

**NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on  
Thursday 11 November 2021 at 6.00pm via Microsoft Teams (Hybrid)**

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**In the Chair:** Councillor O Hanlon (Chamber)

**In Attendance in Chamber:** Councillor P Byrne  
Councillor R Howell  
Councillor O Magennis  
Councillor B Ó Muirí  
Councillor G Sharvin  
Councillor D Taylor  
Councillor W Walker

**In Attendance via Teams:** Councillor P Brown  
Councillor D Murphy  
Councillor M Savage  
Councillor J Tinnelly

**Also in attendance:** Councillor T Andrews

**Officials in Attendance  
In Chamber:**

Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services  
Mr C Mallon, Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism  
Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director, Estates & Capital Projects  
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
Mrs L Cummins, Democratic Services Officer

**Officials in Attendance  
Via Teams:**

Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director, Corporate Services  
Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting)  
Mrs L Fitzsimmons, HR Manager  
Ms V Keegan, Head of Communications & Marketing  
Mr A Grimshaw, Project Director NCCR  
Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director Tourism, Culture & Events  
Mrs C Hanvey, Personal Assistant

**Also in Attendance:  
Via Teams:**

Mrs N Largey, Legal Advisor, Belfast City Council

**SPR/174/2021: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Doran, Gallagher and Mr Lipsett Director of Active and Healthy Communities.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that Mrs Largey a representative from Belfast Legal Services was in attendance.

**SPR/175/2021:            DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mrs Carville declared an interest in item 12 – Planning for the Future, on behalf of all officers.

**SPR/176/2021:            ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THURSDAY 14 OCTOBER 2021**

**Read:**                    Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 14 October 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

***SPR/019/2021 - Covid Walk Through Facility***

Mrs Carville advised Members that this had been on the action sheet for some time and that updates would continue to be provided periodically and proposed it be removed from the action sheet.

**Agreed:**                    **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Magennis that the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 14 October 2021, be approved.**

**CORPORATE SERVICES**

**SPR/177/2021:            LOCAL DEMOCRACY WEEK 2021**

**Read:**                    Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mrs D Carville Director of Corporate Services, regarding Local Democracy Week 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

Mrs Carville advised Members that as part of Local Democracy week, the Women's Working Group had held two very successful 'Dragon's Den' style events in Newry Town Hall and Downshire Civic Centre involving six local schools, with a theme of protecting the environment.

Councillor Ó Muirí congratulated the Women's Working Group for organising an excellent event highlighting it was the perfect example of how Democracy week should be rolled out by encouraging students and schools to get involved in debating motions and it would be great if this could be made into some sort of annual event.

The Chairperson concurred with Councillor Ó Muirí's comments highlighting it was a good news story and that she was lucky enough to be one of the dragon's and the standard of the students was really impressive.

**Agreed:**                    **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Howell to approve the following recommendations:**

- **Down High School, as winners of the 'Dragon's Den' event for Local Democracy Week 2021 be invited to attend the Council Meeting on 6th December 2021 in order to present their motion to full Council.**
- **A selection of the other motions presented by the schools to be amalgamated into an all-**

**encompassing motion at the next Women's Working Group Meeting in December, which would then be presented to Council in January 2022. A Teams link to view the meeting would then be provided to the schools that participated in the event.**

**SPR/178/2021: MID YEAR ASSESSMENT - PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2021- 22**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mrs D Carville Director of Corporate Services, regarding Mid Year Assessment – Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Sharvin asked was there a reason why Delamont Park was not included in the measures of success under objective one and was there a list of the eight community trails.

Mr Mallon confirmed he would address in the next review with regards Delamont and include the figures of receipts at the gate, visitor counters and observations.

Mrs Carville confirmed she would revert back to Councillor Sharvin with details of the eight community trails.

Councillor Byrne stated there should be some sort of threshold with regards tracking visitor numbers into parks across the district as this had a knock on effect on how parks were funded and what the jewels in the crown were.

Councillor Byrne also highlighted that Council should be holding themselves to account in the fact that they were one of the top performers in recycling and setting themselves targets and performance thresholds rather than always reverting to the NI average in order to try and reverse this further for the next quarter. He stated there was poor uptake with regards to online training and digital growth and queried if this was something that could be progressed through the DEA's. In noting that 30% of applicants failed between stage 1 and stage 2, Councillor Byrne queried if they had been directed to the online training to ensure their application is improved for future funding calls?

The Chief Executive confirmed there was work ongoing to hold more sessions across all DEAs in relation to financial assistance and access to funding across the board and a programme of work would hopefully be rolled out early in the new year, with increased signposting to the online training.

Councillor Murphy asked if it was the same pool of people who dealt with planning applications and enforcement orders?

Mr Mallon confirmed there were two separate teams, a development management team who dealt with the applications and the enforcement team deal with enforcement matters.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Sharvin to approve the Mid Year Assessment of the Performance Improvement Plan 2021-22.**

**SPR/179/2021: MID YEAR ASSESSMENTS OF DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLANS 2021-22**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mrs D Carville Director of Corporate Services, regarding Mid Year Assessment of Directorate Business Plans 2021-22. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Savage praised the Chief Executive and staff on the excellent job of bringing together key stakeholders to work collaboratively in the Housing Needs Conference. He stated as a result of this collaboration, there were opportunities to progress potential pilot schemes to help deliver social and affordable housing in the district.

