

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on
Thursday 17 December 2020 at 6.00pm via Microsoft Teams & Downshire Civic Centre
(Hybrid)**

In the Chair: Councillor G Sharvin

In Attendance: Councillor P Brown Councillor P Byrne
Councillor H Gallagher Councillor O Hanlon
Councillor R Howell Councillor A Lewis
Councillor H McKee Councillor O Magennis
Councillor D Murphy Councillor B Ó Muirí
Councillor M Savage

Also in attendance: Councillor T Andrews Councillor G Stokes

Officials in Attendance: Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism
Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporates Services, HR & Safeguarding
Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy
Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration)
Mr P Tamati, Assistant Director Leisure and Sport
Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director Estates & Project Management
Mr F O'Connor, Legal Advisor
Mrs J McMurray, Legal Advisor
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager
Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/186/2020: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillors Enright and Walker.

SPR/187/2020: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Andrews declared an interest in item 10 – Carlingford Lough Greenway.

SPR/188/2020: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2020 & SPECIAL STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2020

Read: Action Sheets of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 12 November 2020 & Special Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 1 December 2020. **(Copy circulated)**

SPR/160/2020 – Request to use Monaghan Row
SPR/169/2020 – Request from PHA for National Testing Partnership Venue in Newry
(Walk-in test facility)

Councillor Lewis asked for an update in relation to the above requests. Mr Quinn confirmed that the Southern Trust had not had time to consider the use of Monaghan Row as their focus was on Craigavon at this stage but had indicated they would consider it in time.

In response to a query from Councillor Byrne, Mr Quinn confirmed a timeframe could not be given at this stage by the Trust due to the current pressures they were under however he would continue to liaise with the team and would continue to update Members.

Mr Quinn further advised that Council would continue to work with the PHA, should they need to use other sites, but at present they only required a testing site in Newry.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed that the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held on 12 November 2020 & Special Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee held on 1 December 2020, be approved.**

ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Gallagher, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the next matter 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/189/2020: VERBAL UPDATE TO MEMBERS REGARDING TRADE UNION DISPUTE, NI EXECUTIVE'S RESTRICTIONS ANNOUNCEMENT & COUNCIL FINANCES

The Chief Executive and Mrs Carville updated Members on recent conciliatory meetings that had taken place involving the Labour Relations Agency and Trade Unions.

The Chief Executive advised Council's Emergency Planning Group were meeting on Friday 18 December and Members would be advised what actions were taken to comply with the new regulations announced this evening. She stated that meetings would continue virtually.

Mrs Carville provided a verbal update to Members on Council Finances as requested at the recent Strategic Finance Working Group.

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

Noted: The Chairperson advised that, while in closed session, Council officers provided an update to Members on the Council Finances, Trade Union disputes and the Executives' restrictions announcement.

CORPORATE PLANNING AND POLICY

SPR/190/2020: **NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN CORPORATE PLAN 2021 - 2023**

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning and Policy regarding, Newry Mourne and Down Corporate Plan 2021 - 2023 **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Mackin provided an update to Members regarding the Corporate Plan 2021-2023. She advised the Plan had been tabled at the March 2020 Strategy Policy and Resources Committee meeting but was not adopted due to the pandemic restrictions. In view of the ongoing pandemic, it had been agreed to seek the opinions of residents, both on the Corporate Plan as well as the new emerging priorities in a post Covid-19 environment; the results of which had been presented to Members at a recent workshop. She recommended that the Council approve the draft Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2021-2023 now tabled.

Councillor Magennis asked whether the community centre provision for Warrenpoint and Camlough outlined in Key Actions of the document could be fast tracked due to the level of mental health issues arising following the pandemic.

The Chairperson queried the progress of Downpatrick Regeneration and asked if anything further could be added, as at present, the wording was quite generic, therefore people may not understand what regeneration meant.

Mrs Mackin responded to the Members' queries, stating the Corporate Plan was a strategic document that highlighted the high-level objectives and actions that, as an organisation, the Council wanted to deliver on. She stated the details would be cascaded to the strategies that support the delivery of the plan and the detail of individual projects would be within those plans.

Mrs Carville noted Councillors Magennis's concerns and highlighted that the timing of any capital build would be considered through the Strategic Finance Working Group, as part of the rates process and any project boards that would then be established.

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Councillor Magennis, that Members approve the draft Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan 2021-2023.**

FOR NOTING

SPR/191/2020: **ACTION SHEET FOR ALBERT BASIN TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP MEETING – 19 NOVEMBER 2020**

Read: Action sheet for Albert Basin Task and Finish Working Group meeting – 19 November 2020. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Savage expressed his thanks to all the organisations, including Newry 2020, that had been involved in the process and who had played a full and positive role in the Albert Basin project thus far. He asked that connectivity was maintained going forward through the stakeholder forum and asked that more information be presented in future as to

how the stakeholder forum would link in with the project board to ensure the retention of community involvement and insight in the delivery of the Albert Basin Park project.

Agreed: It was agreed to note the contents of the Action Sheet.

