



May 14th, 2024

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on Thursday, 16th May 2024 at 6:00 pm in Microsoft Teams & Downshire Civic Centre.

Committee Membership 2023 - 2024

Councillor S O'Hare **Chairperson**

Councillor C Enright **Deputy Chairperson**

Councillor P Byrne

Councillor O Hanlon

Councillor R Howell

Councillor T Kelly

Councillor A Lewis

Councillor A Mathers

Councillor D McAteer

Councillor L McEvoy

Councillor A Quinn

Councillor H Reilly

Councillor M Rice

Councillor G Sharvin

Councillor D Taylor

Agenda

1.0 Apologies and Chairperson's Remarks

2.0 Declarations of Interest

3.0 Action Sheet arising from Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 18 April 2024

 *SPR-Action Sheet arising from 2024 04 18.pdf*

Page 1

Notices of Motion

4.0 Notice of Motion - Projected Rates Increase C/060/2024

For Decision

 *SPR Report NOM FINAL FOR SPR May 2024.pdf*

Page 4

 *SPR - August 2019 Final Minutes & Presentation (1).pdf*


Page 12

Items deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

5.0 Proposed Lease of Lands at Orior Park, Bessbrook

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 *SPR Report 16 MAY 2024 Orior Pk Bessbrook.pdf*

Not included

 *NM032-G-1-10 Orior PK Lease Map.pdf*

Not included

6.0 Proposed Renewal of Lease at Cloughreagh CC

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 *Proposed Renewal of Lease at Cloughreagh CC.pdf*

Not included

 *Map for Lease at Cloughreagh CC.pdf*

Not included

7.0 DFI Rivers NMDC Draft Agreement

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **DFI Rivers NMDC Draft Agreement - 25-3-24 report.pdf**

Not included

 **DFI Rivers NMDC Draft Agreement - 25-3-24.pdf**

Not included

8.0 Newry Leisure Centre

For Decision

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **Newry Leisure Centre Newry Leisure Centre Phase 1 Legacy Invoice.pdf**

Not included

 **NLC - Phase 1 - Contractor Final Invoice.pdf**

Not included

FOR NOTING Items deemed to be exempt under Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014

9.0 IT Update

For Information

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **SPR May 2024 - ITPG Highlight Report.pdf**

Not included

10.0 Newry Swimming Pool Update

For Information

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

11.0 Labour Management Partnership Funding Update

For Information

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **SPR LMP Update.pdf**

Not included

12.0 Specific Delegated Authority

For Information

This item is deemed to be exempt under 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) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

 **Specific delegated authority - SPR Report May 2024.pdf**

Not included

For Noting

13.0 Statutory reporting – Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

For Information

 **Statutory reporting - Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2022-31 March 2023.pdf**

Page 53

 **Appendix I - NMDDC Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.pdf**

Page 56

14.0 Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2024

For Information

 **Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report Quarterly Report for period January March 2024.pdf**


Page 61

 **Appendix I - Section 75 Policy Screening Report Quarterly Report for period January March 2024.pdf**

Page 64

15.0 Annual report for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 on requests related to naming Council facilities, planting trees and to locate artworks/sculptures on Council property

For Information

 **Annual report for the period 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024 on requests related to naming Council facilities planting trees and to locate artworks sculptures on Council property.pdf**

Page 66

Invitees

Cllr Terry Andrews

Cllr Callum Bowsie

Mr Caolain Boyd

Fionnuala Branagh

Cllr Jim Brennan

Cllr Pete Byrne

Mr Gerard Byrne

Cllr Philip Campbell

Mr Andrew Cassells

Cllr William Clarke

Cllr Laura Devlin

Ms Louise Dillon

Cllr Cadogan Enright

Cllr Killian Feehan

Cllr Doire Finn

Cllr Aoife Finnegan

Ms Joanne Fleming

Cllr Conor Galbraith

Cllr Mark Gibbons

Cllr Oonagh Hanlon

Cllr Glyn Hanna

Cllr Valerie Harte

Cllr Roisin Howell

Cllr Tierna Howie

Cllr Jonathan Jackson

Cllr Geraldine Kearns

Miss Veronica Keegan

Mrs Josephine Kelly

Cllr Cathal King

Cllr Mickey Larkin

Cllr David Lee-Surginor

Cllr Alan Lewis

Cllr Oonagh Magennis

Mr Conor Mallon

Cllr Aidan Mathers

Cllr Declan McAteer

Cllr Leeanne McEvoy

Jonathan McGilly

Cllr Andrew McMurray

Mr Colin Moffett

Maureen/Joanne Morgan/Johnston

Cllr Declan Murphy

Sinead Murphy
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Cllr Kate Murphy
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Cllr Selina Murphy
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Cllr Siobhan O'Hare
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Mr Andy Patterson
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Cllr Áine Quinn
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Cllr Henry Reilly
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Cllr Michael Rice
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Gavin Ringland
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Cllr Michael Ruane
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Cllr Gareth Sharvin
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Donna Starkey
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Nicola Stranney
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Sarah Taggart
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Cllr David Taylor
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Cllr Jarlath Tinnelly
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Cllr Jill Truesdale
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Mrs Marie Ward
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Mr Conor Woods
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ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – Thursday 14 March 2024					
Minute Ref	Subject	Decision	Lead Officer	Actions taken / Progress to date	Remove from Action Sheet? Y/N
SPR/042/2024	Hybrid Meetings	It was agreed a report be brought back to Committee regarding the new Chamber system and the resources required to manage it.	J Kelly	Options being explored and report to be brought back to future meeting.	N
ACTION SHEET – STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING (SPR) – Thursday 18 April 2024					
SPR/055/2024	Action sheet from meeting held 14.03.2024	It was agreed to note the action sheet	J Kelly	Agreed	Y
SPR/056/2024	Notice of Motion – Ethical Procurement	It was agreed that NMD Council affirms to consider a section under ethical procurement and will review the Council's tender process. It was also agreed this item remain on the action sheet until such time as new Policies were forthcoming to Committee	J Kelly	Procurement Policy is being updated with new legislation. Report to be brought back to SP & R in due course.	N
SPR/057/2024	Notice of Motion – MMR Vaccinations	It was agreed to note the contents of the report	V Keegan	Agreed	Y
SPR/058/2024	Notice of Motion – Projected Rates Increase	It was agreed that this item be tabled at May Committee Meeting	J Kelly	Agreed – On Agenda for May SP & R meeting.	Y
SPR/059/2024	Funding Opportunity	The following was agreed: - Confirm to DiE that Council will recruit for a dedicated officer for Multiply Programme following receipt and acceptance of LoO (for employment only) - Liaise with SRC and SERC to ensure there is no duplication of delivery in the district regarding interventions and targets. - Develop an action plan through LMP and Community Development and submit to DiE by 26 April 2024.	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/060/2024	Elected Member Development Charter	The following was agreed: - To commit to the requirements of the Member Development Charter - To nominate Party Leaders as the Members to progress this Charter Requirements	J Kelly	Agreed	Y

