

At the Council meeting held on 6 October 2025, the following amendment was agreed by Members:

SPR/145/2025: It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Lewis, to defer the item to allow additional information to be provided and for an independent auditor to speak to Members regarding the policy

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 11 September 2025 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Downshire Civic Centre

In the Chair: Councillor O Hanlon

In Attendance in Chamber:

Councillor P Byrne	Councillor C Enright
Councillor M Hearty	Councillor R Howell
Councillor A King	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor A Mathers	Councillor S O'Hare
Councillor H Reilly	Councillor M Rice
Councillor D Taylor	

Committee Members in Attendance via Teams:

Councillor T Howie	Councillor D McAteer
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Non-Committee Members

In Attendance via teams: Councillor C Bowsie

Officials in Attendance in Chamber:

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive
Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism
Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities
Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital, Estates & Procurement
Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
Ms C McClean, Assistant Director of People & Legal
Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability
Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment
Mrs F Branagh, Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Smyth, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/141/2025:

APOLOGIES & CHAIRPERSONS REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillor C King and Mrs Kelly, Director of Corporate Services and Mrs Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Environment.

Councillor Hanlon welcomed Councillor A King to the chamber.

SPR/142/2025:

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SPR/143/2025:

**ACTION SHEET OF STRATEGY, POLICY & RESOURCES
MEETING HELD ON 12 JUNE 2025**

Read:

Action Sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting held 14 August 2025. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed to approve the action sheet of Strategy, Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 14 August 2025.

FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

SPR/144/2025:

PROCUREMENT POLICY

Read:

Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Procurement Policy, presented by Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director of Capital, Estates & Procurement, regarding Procurement Policy. **(Copy circulated)**

Mr Boyd provided an overview of the updated Procurement Policy, noting that the Policy had been revised following the introduction of the Procurement Act, which came into effect in Northern Ireland in February 2025. He confirmed that the updated Policy also reflected the recent changes to the Northern Ireland Procurement Policy, as outlined within the report.

Councillor Hearty referred to Mr Boyd's reference to the Procurement Act of 2025 and noted that the report cited the Procurement Act of 2023 and queried whether this was an error.

Mr Boyd clarified that the Procurement Act had been passed by Parliament in 2023 and was originally due to come into effect in Northern Ireland in October 2024. However, due to delays, the Act did not come into effect in Northern Ireland until February 2025.

Councillor Hearty further noted that The Executive had published an updated Procurement Policy Statement in June 2025, which included expanded guidance on ethical procurement and queried whether these updates had been reflected in the Council's Procurement Policy.

Mr Boyd confirmed that the Procurement Policy was a live document and would be amended on an ongoing basis to remain in line with legislative and policy developments, and any such amendments would be brought before Members for confirmation as required.

Councillor Reilly queried the extent of premarket engagement currently in place and asked whether there was a greater emphasis on transparency within the procurement process.

Mr Boyd advised that, in accordance with Procurement Business Plans, the Council was required to undertake premarket engagement activities, including "meet the buyer" events. He further confirmed that for contracts above the procurement threshold, there was a prerequisite to engage with the market prior to the commencement of the procurement process, to ensure appropriate market feedback was obtained. Mr Boyd added that, in line with current legislation, all changes to contracts must be publicly notified, which contributed to enhanced transparency.

AGREED:

On the proposal of Councillor Hearty, seconded by Councillor Reilly, the following was agreed:

- To approve the updated Procurement Policy.
- To approve the revised Procurement Limits as detailed in the Policy.
- To note that the Council approval limits for expenditure have not changed and remain at £30,000.
- Note the legislative updates contained within 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 Rice, seconded by Councillor Howell, 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).

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

The Chairperson advised the following had been agreed whilst in closed session:

SPR/145/2025: RESERVES POLICY

Read: Report from Mrs J Kelly, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Reserves Policy, presented by Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of People Finance & Performance, regarding Reserves Policy. **(Copy circulated)**

As there was dissent in the Chamber, the item was put to a show of hands vote, with the results as follows:

FOR	11
AGAINST	3
ABSTENTIONS	0

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to approve the Reserves Policy.