SPR/192/2020: PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Performance and Improvement Update **(Copy circulated)**

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

SPR/193/2020: MINUTES OF NEWRY CCR PB MEETING – 12.11.2020 & 10.12.2020

Read: Minutes of Newry CCR PB Meeting – 12.11.2020 & 10.12.2020

In response to a query from Councillor Byrne, Mr Mallon advised that the most recent meeting minutes were ratified via email through the Project Board Members therefore they were tabled at the meeting this evening, and this would be the process going forward to ensure timely ratification of the actions.

Agreed: It was agreed to note the contents of the minutes.

ITEMS RESTRICTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 6 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (NI) 2014

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on the next matter 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/194/2020: PLANNING ADVISORY CONSULTANT

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism, regarding Planning Advisory Consultant. **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, that Members consider the report, and approve the extension of the Planning Advisory Consultant commission for a further 12 weeks at the cost indicated in the officer's report with a 3 month period review.

SPR/195/2020: COVID-19 – IMPACT ON LEISURE SERVICES UPDATE

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mr M Lipsett, Director of Active and Healthy Communities, regarding Covid-19 – Impact on Leisure Services Update. **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Gallagher, seconded by Councillor Byrne, that Elected Members note the additional financial impact of Covid-19 on indoor leisure income, noting that membership discounts and extensions had been applied due to the pandemic. And consider and agree to approve officers to continue to make appropriate adjustments to these memberships based on COVID-19 restrictions for the remainder of the financial year.**

Councillor Andrews left the meeting for the next item – 7.21pm.

SPR/196/2020: CARLINGFORD LOUGH GREENWAY

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding Carlingford Lough Greenway **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed that Council now proceed to take the necessary legal action, including potentially vesting the property to secure the required land title to allow the Carlingford Lough Greenway project to proceed.**

Councillor Andrews re-joined the meeting at this stage – 7.24pm.

SPR/197/2020: CONACRE AGREEMENTS

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding Conacre agreements. **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor McKee that Elected Members approve the issue of an Expression of Interest in respect of**

the lands listed in the officer's report which will include a minimum conacre licence fee as provided by the Council's Valuer. The Expression of Interest to be advertised once in a local paper available in the vicinity of the lands listed in the report. That Elected Members agree to Council entering into a Licence Agreement with the highest bidder for a period of three years in respect of each of the lands listed.

SPR/198/2020: HEALTH CASH PLAN

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director of Corporate Services (HR & Safeguarding), regarding Health Cash Plan. **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed that Members support the continuation of the Employee Health Cash Plan through the alternative provider identified at 2.1.2; for the reasons outlined within 2.1-2.3 of the report.

SPR/199/2020: PHA REPORT

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates and Project Management, regarding request from PHA for National Testing Partnership Venue in Newry (walk-in testing facility). **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Gallagher It was agreed that Members consider & agree the following recommendations:

- That Members give approval for a further report be brought to SP&R Committee prior to the end of the initial 3 months, to gauge if the testing facility is to remain in place for the remaining 3 months of the lease period (or potentially longer) and how this would impact on future council events at Albert Basin.
- That Members give approval for a peppercorn rent to be received from PHA for this lease and that associated approval be sought from the Department for this sub-value disposal.
- That Members give approval for the lease to agreed and signed in advance of the following:
 - Departmental approval being received for this sub-value disposal;
 - and full Council approval of the SP&R minutes.

SPR/200/2020: SURPLUS ASSET UPDATE

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates and Project Management, regarding Surplus Asset Update. **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Savage that Elected Members note the content of the report and agree the following:**

- 3.2 - Play Area at Bleary Bungalows, Chancellors Road, Newry. Members approved to accept the offer listed as option 3 of the officer's report, with continued discussions with potential purchasers.**
- 3.3 - Daisy Hill Nursery, Carnagat Section, Daisy Hill, Newry. Members approved to proceed with Option 4 within this report and further proceed with Option 3, if necessary.**
- 3.4 - Land for No.13 and No.15 The Square, Ballynahinch, BT24 8AE (Steel Structure). Members approved for this site to remain on the open market in order to determine the level of interest from potential purchasers.**
- 3.5 - Members approval for the next stages of the conveyancing process listed in 3.2 and 3.3 to proceed immediately.**

SPR/201/2020 MULTI-COUNCIL TENDER PROVISION OF INSURANCE SERVICES FOR THE EASTERN SUB REGION – APPROVAL

Read: Report dated 17 December 2020 from Mr C Quinn, Assistant Director of Estates and Project Management, regarding Multi – Council Tender provision of Insurance services for the Eastern Sub Region – Approval. **(Copy circulated)**

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

Agreed: **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Magennis It was agreed that Elected Members approve the appointment of Willis Tower Watson as per the 'Multi-Council Tender – Provision of Insurance Services for the Eastern Sub Region Exercise' for a 4 year term, with the contract to be reviewed prior to any extension following the initial 2-year period.**

FOR NOTING

SPR/202/2020 STRATEGIC FINANCE WORKING GROUP ACTION SHEET – 14 DECEMBER 2020

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

Noted: It was agreed to note the contents of the Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet – 14 December 2020.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 8.08pm.

Signed: Councillor Gareth Sharvin
Chairperson

Signed: Dorinnia Carville
Director of Corporate Services