SPR/061/2024	Draft Performance Improvement Objectives	- Training and Development requirements for Councillors will progress through the Charter arrangements.	G Byrne	Agreed	Y
SPR/062/2024	Local Government Staff Commission	It was agreed to note the 5 draft performance improvement objectives 2024-25 as per Appendix 1 It was also agreed to approve the timetable for publishing the draft performance improvement plan 2024-25 as per Appendix 2, including commencing with the consultation and engagement process as of 19/04/2024 It was agreed to approve the payment from NMD to LGSC for April 24 – March 25 It was also agreed to note the ongoing contribution of running costs up to 31 March 2027	J Kelly J Kelly	Agreed Agreed	Y Y
SPR/063/2024	Planning Department Quarterly Update	It was agreed to note the contents of the report. It was also agreed that quarterly reports be tabled to keep Members updated on progress	J McGilly J McGilly	Agreed Next update to be tabled at August SPR	Y Y
SPR/064/2024	Proposed Lease of Lands at Lismore Park, Crossmaglen	It was agreed to enter a lease as detailed within the Officer's Report A report be brought to committee detailing all lands leased at a peppercorn rent, whether they are in use, and if not be added to the surplus asset register	P Rooney A Patterson	Agreed Report being prepared.	Y N
SPR/065/2024	Lease Proposal	It was agreed to approve the debt recovery and lease as outlined within the Officer's Report	A Patterson	Agreed	Y
APR/066/2024	STA – Asset Management System	It was agreed to approve the recommendations as outlined within the Officer's Report.	G Byrne	Agreed	Y
SPR/067/2024	Rate Support Grant Update	It was agreed to note the independent review into the RSG	G Byrne	Agreed	Y
SPR/068/2024	Communications	It was agreed to note the contents of the report	V Keegan	Agreed	Y
SPR/069/2024	Exempt minutes of NCCR meeting of 05.02.24	It was agreed to note the minutes	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/070/2024	Open minutes of NCCR meeting of 05.02.2024	It was agreed to note the minutes	C Mallon	Agreed	Y
SPR/071/2024	Minutes of MMGP meeting of 08.02.2024	It was agreed to note the minutes	C Mallon	Agreed	Y

SPR/072/2024	Response from Minister Murphy re Enhanced Flood Relief Scheme	It was agreed to note the communication.	J Kelly	Agreed	Y
END					

Report to:	SPR Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 th May 2024
Subject:	NOM
Reporting Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Mallon - Director of ERT
Contact Officer (Including Job Title):	Conor Mallon - Director of ERT

	For decision	X	For noting only	
1.0	Purpose and Background			
1.1	<u>Purpose</u> To seek Members approval of the recommendations included in Section 3.1.			
2.0	Key issues			
2.1	<i>Notice of Motion received from Councillor Enright:</i> <i>In view of cost of living pressures on ratepayers, Council must tailor its investment plans to what the people of Newry Mourne and Down can actually afford. Current projected rates increases in our Council over the next few years are unsustainable both in the short-term and longer term. This requires a root-and-branch re-examination of proposed capital expenditure with any major non-essential projects with a negative rate of return cancelled to make rates affordable in the medium term. In particular, Council directs management to prepare a costing for Councillors of a downsized Newry Civic Centre project with suitable office accommodation for Newry-based council staff only. Alternate sites should be considered like Bagenals Castle LIDL site that only came on the market in December 2023.</i> <i>This should take account of - The loss of the Civil Service as an anchor tenant; The need to avoid speculative development in line with UK Department of Finance Guidance for Councils; The collapse of the office market in Ireland and GB since Covid and since Council voted to initiate this project in August 2019; An examination of any more affordable or appropriate sites; Aim to preserve the £130,000+ pa income stream from the Abbey car-park; These costings should include an option to remove the second fully-featured Council Chamber as an unnecessary luxury.;</i> <i>A cost benefit case for this project should likewise be prepared showing the annual savings from leaving current premises v's the annual cost of operating the new premises to ensure Councillors are fully informed. Council notes that no such operational cost/benefit case exists at the moment. Council request management to bring forward the above costings as soon as possible</i>			
2.2	Rates & Financial Scrutiny Council is very mindful of the cost-of-living pressures and the requirement to spend council finances wisely and within appropriate governance approvals for all capital expenditure. Each year the Strategic Finance Working Group (SFWG) meets over a number of months to scrutinise the projected costs for the next financial year and also the medium-term financial			

