

**NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on  
Thursday 20 January 2022 at 6.00pm via Microsoft Teams**

---

**In the Chair:** Councillor O Hanlon

**In Attendance via Teams:** Councillor P Brown  
Councillor P Byrne  
Councillor O Magennis  
Councillor D Murphy  
Councillor B Ó Muirí  
Councillor M Rice  
Councillor M Savage  
Councillor G Sharvin  
Councillor J Tinnelly  
Councillor W Walker

**Also in attendance:** Councillor T Andrews

**Officials in Attendance  
Via Teams:** Mrs M Ward, Chief Executive  
Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services  
Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration & Tourism  
Mr J McBride, Director of Neighbourhood Services (Acting)  
Mr C Boyd, Assistant Director, Estates & Capital Projects  
Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director Finance (Acting)  
Mrs C Miskelly, Assistant Director Corporate Services  
(HR & Safeguarding)  
Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting)  
Mrs C Hanvey, Personal Assistant  
Ms S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
Mrs L Cummins, Democratic Services Officer

**Also in Attendance:  
Via Teams:** Mr C Campbell, Legal Advisor, Belfast City Council

**SPR/001/2022: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Apologies were received from Councillors Gallagher, Howell and Taylor.

**SPR/002/2022: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest declared.

**SPR/003/2022: ACTION SHEET ARISING FROM STRATEGY, POLICY AND  
RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON THURSDAY 16  
DECEMBER 2021**

**Read:** Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Thursday 16 December 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Byrne that the action sheet from the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 December 2021, be approved.

## **FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION**

### **SPR/004/2022: NOTICE OF MOTION REGARDING CONTACTLESS PAYMENT SOLUTIONS TO TACKLE HOMELESSNESS**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr G Byrne, Assistant Director of Finance (acting), regarding Notice of Motion - Contactless Payment Solutions to tackle Homelessness **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Brown spoke at length on his notice of motion stressing that Council had previously had a number of debates, motions and proposals around homelessness and that all Members had been dedicated in addressing the troubling and ever rising homelessness figures in the district through holding housing conferences, calling for more social houses and dealing with housing related issues on an almost daily basis. He had himself worked closely with a number of local charities i.e Newry helping the homeless and the Simon community and seen first hand the great work they do.

He referred to various organisations who had trialled and installed a variety of ways to help tackle homelessness through various options of contactless terminals and urged Members to support the motion and help tackle homelessness in our community.

Members raised the following points:

- Was there a need for a cashless system, when there were various other ways to donate through buying the 'Big Issue' and through social media and over the phone via texts etc.
- Was the Council at risk of favouring one charity over another by setting up cashless system for just the homelessness.
- What happens if another equally important Charity ask for the same, this could be a section 75 issue and could set a precedent going forward?
- Council were already working closely with Housing Executive in tackling homelessness.
- The cost of setting up these pay stations could run into tens of thousands, would Council be better off if that was the case just giving the money directly to the charity to do with what they want.
- In Manchester the Andy Burnham scheme works very well with pay stations being installed in high footfall areas for the one charity.
- Perhaps the Chairperson's chosen charities which would cover a large number of organisations and benefit a range of charities could be considered.
- A company in Manchester called Goodbox had designed a platform where charities were able to purchase hardware/software which allowed them to go contactless.
- As the motion was limited to one particular charity, officers need to look at the infrastructure being asked for if it could be implemented to accommodate more than one charity.
- ATM's and similarly some shops offer the option of a round up donation when purchases are made by card to support local charities.
- Sentiments of the motion were great but would require further exploration to support a range of charities.

Councillor Ó Muiri proposed an amendment by writing to the Housing Executive asking them to work with the Council to implement the scheme, to use Council land to install the paypoints and work with Council throughout it.

Councillor Brown did not accept the amendment stating that he thought Council could take the lead on this themselves and through the process write to DfC, liaise with the Housing Executive, draw down on grant funding from trusts and foundations through charity partners to spread the cost as much as possible.

Councillor Byrne proposed that Council explore avenues to roll this out including through the Chairs charitable fund as soon as possible. This was seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

Councillor Brown stated he was happy to look if the platform could support other charities and any equality issues around that but would be reluctant to assume that the money would be split between different sectoral interests but was happy to accept the amendment.

The Chairperson proposed that Council write to the local bank's or the services that service the governance of the ATM'S about the option of being able to donate through ATM's to charities on a rotational basis. This was seconded by Councillor Sharvin.

Councillor Brown accepted the above amendment.

Councillor Walker stated some excellent comments had been made and seconded Councillor Brown's proposal to go away and explore the paper further, with more scrutiny and bring back a paper with the additional comments and proposals that had been made for discussion.

In summing up Councillor Brown thanked Councillor Walker for seconding the proposal and highlighted that it was at the exploration stage and no hard and fast decisions should be made. He stated he worried about watering down the main focus on the homelessness issue but welcomed the idea of exploring further to support other charities and look at a later date based on officer's advice on how to best proceed.

