

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Special Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 18 August 2020 at 3.00pm via Skype

In the Chair: Councillor G Sharvin

In Attendance:

Councillor P Brown	Councillor P Byrne
Councillor S Doran	Councillor C Enright
Councillor H Gallagher	Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor R Howell	Councillor O Magennis
Councillor H McKee	Councillor D Murphy
Councillor B Ó Muirí	Councillor W Walker

Also in attendance:

Councillor T Andrews	Councillor W Clarke
Councillor A Finnegan	Councillor H Reilly
Councillor J Tinnelly	

Officials in Attendance:

Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
Mr R Moore, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Mr C Mallon, Director or Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services
(Administration)
Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy
Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates & Capital Projects
Mr E Devlin, Assistant Director Health & Wellbeing
Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director Tourism, Culture & Events
Mr A Grimshaw, Project Director
Mr F O'Connor, Legal Advisor
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)
Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/104/2020: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillor Savage & Lewis.

SPR/105/2020: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A declaration of interest was given on behalf of those Members on the Committee who currently hold an SRA for Item 5 – SRA Allowances.

CORPORATE SERVICES

SPR/106/2020 REVISION OF EFFICIENCY WORKING GROUP

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Revision of Efficiency Working Group (**Copy circulated**)

Councillor Ó Muirí queried if the membership, based on party strength, was still reflective with Sinn Féin and SDLP having 2 members each, despite Sinn Féin being the larger party.

Mrs Carville responded stating the working group was not decision-making and would be open to other members, particularly during the rates setting process. However a core membership was required to commit to attend in order for discussions to take place throughout the year.

In response to a query from Councillor Brown regarding the Strategic Projects Working Group (SPWG), Mrs Carville stated that SPR Committee had previously stood down the SPWG and instead had created individual project boards that were attached to key strategic projects such as the Newry City Centre Regeneration Project Board.

The Chairperson requested that all nominees for the working group be forwarded to Democratic Services.

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

- 1. The EWG be reconstituted and renamed as the Strategic Finance Working Group (SFWG), with the Terms of Reference for the Group to be determined by the SFWG and agreed by SP&R Committee.**
- 2. Membership of the group be agreed as 2 Sinn Fein, 2 SDLP, 1 UUP, 1 DUP and 1 Alliance/ Independent, with the Chair agreed annually from within the membership.**
- 3. The Neighbourhood Services Transformation Group be stood down, with the SFWG taking on the role performed by this group.**

Agreed: **It was agreed that nominees for the Strategic Finance Working Group be submitted to Democratic Services as soon as possible.**

CORPORATE PLANNING & POLICY

SPR/107/2020 **DRAFT DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2020-2023 & DRAFT EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2020-2023**

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy regarding, Draft Disability Action Plan 2020-2023 & Draft Equality Action Plan 2020-2023 (**Copy circulated**)

Councillor Byrne stated that although Diversity Champions was mentioned within the reports, there has not been any update provided to those Members that were put forward as same and requested that an update be brought back to the Committee.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that Members approve the draft Disability Action Plan 2020-2023 & draft Equality Action Plan 2020-2023.**

Agreed: **It was agreed that officers would bring an update to Committee regarding Diversity Champions.**

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

SPR/107/2020: **SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES**

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting) regarding, SRA Responsibility Allowances **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Brown stated he had previously requested that the Chief Executive table his request to maintain an Alliance/Independent presence at the Party Representatives Meeting as this worked very well during the period of delegated authority, and as no decision had been made as yet, he proposed to hold off making a decision on the SRA. This was seconded by Councillor Enright.

Mrs Carville confirmed the Chief Executive did table Councillor Brown's comments at the Party Representative's forum and that there is no new decision to taken with regard the membership of the Forum.

Councillor Byrne stated that the Terms of Reference of the Party Representative's Forum were very clear on how to form a group. During the period of delegated authority, Councillor Brown was involved in those meetings, and some Independent Councillors felt they were not being updated by Councillor Brown following those meetings.