2.3	<p>costs ahead of setting the Rate. In addition, the SFWG also meets to review the future capital programme of the Council.</p> <p>Councils keep its costs under review and also monitors costs through both the SFWG, Programme Boards, SP&R and Council meetings.</p> <p>In relation to the Newry City Centre Project, the Outline Business Case (OBC) was approved by Council at its November 2020 meeting. Council when approving the OBC for these capital projects considered the business need, project options, costs and affordability.</p> <p>In line with Council governance a final business case (FBC) will be completed for approval prior to commencement on site when the procurements costs are known.</p> <p>Suitable Office Accommodation / Removal of Council Chamber</p> <p>When Newry and Mourne District Council and Down District Council were in the shadow period of the merger in 2014-15 it was agreed by Members that two offices would be retained in Newry and Downpatrick. This was due to the geographical spread of the new district, the third largest local authority in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>In 2014-15 the Shadow Newry, Mourne and Down District Council approved a new Civic Centre for Newry, and established it was also a strategic objective for the Council in the 2015-19 Corporate Plan. The Downpatrick Headquarters at the Downshire Estate had been in operation since 2012 in response to end-of-life accommodation on the Strangford Road. This successful project set out to reinvigorate the public sector in Downpatrick through the creation of a dedicated campus for public services. This campus now accommodates a range of public sector services including Council, PSNI, NIFRS, NIHE, Probation Board and Youth Justice Agency.</p> <p>The operational inefficiencies of the Councils existing estate and the Councils sale of Monaghan Row to the Southern Health Trust to facilitate the expansion of services at Daisy Hill Hospital supports the need for a Civic & Regional Hub in Newry. The development of a hub that would transfer staff from remote and ageing sites across Newry into one centralised work base. The inefficient design of the current buildings also prevents more effective, modern ways of working.</p> <p>In line with Council approval, project work has been ongoing on delivery of the new Civic and Regional Hub in Newry. Delivery of the project will secure existing public sector jobs in Newry and will play a significant role in the regeneration of the Newry City Centre.</p> <p>The schedule of accommodation for the project from inception has been determined on the basis of staff relocating from existing office accommodation in Newry, including Greenbank, Mc Grath House, (which has been deemed surplus and will be disposed of), Monaghan Row (sold to Southern Trust in 2023) and Bagenals Castle. This equates to circa 215 members of staff with an employee to desk ratio of 75% (162 desks to be provided) and is reflective of current agile working practices within the Council, a Council agile working policy is in place to facilitate this. It should be noted that the decision on a circa 75% desk ratio was taken prior to the global pandemic as Council were seeking to move to more agile working</p>
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arrangements, this was then fast tracked as a result of the pandemic and should ensure a smooth transition to the new operating model. The accommodation also includes a 41-seat chamber, meeting space and space for the Newry, Mourne and Down Innovation Hub.

The Civic and Regional Hub project has been subject to regular review post COVID-19 through the NCCR Programme board (of which Cllr Enright is a member). Office space is also analysed against current post-COVID trends and takes into consideration the Council's Agile Working Policy.

It is important to retain staff and support public sector jobs in modern, up-to-date facilities, to allow staff and Councillors to deliver quality services, and be an economic driver for both Downpatrick and Newry.

The hub will replace the Council offices at Monaghan Row, recently acquired from the Council by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. The £900,000 acquisition will allow the Trust to expand and develop services at the hospital.

Following misinformation which was circulating publicly it was confirmed at a Council meeting in March 2023 that there would be no impact on jobs in either Downpatrick or Newry due to the Civic and Regional Hub plans.

Alternative sites

2.4

In choosing Abbey Way as the location for the Civic and Regional Hub, a comprehensive site selection exercise commenced in 2016 to consider all the potential sites within the Newry City core. This process concluded in 2019 and considered a total of 33 public and privately owned sites regardless of if they were available on the market or not. It included the Lidl site referred to which was ranked at Nr 10 out of the 33 sites. This was an extensive exercise, which included soft marketing testing (with public advertisements for sites) in 2018 and 2019. It identified the Abbey Way site, which is within Council ownership, as the preferred location. It should be noted that any site not in Council ownership would have incurred acquisition costs.

Site selection of Abbey Way was considered and approved at SPR in August 2019, a counter proposal as highlighted below was put at Council in September 2019 but was lost. Work on the Abbey Way site proceeded from this point.

Councillor Tinnelly said he did not agree with the recommended location for the civic hub as there were too many uncertainties and he proposed that Council hold back on making a final decision to approve the recommendation that Abbey Way site be selected as the location for the civic hub. Councillor Brown seconded the proposal.

Councillor Brown amended the proposal to include that Council hold back on making a final decision to approve the recommendation that Abbey Way site be selected at the location for the civic hub, until a full and detailed plan on the public consultation strategy be made available to Members. Councillor Tinnelly agreed to include Councillor Brown's amendment.

For: 4 Against: 26 Abstentions: 3 The counter proposal was declared 'lost'.

2.5	<p>Site acquisition</p> <p>Council have been working through the delivery of this project and the project have reached planning/procurement stage. If Council decide to change site location at this point this would be against the previous Council decision and effectively the work that has been ongoing since 2019 would be considered nugatory.</p> <p>The Council minutes and Reports in relation to the site selection process have been previously forward to the NCCR Programme Board members, these documents are again attached at Appendix 1.</p>
2.6	<p>Office Space</p> <p>As part of the OBC for the project additional office space was considered, the NICS were never considered as an anchor tenant. As set out in section 2.2 above the additional space is to be utilised by other public sector bodies/an innovation hub for the business and voluntary sector. This additional space accounts for only 9% of the total office space and has been a fundamental element from the start of the project. It should also be noted that this will not compete with private sector operators in relation to office accommodation.</p> <p>There is however a separate work stream to BRCD for NCCR which will see the Council together with DFC fund up to £3m to promote development of Grade A office accommodation in the area.</p> <p>An element of the BRCD programme of works is delivery of an innovation hub for the Newry, Mourne and Down Region and Council have been working with Catalyst Inc in respect of the delivery of this element, the Innovation Hub will be based in the Civic and Regional Hub.</p>
2.7	<p>Abbey Way Car Park Income</p> <p>The impact of the project on parking income from the Abbey Way site has been a consideration during the project development, and a number of parking surveys have been completed by appointed traffic engineers.</p> <p>The traffic engineers note the available off-streetcar parking spaces at Abbey Way are never fully occupied with typically more than 62% of the total spaces available, and that the maximum occupancy of these two car parks was observed on Saturday afternoons, with circa 116 spaces occupied of the 304 total. (Carparking surveys have been conducted with consideration to DFI requirements and post covid)</p> <p>Therefore, the current income from parking charges at Abbey Way of circa £90k (2023 figure) not (£130k) is based on a low level of spaces being occupied, and the number of occupied spaces that generate the current income will continue be available after the project is completed. It is therefore anticipated that the income levels will not be impacted.</p>