The Chairperson concurred with Councillor Savage's comments stating the key message coming out of the conference was very much collaboration and all departments had a roll to play in tackling the housing needs issue.

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Magennis, to approve the Mid Year Assessment of the Chief Executive's Department Business Plan 2021-22 and to approve the Mid Year Assessment of the Corporate Services Directorate Business Plan 2021-22

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Savage 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/180/2021: AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding Amendment of Standing Orders **(Copy circulated)**

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

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

- To agree to the deletion of Standing Order 21.1(2)(a);
- To agree to the deletion of Standing Order 21.1(2)(b) and its replacement with the following:

“... a decision in respect of which any delay in implementation would result in a breach of a contractual or statutory duty or would be prejudicial to any emergency response. ‘Emergency’ shall be

construed as a threat of serious damage to human welfare and/or the environment.”

In line with standing orders this matter stands adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of Council.

**SPR/181/2021: GRANT OF LICENCE FOR WORKS AT CANAL BANK NEWRY**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting) regarding, grant of licence for works at Canal Bank Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed that Elected Members agreed to approve in principle the grant of a licence to carry-out works at the canal towpath and to widen a right of way in favour of a neighbouring landowner for improved access into their lands. The licence will be subject to approval of final plans and all necessary statutory consents, and to the payment by the landowner of any ancillary legal and valuation costs.

**SPR/182/2021: LICENCE OF STRIP OF LAND AT COUNCIL CAR-PARK, IRISH STREET DOWNPATRICK**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting) regarding licence strip of land at council car-park Irish Street, Downpatrick. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed that Elected Members approve to grant a short-term licence agreement to the charitable group for the use of the strip of waste ground within the car-park at Irish Street, Downpatrick as a community garden for a nominal fee, subject to the approval by Department for Communities of the disposal at less than best value.

**SPR/183/2021: LEASE OF MINOR HALL WARRENPOINT TOWN HALL TO PUZZLES PLAYGROUP**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mr A Patterson, Assistant Director of Tourism, Culture & Events, regarding lease of Minor Hall, Warrenpoint Town Hall to Puzzles Playgroup **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed that Elected Members approve to formalise the occupation of the Minor Hall at Warrenpoint Town Hall to Puzzles Playgroup with a 5-year licence agreement inclusive of utilities at a Rent to be kept at the current amount: this is subject to legal advice and agreement at Council, with an update to be provided at full Council.

Councillor Brown left the meeting during discussions of the above item – 18.54pm

**SPR/184/2021: THEATRE/CONFERENCE – RIBA STAGE 2 REPORT**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism, regarding theatre/conference – RIBA stage 2 report. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Ó Muirí, it was agreed that Elected Members note the contents of the report and approve the following recommendations:

- Council accepts the Stage 2 report for the theatre/ conference project and Council progresses to RIBA Stage 3 - Spatial Coordination;
- Council proceeds with the procurement for an Integrated Supply Team (IST);
- The Pre-Application Notice (PAN) is concluded and Council proceeds with the submission of the full planning application.

Mr Boyd, Mrs Fitzsimons, Mrs Keegan, Mr Grimshaw, Mr O'Connor, Mr Patterson and Mrs Robb left the meeting at this point 19.00pm.

**SPR/185/2021: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive, regarding planning for the future. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed that Elected Members

approve the revised Tier 3 structure highlighted in yellow at Appendix 3 of the officer's report.

**SPR/186/2021: CASTLEWELLAN FOREST PARK**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mr J McGilly, Assistant Director Enterprise, Employment & Regeneration, regarding Castlewellan Forest Park. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed that Elected Members approve the following recommendations:

- To accept the draft lease as presented to Council subject to agreement by National Lottery Heritage Fund and resolution of outstanding issues between Council and Forestry Service.
- Approve a business case for an Integrated Consultancy Team to take the project from RIBA Stage 4-6 with 10% optimum bias included. This is based on a construction/restoration project of £3.2 million.
- To note the action report from the Task and Finish Board meeting held on 1 October 2021.

**FOR NOTING –**

This item is deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

**SPR/187/2021: LITIGATION SETTLEMENT**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding Litigation Settlement. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed that Elected Members note the contents of the report.

**SPR/188/2021; MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – 2021/22 PERIOD 6**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Management Accounts – 2021/22 Period 6.

(Copy circulated)

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed that Elected Members note the report.

**SPR/189/2021:** **NMDDC FUNDED HEALTH CASH PLAN FOR EMPLOYEES**

**Read:** Report dated 11 November 2021 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, regarding NMDDC Funded Health Cash Plan for employees.  
(Copy circulated)

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed that Elected Members note the contents of the report.

Councillor Brown re-joined the meeting at this point - 19.13pm

**FOR NOTING**

**SPR/190/2021:** **MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2021**

**Read:** Minutes of Newry City Regeneration Programme Board Meeting – 4 November 2021. (Copy circulated)

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Magennis, It was agreed to note the minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on 4 November 2021.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 19.17pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 06 December 2021.

**Signed:** **Councillor Oonagh Hanlon**  
**Chairperson**

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