Councillor Enright confirmed that himself, Councillor Tinnelly and the 2 Alliance Councillors wished to form a group with the way open being left should the remaining Independent Councillors wish to join.

Councillor Byrne asked for a point of information with regard to Members being asked to vote on something in which they have declared an interest.

Mrs Carville clarified that Councillors were being asked to delay consideration on the paper and would suggest they could vote on the matter.

The Chairperson put Councillor Browns proposal to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR:	2
AGAINST:	8
ABSTENTIONS:	0

The proposal was LOST.

Councillor Ó Muirí proposed that Members proceed with the officer's recommendation. This was seconded by Councillor Doran.

The Chairperson put Councillor Ó Muirí's proposal to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR:	8
AGAINST:	2
ABSTENTIONS:	0

The proposal was CARRIED.

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Doran, that Members agree the outstanding SRA be allocated among those other positions which receive SRA payments and that this is backdated to 1 June 2020.

POLICIES

SPR/108/2020: CONDITIONS OF HIRE POLICY

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director Tourism, Culture & Events regarding, Conditions of Hire Policy
(Copy circulated)

Mr Patterson advised there had been a number of legacy Council policies for different service areas of the Council on the hire of venues and the purpose of the policy was to provide clarity to Council officers, Elected Members and external groups and individuals on the applicable legislative, safeguarding and health and safety requirements that must be adhered to in hiring Council facilities/venues.

The following queries were raised by Members:

- Was there anything Council could do to help out smaller groups that would not have the level of insurance required to hire Council facilities.
- What about individuals and families using centres for birthday parties and family events would they not be adequately insured?
- £10 million of insurance cover was too difficult to obtain, the Department of Education currently required £3 million.

Mr Patterson responded to the queries as follows:

- Council needed to identify groups to ensure they had the appropriate cover in place for high and low risk activities. Work would be undertaken by Assistant Directors regarding the type of facility in order to set the appropriate pricing schedule depending on use.
- The hiring of a Council facility for a birthday party would fall under Council insurance, however if an inflatable being used there was a separate policy and procedure in place.
- The sum of £10 million was the sum required in terms of Public Liability insurance.

Mrs Carville confirmed the advice from Council's Insurers was to have that level of insurance from the user groups. The impact of that is we would have to increase the premiums significantly and any risk from those groups would become a risk borne by Council. She also confirmed that £10 million is the level required and stated for the record in response to comments made by Cllr Enright that officials were not making up figures and these were the figures as advised from the insurers.

Mr Lipsett clarified there were different insurance requirements depending upon which building was used i.e:

- Anywhere that council staff were present and it was a Council-owned facility.
- Where you bring something else in or hired something Council cannot cover, you need your own insurance.
- Those centres that were not run by Council staff i.e. those being run by community associations needed their own insurance and the level of cover advised was £10 million.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, to approve the new Conditions of Hire Policy for implementation across all Council Facilities as relevant.**

FOR NOTING

SPR/109/2020: MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING ON 5 MAY 2020 & 21 MAY 2020

Read: Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting on 5 May 2020 & 21 May 2020 (copy circulated).

Agreed: The Minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting on 5 May 2020 & 21 May 2020 were duly noted.

SPR/110/2020 COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 (APRIL – JUNE 2020)

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy regarding, Communications and Marketing activities in response to COVID-19 (April – June 2020) **(Copy circulated)**

The Chairperson acknowledged the great work the Communication and Marketing team completed over the COVID-19 period, stating it was great to see over 770,000 people being reached from our 20 Digital campaigns, 234 facebook posts and 194 tweets.

Agreed: It was agreed to note the content of the report.

SPR/111/2020 STATUTORY REPORTING – SECTION 75 POLICY SCREENING REPORT – QUARTERLY REPORT FOR PERIOD APRIL – JUNE 2020

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy regarding, Statutory Reporting – Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period April – June 2020 **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: It was agreed to note the content of the report.