2.8	<p>Car Park Provision</p> <p>The siting of the Civic Hub on Abbey Way impacts on parking provision in two ways, firstly through 'new' demand arising due to the relocation of Officers and visitors to the new facility.</p> <p>The Civic Hub also creates a 'displacement' demand, through the removal of some of existing car parking provision.</p> <p>The current parking provision at Monaghan Row for NMDDC staff is for 68 spaces where approx. 160 nr of staff are presently accommodated. Therefore approx. 92 NMDDC staff members based at Monaghan Row, who are currently utilising the public car park spaces in Newry City</p> <p>McGrath House and Bagenals Castle has no provision of car parking for NMDDC staff where the current occupation level for NMDDC staff is 22. All these staff will be re-located to the new Civic Hub, therefore no addition to the parking demands within the city.</p> <p>The number of NMDDC Staff currently located at Greenbank and moving to the Newry City Centre is approx. 33.</p> <p>In the recent DfI correspondence they have accepted a demand of 133 spaces for the Civic Hub project, however this number does not reflect or allow for the current NMDDC staff who are currently located in Newry at Monaghan Row & McGrath House who already avail of and use the current available public carpark spaces in Newry City, therefore it could considered unreasonable to expect that NMDDC should include for staff in the parking demand for the new building who are already utilising the current parking provision in Newry City. Ie this would be double counting.</p> <p>The Revised TA for the scheme taking into account the matters raised by DfI and the comments above will be submitted to the planning department in the coming days to allow the consultation process to conclude.</p>
2.9	<p>OBC Costs Assessment</p> <p>In relation to the current costs of the planned Civic and Regional Hub, the Council can advise that in October 2019 the preferred option was estimated at £10.5m; following further design development in June 2022 it was £12.76m and at procurement stage the current estimate, taking into consideration construction inflation, tender inflation and risk allowance is now £14.97m. (plus circa £2.0m for the BRCD funded Public Realm)</p> <p>Decisions made by the Council on the Capital Budget focuses on investments for the long-term, which will provide benefits over an extended period to the district.</p> <p>The costs associated with the Civic and Regional Hub form an element of the overall BRCD investment into the Newry, Mourne and Down Region, this investment will see up to £200m development including the following projects as part of the overall investment package:</p>

2.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Relief Road • Theatre Conference Centre • Civic Centre • Public Realm • Grade A Office Accommodation • Newry City Park
2.11	<p>Extract from NCCR OBC</p> <p><i>A new Civic & Regional Hub is the common component across all options. It is assumed that this will be constructed to be more space efficient (open plan) than Monaghan Row, and will consider Covid-19 implications. It will have a more spacious reception area, meeting rooms, and will be built to a BREEAM rating of excellent to make the building more sustainable and help to reduce running costs. =</i></p>
2.12	<p>Remove the second fully-featured Council Chamber as an unnecessary luxury</p> <p>When Newry and Mourne District Council and Down District Council were in the shadow period of the merger in 2014-15 it was agreed by members that two headquarters would be retained in Newry and Downpatrick incorporating 41 seat chambers. This was due to the geographical spread of the new district, the third largest local authority in Northern Ireland.</p>
2.13	<p>Office market in Ireland and GB since Covid</p> <p>See below a recent extract from CBRE UK Real Estate Market Outlook 2024 in respect of the current office market, however it must be noted that there are no speculative elements within the Civic Hub project, nor will there be any elements of the project that will compete with the private sector with respect to the provision of office space in Newry.</p>
2.14	<p>Extract from CBRE UK Real Estate Market Outlook 2024</p> <p><i>"The interest rate environment has dominated the office investment landscape since they started rising in the second half of 2022, severely constraining volumes. This will ease in the second half of 2024, but investment volumes in the first half will remain low.</i></p> <p><i>Having moved out in 2023, prime office yields in most markets will start to compress by the end of 2024.</i></p> <p><i>The impact of interest rate rises will halt the expansion in the office jobs market. Following healthy increases in the last two years. we expect office-based employment to remain largely unchanged in 2024.</i></p> <p><i>Despite slowing jobs growth, UK office take-up in 2024 is expected to increase relative to the levels seen in 2023.</i></p> <p><i>Demand for the best quality buildings in the best locations will remain robust in 2024. This will lead to rental growth in most UK office markets at the prime end of the spectrum."</i></p>

3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To proceed as per the Council decision to deliver the NCCR programme of works as agreed including development of the Civic and Regional Hub at Abbey Way Newry.
3.2	To note Council's decision for two offices one in Newry and one in Downpatrick.
3.3	To note that the new Civic Hub in Newry provides the facilities to deliver on the needs of the Council going forward in respect of accommodation for both staff and elected members and is line with the Council's Agile working policy.
3.4	To note that an extensive site selection exercise was completed in 2019, that considered the Lidl Site, and Council approved the Abbey Way site as the preferred location for the Civic Hub.
3.5	To note that it is anticipated that the carpark income levels at Abbey Way will not be negatively impacted.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	As per OBC and subject to review of FBC and outcomes of current live procurement exercises
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation. <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i> N/a</p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p>