SPR/146/2025: RENEWAL OF NORTHERN IRELAND MAPPING AGREEMENT

Read: Report from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director of Community Development, presented by Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Renewal of NI Mapping Agreement. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor O'Hare, it was agreed to approve the STA as outlined within the Officer's Report.**

SPR/147/2025: AHC CAPITAL PROJECTS DELIVERY

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding AHC Capital Projects Delivery. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to proceed to RIBA Stage 4 for Newry City Park and to commence procurement of the Integrated Supply Team to progress the project delivery, subject to planning permission.**

SPR/148/2025: FUNDED PROGRAMME (WALKING FOR ALL)

Read: Report from Mr A Patterson, Director of Active & Healthy Communities, regarding Funded Programme (Walking for All) **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to approve Council's participation in the funded programme, and for the recruitment of the Programme Officer for Walking for All as outlined within the Officer's Report.**

SPR/149/2025: BUSINESS CASE FOR MIXED DRY RECYCLABLES CONTRACT

Read: Report from Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Business Case for Mixed Dry Recyclables Contract. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve the business case for the mixed dry recyclables and to proceed to procurement as detailed in the Officer's Report.**

SPR/150/2025: CASTLEWELLAN FOREST PARK RESOURCING

- Read:** Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Castlewellan Forest Park Resourcing. **(Copy circulated)**
- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Lewis, it was agreed to approve the additional grounds maintenance staffing resources for Castlewellan Forest Park as outlined in section 2.1 of the Officer's Report.
- SPR/151/2025:** **INSURANCE COSTS UPDATE**
- Read:** Report from Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Insurance Costs Update. **(Copy circulated)**
- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor O'Hare, seconded by Councillor Taylor, it was agreed to approve the additional expenditure required for the insurance premiums for 2025/26.
- SPR/152/2025:** **BUSINESS CASE FOR QUOILE CAR PARK RESURFACING**
- Read:** Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Business Case for Quoile Car Park Resurfacing. **(Copy circulated)**
- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Hanlon, seconded by Councillor A King, it was agreed to approve the Capital Business Case as detailed at Appendix 1 of the Officer's Report.
- SPR/153/2025:** **BUSINESS CASE FOR HEIGHT RESTRICTING BARRIER AT CASTLE PARK**
- Read:** Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Business Case for Height Restricting Barrier at Castle Park. **(Copy circulated)**
- AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to approve the Capital Business Case as detailed at Appendix 1 of the Officer's Report.
- SPR/154/2025:** **CONCESSION AGREEMENT EV CHARGE POINTS**
- Read:** Report from Mr C Sage, Assistant Director of Sustainability, regarding Concession Agreement EV Charge Points. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor McAteer, it was agreed to sign The Concession Agreement and ancillary Licences between the Council and the Company noted in the report, to facilitate the installation of EV Charge Points and satisfy the funding requirements.

SPR/155/2025: **REQUEST TO PURCHASE STRIP OF LAND ADJACENT TO NEWRY CANAL**

Read: Report from Mrs C McClean, Assistant Director of People & Legal, regarding Request to Purchase Strip of Land Adjacent to Newry Canal. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Mathers, seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to defer the paper for further consideration at the next SPR Meeting.

Cllr Enright left the meeting – 7.10pm

SPR/156/2025: **LEASE FOR CAFÉ AND MINIATURE RAILWAY AT DELAMONT COUNTRY PARK**

Read: Report from Mrs C McClean, Assistant Director of People & Legal, regarding Lease for Café & Miniature Railway at Delamont Country Park. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Howie, seconded by Councillor Hanlon, it was agreed to renew the lease for a term of three years, subject to market value rent and the café reopening and offering hot and cold food options.

SPR/157/2025: **DBEC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PARTNER**

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding DBEC Communications & Engagement Partner. **(Copy circulated)**

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Rice, it was agreed to approve the appointment of the preferred bidder as the DBEC Communications and Engagement Partner as per the recommendations outlined within the Officer's Report.

SPR/158/2025: **PEACEPLUS STAFF RECRUITMENT FOR CMAP**

Read: Report from Mr C Mallon, Director of Economy, Regeneration & Tourism, regarding PeacePlus Staff Recruitment for CMAP.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to approve, under the ERT Department, AONB and GeoPark structure, the creation of an additional post and associated recruitment of one full time equivalent staff resource to deliver the CMAP project actions.

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

SPR/159/2025: **MINUTES OF NCCR PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING OF 31 JULY 2025**

Read: Minutes of NCCR Programme Board Meeting of 31 July 2025.
(Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the minutes.

SPR/160/2025: **WASTE MANAGEMENT RESOURCES**

Read: Report from Ms S Trainor, Assistant Director of Environment, regarding Waste Management Resources. (Copy circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Mathers, it was agreed to note the contents of the Officer's Report.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 7.21pm

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 6 October 2025.

Signed: **Councillor Oonagh Hanlon**
Chairperson

Signed: **Josephine Kelly**
Director of Corporate Services