Mrs Carville clarified the recommendation stating that officers would research further equality issues and bring back a report on the matter.

**Agreed:**

**It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Walker to approve the following recommendations:**

- **Officers to follow up on the cost, security and equality issues outlined at section 2.1 and also conduct further research of suppliers.**
- **Officers will then bring proposals back to Members for consideration before the end of this financial year.**
- **Council explore avenues to roll this out including through the Chairs charitable fund as soon as possible.**
- **Council write to the local bank's or the services that service the governance of the ATM'S about the option of being able to donate through ATM's to charities on a rotational basis.**

**SPR/005/2022: PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE, OBC PUBLIC CONSULTATION WORKING GROUP**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr C Mallon, Director of Enterprise Regeneration & Tourism, regarding Programme Governance, OBC Public Consultation Working Group **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Brown asked for clarity for the rationale for church members being identified specifically, in the report and expressed concern that there was no representation from the Arts sector and proposed a representation from the Arts be included, this was seconded by Councillor Savage.

Mr Mallon clarified the proposal was for consideration to include representatives from the local churches and the intention was to include the local churches on Hill Street, Newry that would be impacted by the regeneration project. He advised if Members wished to, he could add the Arts sector to the list in Annex 1.

Councillor Brown further proposed that union representation was included in the working group.

Mr Mallon confirmed there was union representation on the Project Boards for each individual project within the internal Council structures, and that there was an Arts sector working group that worked with the Project Board on delivering the Theatre and Arts projects. He advised he was content to approach the group and ask for a representative to sit on the OBC Public Consultation Working Group if members so wished.

**Agreed:** **It was agreed on the proposal of Councillor Ó Muirí, seconded by Councillor Savage to approve the following recommendations:**

- **To approve the recommendation of the NCCR Programme board to revise the programme governance arrangements to include the addition of the OBC Public Consultation Working Group and scheduling Programme Board meetings two-monthly with ability to schedule intermittently.**
- **Representatives from all the local church denominations are included as members of the OBC Public Consultation Working Group.**
- **To approach the Arts centre Working Group and ask that a representative sit on the OBC Public Consultation Working Group.**

**SPR/006/2022: CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON REMOTE HEARING REGULATIONS**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding call for evidence on remote hearing regulations **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed to approve the response on behalf of Newry Mourne and Down District Council to the call for evidence on the use of the remote hearing regulations by local Councils in Northern Ireland.**

**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/007/2022: PROPOSED LEASES OF LANDS AT KILBRONEY PARK, GREENBANK DEPOT AND CLOUGHREAGH COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR ELECTRICITY SUBSTATIONS**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting), regarding proposed Leases of lands at Kilbroney Park, Greenbank Depot and Cloughreagh Community Centre for electricity substations **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Tinnelly, it was agreed that Elected Members approve the leases of the following lands to Northern Ireland Electricity Networks, with NIEN being responsible for ancillary legal and valuation costs: -

- A lease of lands at Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor as outlined in red on Map 1 attached to the officer's report for a term of 99 years, subject to a one – off premium of £1000.
- A lease of lands at Cloughreagh Community Centre, Bessbrook as outlined in red on Map 2 attached to the officer's report for a term of 99 years, subject to a one – off premium of £1000.
- A lease of lands at Greenbank Depot, Newry as outlined in red on Map 3 attached to the officer's report for a term of 99 years, subject to a one – off premium to be determined by Council's valuer.

**SPR/008/2022: LEASES OF COUNCIL LANDS UNDER SPORTS AND COMMUNITY LEASING POLICY**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2020 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting) regarding, Leases of Council lands under Sports and Community Leasing Policy. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Magennis seconded by Councillor Rice, it was agreed that Elected Members approve the following terms of years for the leases previously agreed as follows: -

1. Moorehill Quarry, Lease to MCI Climbing Walls Ltd for a term of 25 years
2. Generator House, Lease to Newcastle Harbour Heritage Association for a term of 5 years.
3. Burren Village Green, Lease to Trustees of Burren's Men Shed for a term of 5 years.
4. Drumaness Cricket Pitch, Lease to Trustees of Drumaness Super Kings Cricket Club for a term of 25 years.
5. Drumaness Soccer Pitch, Lease to Trustees of Drumaness Mills Football Club for a term of 25 years.

**SPR/009/2022:** **LICENCE OF A PORTION OF THE WALLED GARDEN, SLIEVE GULLION FOREST PARK**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting) regarding Licence of a portion of the Walled Garden, Slieve Gullion Forest Park **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed that Elected Members approve to grant a Licence to Clanrye permitting them to carry out horticultural work within the Walled Garden as shown hatched red on the map attached to the officer's report and to create and thereafter maintain a meditation garden as per plan attached to the officer's report for a 5-year period. The Licence will be subject to a yearly Licence Fee to be determined by Council's valuer, consent from Forest Service, receipt of statutory approvals (if relevant) in relation to the meditation garden, reimbursement of Council's valuation costs and the creation and agreement of a scheme of horticultural works to be carried out by Clanrye.