	<div> <div>Consultation period will be 12 weeks</div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> </div> <div> <div>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided)</div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> </div> <div> <div>Rationale:</div> <div></div> </div>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <div> <div>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed</div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> </div> </div>
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – SPR Committee Papers August 2019
8.0	Background Documents – Available on request

NEWRY MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

12

Minutes of Strategy Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 14 August 2019 at 5.00pm in the Mourne Room, Downshire Civic Centre, Downpatrick

In the Chair: Councillor M Savage

In Attendance:

Councillor R Burgess	Councillor P Byrne
Councillor S Doran	Councillor H Gallagher
Councillor R Howell	Councillor A Lewis
Councillor C Mason	Councillor J Tinnelly
Councillor W Walker	

Also In Attendance: Councillor Andrews, McAteer, & Stokes

Officials in Attendance:

Mrs Marie Ward, Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism

Mr Michael Lipsett, Director of Active & Healthy Communities

Mrs R Mackin, Assistant Director Corporate Planning & Policy

Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director of Finance

Mr J McBride, Assistant Director of Waste Management (Acting)

Mrs Louise Fitzsimons, Human Resources

Mrs Martina Flynn, Safer Communities & Good Relations Manager

Mr A Grimshaw, Project Director

Ms L O'Hare, Democratic Services Officer

Mrs P McKeever, Democratic Services Officer

SPR/093/2019: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

An apology was received from Councillors Brown, O'Hanlon, Mulgrew, O'Muiri, Sharvin and Curran.

SPR/094/2019: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest

SPR/095/2019: ACTION SHEET OF THE STRATEGY, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2019

Read: Action Sheet of the Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 13 June 2019. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed that the Action Sheet of 13 June 2019, be noted, and actions removed as marked.**

SPR/096/2019

ACTION SHEET OF THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2019 & 31 JULY 2019

Read: Action Sheet of the Strategic Partnership Working Group Committee Meeting held on 20 June 2019 & 31 July 2019. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Stokes requested that a copy of the contamination report be made available to the Task and Finish Group as soon as possible so they have time to understand the report before the next meeting. Councillor Byrne supported the request and sought clarity on dates for meeting with Consultants.

Mrs Ward said the contamination report was very technical and would require a presentation to be set up. Mrs Ward continued saying all information would be made available to both the Task and Finish Working Group and Councillors, this would ensure adequate opportunity to digest the information before it would be brought back to SP&R for decision. Mrs Ward said she would endeavour to secure a date for a meeting with the consultants as soon as possible.

Agreed: **On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed that the Action Sheet of 20 June 2019 & 31 July 2019, be noted, and actions removed as marked.**

It was also agreed that a date for a meeting with the consultants be arranged as soon as possible.

SPR/097/2019

NEW CIVIC CENTRE/PUBLIC REALM/THEATRE AND CONFERENCE FACILITIES

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr A Grimshaw, Project Director, regarding City Centre Regeneration Project Civic Hub Abbey Way Site. **(Copy circulated)**

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr A Grimshaw, Project Director, regarding City Centre Regeneration Project BRCD Public Realm. **(Copy circulated)**

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr A Grimshaw, Project Director, regarding City Centre Regeneration Project Theatre/Conference RIBA Stage 1. **(Copy circulated)**

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr A Grimshaw, Project Director, regarding City Centre Regeneration Project Theatre/Conference Sean Hollywood Arts Centre. **(Copy circulated)**

Presentation made by Mr Graham Ogle from Hamilton Architects and Mr Adrian Grimshaw, Project Director. **COPY TO FOLLOW**

Following the presentation, discussion took place and the following issues were raised:

- The Albert Basin park should remain a priority for Council.
- The proposed development of the civic centre, public realm, theatre and conference facilities had huge potential for the city of Newry in terms of regenerating the city centre.

- Public consultations had been held and Council would continue to consult widely with the public.
- Planning Department had been involved on all planning matters and the Historic Environment Division where historical buildings were involved.
- Council recognised the importance significance of the Cathedral located on Hill Street and they will liaise with representatives from the Cathedral regarding the cathedral gardens in an effort to seek a conclusion that is satisfactory to both parties.
- Acknowledgement that car parking issues were of concern, however it was the start of the process and proposals would be considered on how best to deal with this.
- The development would realise an investment of almost £30M.
- A public consultation was scheduled for October 2019 at which a lot more information would be available.
- The new civic centre would be 4,200 sq metres and will accommodate 180 staff, whilst allowing for flexible working for staff.

A discussion took place about the proposed site for the Civic Hub and the Chairperson put the matter to a vote, the results of which were as follows:

FOR: 6
AGAINST: 0
ABSTENTIONS: 4

The proposal was CARRIED

Agreed: **Civic Hub – Abbey Way Site**
 On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Doran, it was agreed to note the contents of the report and to approve the recommendation that Abbey Way site is selected as the location for the Civic Hub and associated public realm works.

Agreed: **BRCD Public Realm**
 On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was unanimously agreed to note the contents of the report and to approve the proposals for Public Realm are further developed and tested by the Integrated Consultant Team in terms of their feasibility, including consultation through a series of stakeholder engagement sessions during Autumn 2019.

Agreed: **RIBA 1 Theatre / Conference**
 On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Doran, it was agreed to note the contents of the report and approve the recommendation to proceed with option 2, comprising demolition of the Sean Hollywood Arts Centre and complete new build, which has been recommended by the Integrated Consultant Teams RIBA Stage 1 report as the basis for ongoing design development.