SPR/112/2020 NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: A CORPORATE GUIDE TO POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy regarding, Newry Mourne and Down District Council Policy Development Framework: A Corporate guide to Policy Development **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: It was agreed to note the content 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 Brown, seconded by Councillor Walker, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the next matters 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.

SPR/113/2020 PROPOSED LEASE OF LANDS AT KILBRONEY, ROSTREVOR

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal & Administration (Acting) regarding, proposed lease of lands at Kilbroney, Rostrevor **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor McKee, that Elected Members agree to accede to the Centre's request and agree to Lease the lands for 20 years at a peppercorn rent, subject to the Centre discharging Council's valuation and legal fees and also subject to updated Departmental consent.**

SPR/114/2020 REQUEST TO SURRENDER LEASE IN RESPECT OF UNITS 1 & 8 MCGRATH HOUSE, MARGARET STREET, NEWRY

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal & Administration (Acting) regarding, Request to surrender lease in respect of Units 1 & 8 McGrath House, Margaret Street, Newry **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that Elected Members agree to accede to Mr McAteer's request and agree to surrender the Lease without penalty, subject to Mr McAteer paying all rent (save for April and May) until the date of the surrender and reinstating the Premises in accordance with the terms of the lease.**

SPR/115/2020: RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NI PROTOCOL FOR EU EXIT

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mr E Devlin, Assistant Director Health & Wellbeing regarding, Resources required for implementation of NI Protocol for EU exit **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Brown, that Elected Members agree to approve the following recommendations:**

- 3.5 FTE EHOs are recruited as detailed in the officers report
- Once further work is completed on establishing shift patterns and cover required, further EHO and supervisory roles may be recruited to meet the demands of the new service.
- A new temporary Senior/Lead EHO post is created from within existing staff to allow this work and that relating to Export controls and Approved premises to be managed
- To ensure adequate cover is available, all EHOs should be offered the opportunity to volunteer, through an Expression of Interest, to work shifts at the BCP, on completion of the required training programme.

SPR/116/2020 ST PATRICK'S DAY EVENT COSTS

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director Tourism, Culture & Events regarding, St Patrick's Day Event Costs (**Copy circulated**)

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that Council pays invoices to specified suppliers totalling £58,300 in relation to outstanding payments for St Patrick's Day 2020 Event costs and a claim is submitted to the Executive Office in relation to eligible costs.

SPR/117/2020 REOPENING MUSEUMS

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director Tourism, Culture & Events regarding, Reopening Museums (**Copy circulated**)

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that the Council's two museums remain closed and an assessment is undertaken again in September 2020 to consider reopening the museums.

SPR/118/2020 MOURNES GATEWAY PROJECT – BELFAST REGION CITY DEAL OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director Tourism, Culture & Events regarding, Mournes Gateway Project – Belfast Region City Deal Outline Business Case (**Copy circulated**)

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Doran, that members agree to progress the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Mournes Gateway Project for submission to the next stage of consideration in the Belfast Region City Deal Programme.

SPR/119/2020 TENDOR FOR THE COUNCIL'S STATUTORY ADVERTISING

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy, regarding Tender for the Council's Statutory Advertising (**Copy circulated**)

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Byrne, that members agree to proceed with Option 2 as detailed in the Business Case, namely to issue a tender for Council's statutory advertising.

FOR NOTING

SPR/120/2020 NEWRY LEISURE CENTRE - HITT CAFÉ LICENSE AGREEMENT

Read: Report dated 18 August 2020 from Mr M Lipsett Director of Active & Healthy Communities regarding, Newry Leisure Centre – HITT Café License Agreement (**Copy circulated**)

Councillor Clarke asked if there was any progress on Vending Machines in centres, Mr Lipsett replied there was limited progress due to the COVID-19 situation and would bring an updated report to the Active and Healthy Committee meeting.

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

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

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 5.19pm.

Signed: **Councillor Gareth Sharvin**
Chairperson

Signed: **Dorinnia Carville**
Director of Corporate Services