**SPR/010/2022:** **CONACRE ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPECT OF CASTLEWELLAN FOREST PARK**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting) regarding Conacre Arrangements in respect of Castlewellan Forest Park **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Walker seconded by Councillor Rice, it was agreed that Elected Members approve that an Expression of Interest was issued in respect of the lands outlined in red on the map attached to the officer's report with a minimum conacre licence fee as provided by Council's Valuer. The Expression of Interest to be advertised once in a local paper available in the vicinity of Castlewellan.

That Elected Members agreed to Council entering into a Conacre Licence Agreement with the highest bidder for a period of three years in respect of lands outlined in red on the map attached to the officer's report.

**SPR/011/2022: REQUEST TO PURCHASE LANDS TO THE REAR OF 57 VIOLET HILL AVENUE, NEWRY**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr F O'Connor, Head of Legal Administration (Acting) regarding request to purchase lands to the rear of 57 Violet Hill Avenue, Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed that Elected Members approve a transfer of the area outlined in green on the map attached to the officer's report for the proposed use and subject to all necessary statutory approvals, with the cost to be the market value of the property as determined by Council's valuer and with the applicants being responsible for Council's legal and valuation costs. The applicants will also be responsible for the construction and cost of a suitable new boundary with Council lands which will be subject to officers' approval.

**SPR/012/2022: REFUSE COLLECTION WORKFORCE REVIEW**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr J McBride, Director Neighbourhood Services (Acting), regarding Refuse Collection Workforce Review. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Sharvin, it was agreed that Elected Members approve the workforce establishment figure for the service at

124 full time equivalent; and to agree that sixteen (16) temporary posts be made permanent via an HR process.

Councillor Brown left the meeting during discussions of the above item – 19.18pm

**SPR/013/2022: LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION (LGSC) DISSOLUTION/CONTINUING OPERATION**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mrs D Carville, Corporate Services Director, regarding Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) Dissolution/Continuing Operation. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed that Elected Members note the contents of the report and confirm they support of the view set out by NILGA in Appendix 3; that the Local Government Staff Commission should be closed at the very earliest opportunity.

**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/014/2022: Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet - 13 December 2021**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mrs D Carville, Director of Corporate Services, regarding Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet - 13 December 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Byrne seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to note the Strategic Finance Working Group Action Sheet – 13 December 2021

**SPR/015/2022: D1 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – CECIL STREET NEWRY**

**Read:** Report dated 20 January 2022 from Mr C Mallon, Director Enterprise Regeneration and Tourism, regarding D1 Expression of interest – Cecil Street Newry. **(Copy circulated)**

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

**Agreed:** On the proposal of Councillor Byrne seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to note the intention to submit an



**expression of interest through the D1 process for the 2 sites on Cecil Street, Newry as indicated in Appendix 1**

**FOR NOTING**

**SPR/016/2022: MINUTES OF NEWRY CITY CENTRE REGENERATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2022**

**Read:** Minutes of Newry City Regeneration Programme Board Meeting – 13 January 2022. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Tinnelly queried why were the Programme Board minutes for noting and not for decision as members didn't get the chance to raise queries, and why were the Project Board minutes not presented to Strategy Policy Resources Committee for decision and scrutiny?

Councillor Byrne advised that as a member of the Programme Board on which all political groups are represented, the Programme Board was the umbrella board and under this there were distinct Project Boards and the minutes of those go to the Programme Board for discussion and then to Strategy Policy Resources Committee for noting, just like any other committee. Any decisions or recommendations come as separate papers. If any member wished to request a copy of papers or minutes of any Project Board meetings these could be forwarded on.

The Chairperson added that at no time had she stopped anybody from commenting on for noting items and does let people speak if indicated.

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Walker, it was agreed to note the minutes of Newry City Centre Regeneration Programme Board Meeting held on 13 January 2022.**

**SPR/017/2022: STATUTORY REPORTING – SECTION 75 POLICY SCREENING REPORT – QUARTERLY REPORT FOR PERIOD OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2021**

**Read:** Statutory Reporting – Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for Period October – December 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Sharvin, seconded by Councillor Savage, it was agreed to note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for Period October – December 2021.**

**SPR/018/2022: STATUTORY REPORTING – DAERA RURAL NEEDS ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2020 - 2021**

**Read:** Statutory Reporting – DAERA Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report 2020 – 2021. **(Copy circulated)**

**Agreed:** **On the proposal of Councillor Magennis, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed to note the Statutory**

**Reporting –DAERA Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report  
2020 – 2021**

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 20.01pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 07 February 2022.

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

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