Agreed: **Theatre / Conference Design Options**
 On the proposal of Councillor Byrne, seconded by Councillor Doran, it was agreed to note the contents of the report and to approve the investigation of RIBA Stage 1 design Options are reliant on either the partial or total demolition of the existing Sean Hollywood Arts Centre.

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE

SPR/098/2019: DEVELOPMENT TRUST NI PUBLIC SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr J McGilly, Head of Community Planning, regarding Participatory Budgeting: Facilitation of future Community Planning Initiatives. **(Copy circulated)**

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Doran, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed that Council nominate through Party Rep's, 2 No elected members to sit on the steering group for the 2 year term of project.

SPR/099/2019: RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE POLICING & COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (PCSP)

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Ms M Flynn, Safer Communities and Good Relations Manager, regarding Recruitment & Appointment of Independent Members to the Policing & Community Safety Partnership **(Copy Circulated)**

Councillor Walker proposed that 1 member be taken from SF, SDLP, DUP & UUP, 2 reserves from SF & SDLP party and the Chair a SF Member as they are the largest party, this was seconded by Councillor Lewis. All members agreed.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Doran, seconded by Councillor Howell, it was agreed that the Committee

1. Note the report.
2. Agree to nominate a panel pf up to four political Members of the PCSP to participate in the recruitment and selection of new Independent Members of the PCSP.
3. Agree to nominate 1-2 reserve panel Members who, where possible, should also be political Members of the PCSP.
4. Agree the Chair of the panel from the nominated Members.

CORPORATE PLANNING AND POLICY

SPR/100/2019 REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COUNCILLORS' EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS REFERENCE GROUP FOR PERIOD 2019 - 2023

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr L Hannaway, Chief Executive & Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy, regarding Revised Terms of Reference for Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group for period 2019 - 2023 **(Copy circulated)**

All Members agreed that Councillor Reilly and another Independent should be nominated.

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Byrne, it was agreed that Council agree to the revised Terms of Reference for the Councillors' Equality and Good Relations Reference Group with specific reference to membership.

SPR/101/2019: PRESENTATION OF 2020 ANNUAL REPORT/NMD CONNECT

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Ms V Keegan, Head of Communications and Marketing, regarding Presentation of 2020 Annual Reporting/NMD Connect (**Copy circulated**)

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Doran, seconded by Councillor Gallagher it was agreed that the Council continues to publish the Annual Report/NMD Connect as one document, with versions in Irish and English published on the website and supported by a limited print run. This strategy has the advantage of ensuring the widest distribution across the district as well as ensuring value for money. The strategy will be supported by a marketing campaign.

CORPORATE SERVICES

SPR/102/2019: ACQUISITION OF LAND AT GREENFIELD STEPS, ARDGLASS

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mrs A Robb, Assistant Director Corporate Services (Administration), regarding Acquisition of land at Greenfield Steps, Ardglass (**Copy circulated**)

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Gallagher it was agreed that Council proceed based on recommended valuation and complete the necessary legal formalities in relation to this acquisition.

FOR NOTING

SPR/103/2019 SECTION 75 POLICY SCREENING REPORT – QUARTERLY REPORT FOR PERIOD APRIL – JUNE 2019

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr C Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy regarding Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period April – June 2019 (**Copy circulated**)

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Howell it was agreed to note the contents of the report.

SPR/104/2019 SOCIAL MEDIA FOR DEA'S

Councillor Walker suggested that it would be beneficial for each DEA to have their own social media page to promote DEA events and funding opportunities.

Agreed: It was agreed to bring this item back to the Active and Healthy Committee for further discussion.

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Gallagher, 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/105/2019: NI PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr A McKay, Chief Planner regarding NI Public Services Ombudsman (**Copy circulated**)

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

Agreed: On the proposal of Councillor Doran, seconded by Councillor Gallagher it was agreed to note the contents of the officer's report and approve the recommendations as set out in 3.1 of the report.

FOR NOTING

SPR/106/2019 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

Read: Report dated 14 August 2019 from Mr K Montgomery, Assistant Director of Finance, regarding Managements Accounts to 30 June 2019 (**Copy circulated**)

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

Agreed: It was agreed to note the Management Accounts to 30 June 2019.

SPR/107/2019 UPDATE ON CHIEF EXECUTIVE HANDOVER ARRANGEMENTS

Members were given a verbal update on the handover arrangements.

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

Agreed: It was agreed to note the verbal update on the Chief Executive.

There being no further business, the Meeting concluded at 7.34pm

Signed: **Councillor Michael Savage**
 Chairperson

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

Newry City Centre Regeneration

14th August 2019



As Treasúrair an Dúis agus Ard Mhúirthe Themas
Serving Down and South Armagh

HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Overview

- Connectivity between Theatre & Conference and new Civic Hub
- Proposed Public Realm works
- Newry Theatre and Conference Centre - update
- Civic Hub - update

