of the City Deal funding was very welcome and Dfi should ensure that a project for an upgrade to the A2 Newcastle to Warrenpoint Road be included.
- The works to the roundabout in Newcastle were progressing and were scheduled to be completed within this financial year.
- There had been no change of policy with regard to Councillors accessing DFI Roads staff via the call centre telephone number.
- Simple inexpensive requests such as new signage and speed related signs still not granted in the Ballyholland area.
- Works carried out on the Tullyah Road, Whitecross two years ago by private contractors had now resulted in a part of the road subsiding, DFI Roads to investigate this and revert back to Council.
- The 20mph speed limit operating on a part time basis at primary schools throughout the district was proving to be very successful and could be considered for Tullyah primary school.

- The estimated road maintenance budget across the 4 Roads Divisions, to maintain the network at a constant level, is estimated to be in the region of £140m per year.
- The total budget for roads maintenance for all four roads divisions in N. Ireland was £75m, of which approximately £28m was allocated to Roads Southern Division.
- Member expressed concern regarding the increased volume of traffic and the absence of a footpath at the Dorans Hill / Watsons Road Newry area, however the widening of the bridge at Dorans Hill and Watsons Road was not included as part of the planning application recently approved for a housing development at this location.
- DFI Roads to investigate issues regarding adopting the Mullaghduff Road, Cullyhanna.
- Mr Richardson to send the Speed Limits Guidance assessment process to Councillor Mulgrew for information.
- Mr Richardson to circulate to Members details of all works carried out or still to be carried out under the Roads Recovery Fund.
- Newry Section office to move from Cecil Street, Newry to Carnbane Industrial Estate in mid-November 2018, all contact details to remain unchanged.

AGREED: It was agreed that Roads Service Officials respond in writing to the issues raised at the earlier DEA clinics as well as the issues raised during the meeting.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.45 pm.

For confirmation at Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to be held on Monday 3 December 2018.

Signed:

Chairperson

Chief Executive