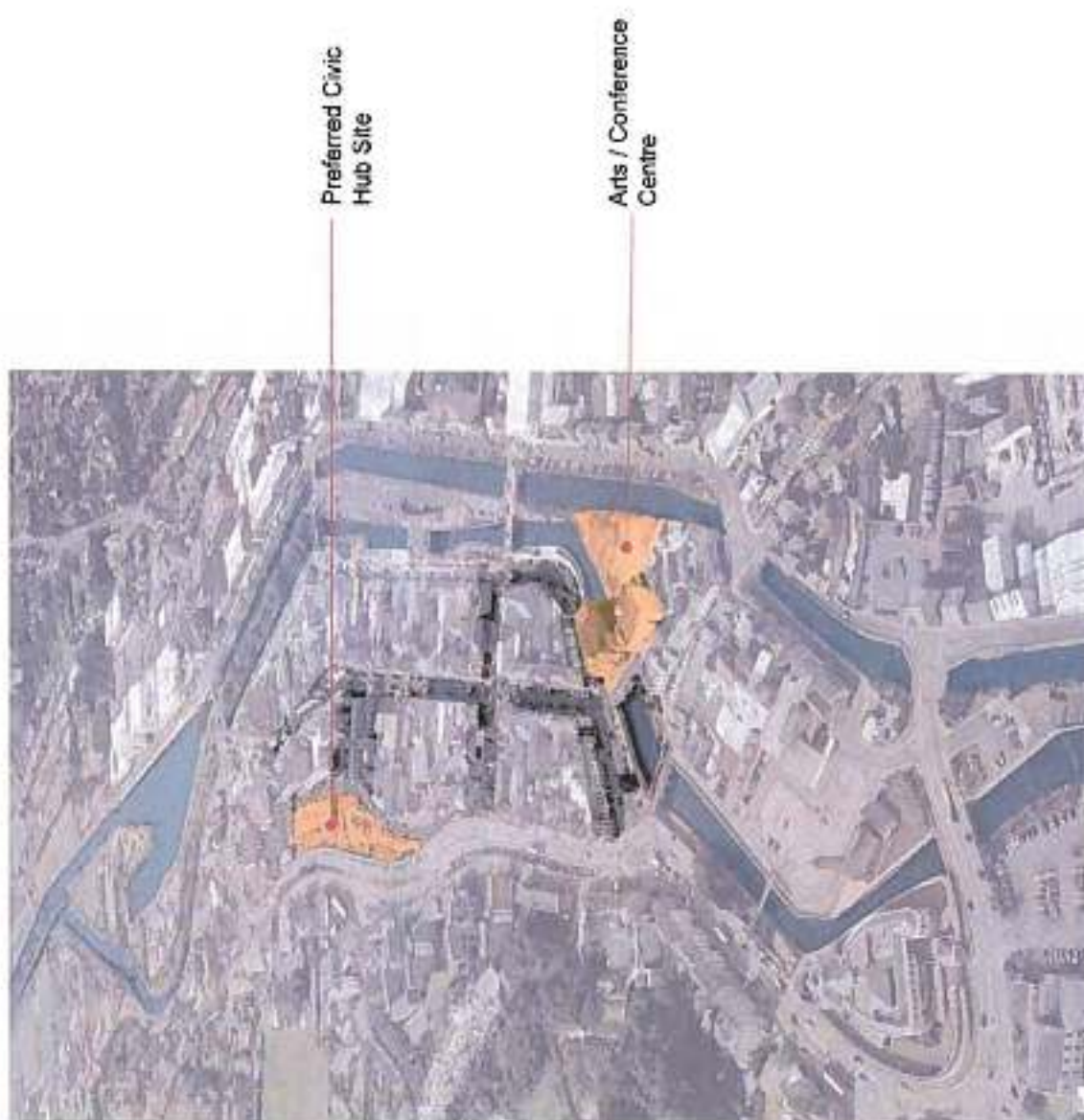


HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY THEATRE / CONFERENCE CENTRE

Project Context

Newry Urban Regeneration Project

- Civic Hub
- Arts / Conference Centre
- Public realm



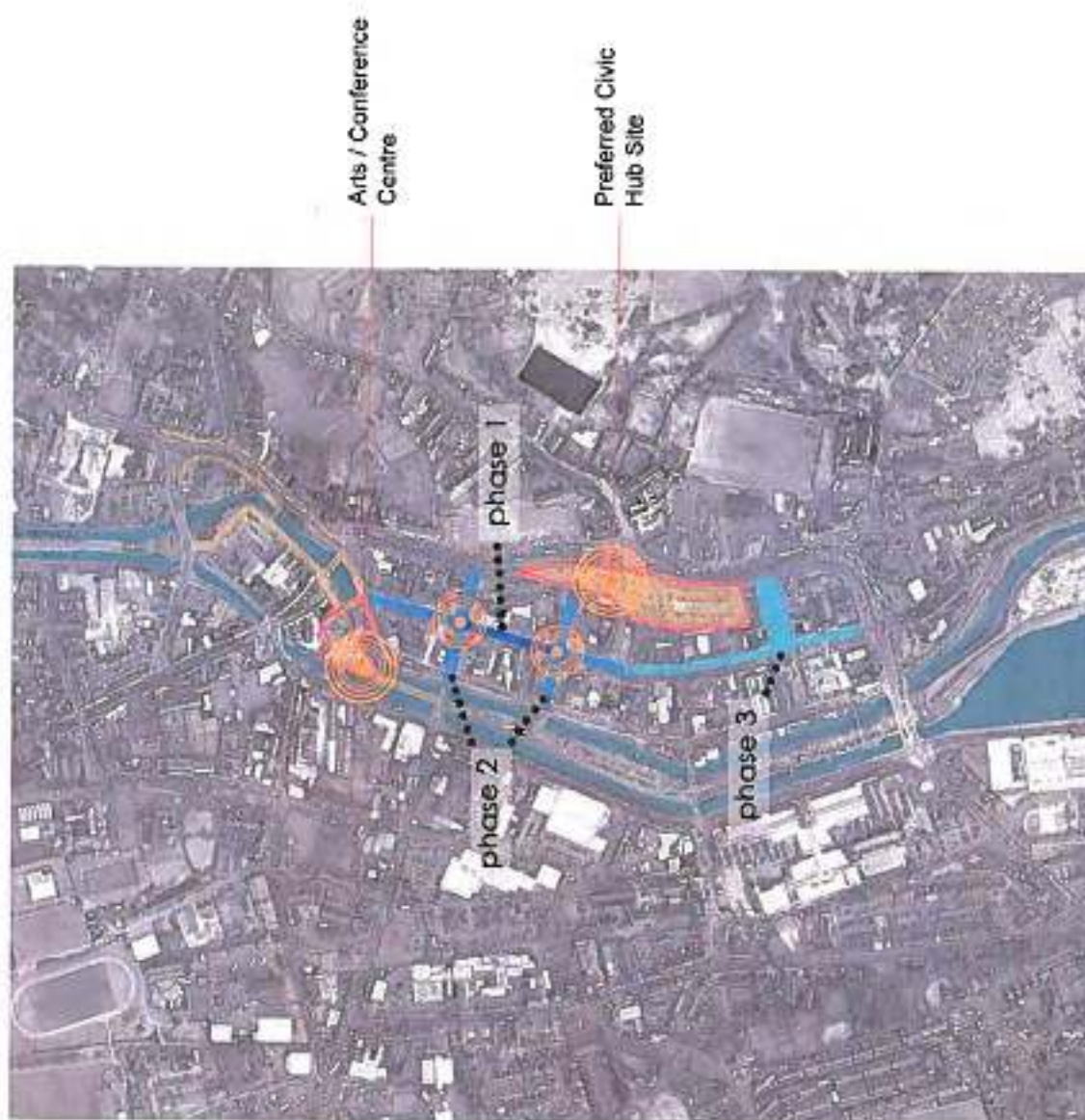
Preferred Civic
Hub Site

Arts / Conference
Centre

HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY THEATRE / CONFERENCE CENTRE

Urban Development

- Creation of new nodes, bookends
- Current public realm works
- New projects are integral in the expansion of the current public realm



Public Realm Works





1. Civic Spaces - People centred destinations that capitalise upon their site-specific assets



2. Performance Space - A place of creativity and excitement in the heart of the city



3. Core Streets - The highest quality of city streets, uniquely Newry and balancing provision for all users



4. Connecting Lanes - Historic spaces with their own distinctive character and personality



5. Access & Welcome - Positive first impressions of the city and its centre



6. Waterfront Open Space - Maximising a unique asset. A quality waterfront environment connecting the city and beyond

1. **Civic Spaces** *People centred destinations that capitalise upon their site-specific assets*
2. **Performance Space** *A place of creativity and excitement in the heart of the city*
3. **Core Streets** *The highest quality of city streets, uniquely Newry and balancing provision for all users*
4. **Connecting Lanes** *Historic spaces with their own distinctive character and personality*
5. **Access and Welcome** *Positive first impressions of the city and its centre*
6. **Waterfront Open Space** *Maximising a unique asset. A quality waterfront environment connecting the city and beyond*

Public Realm , Strategic Overview



Newry Theatre/Conference Centre



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Introduction

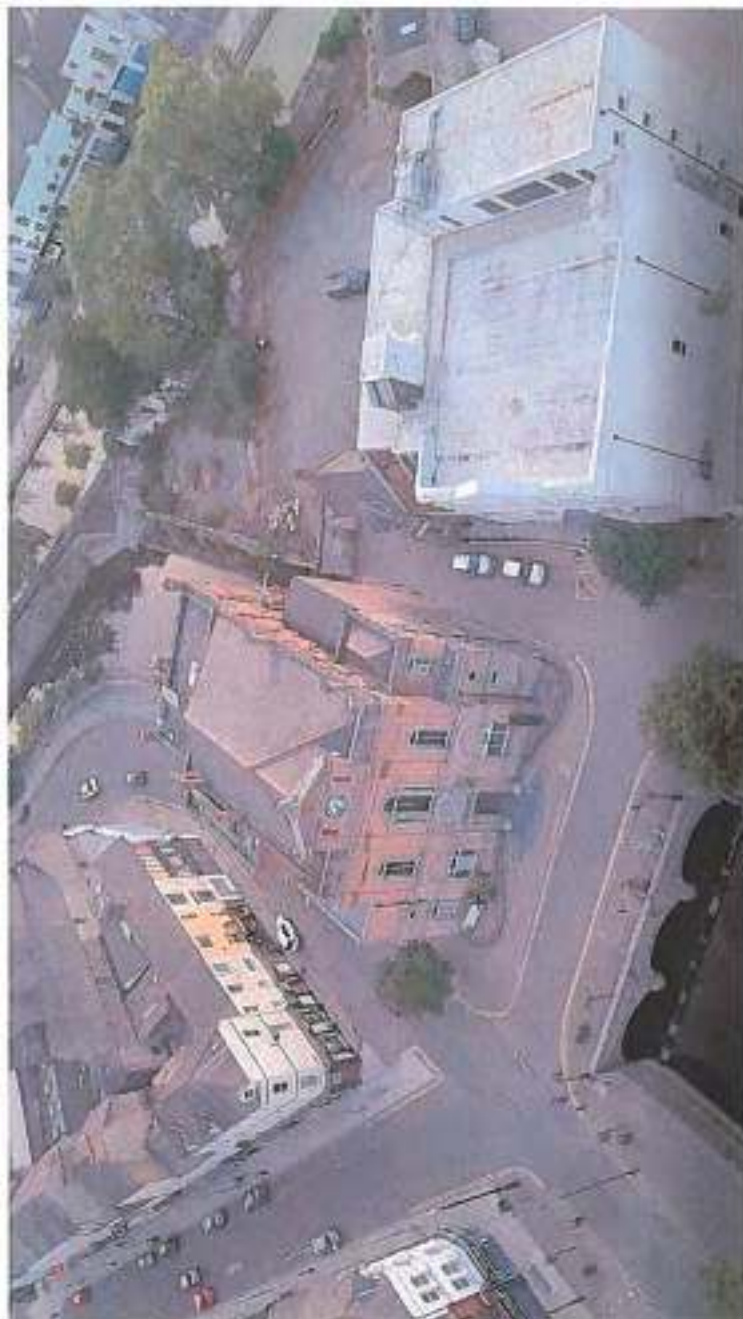
- Brief
- Site & Context
- Precedents
- Preferred Option



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY THEATRE / CONFERENCE CENTRE

Options explored

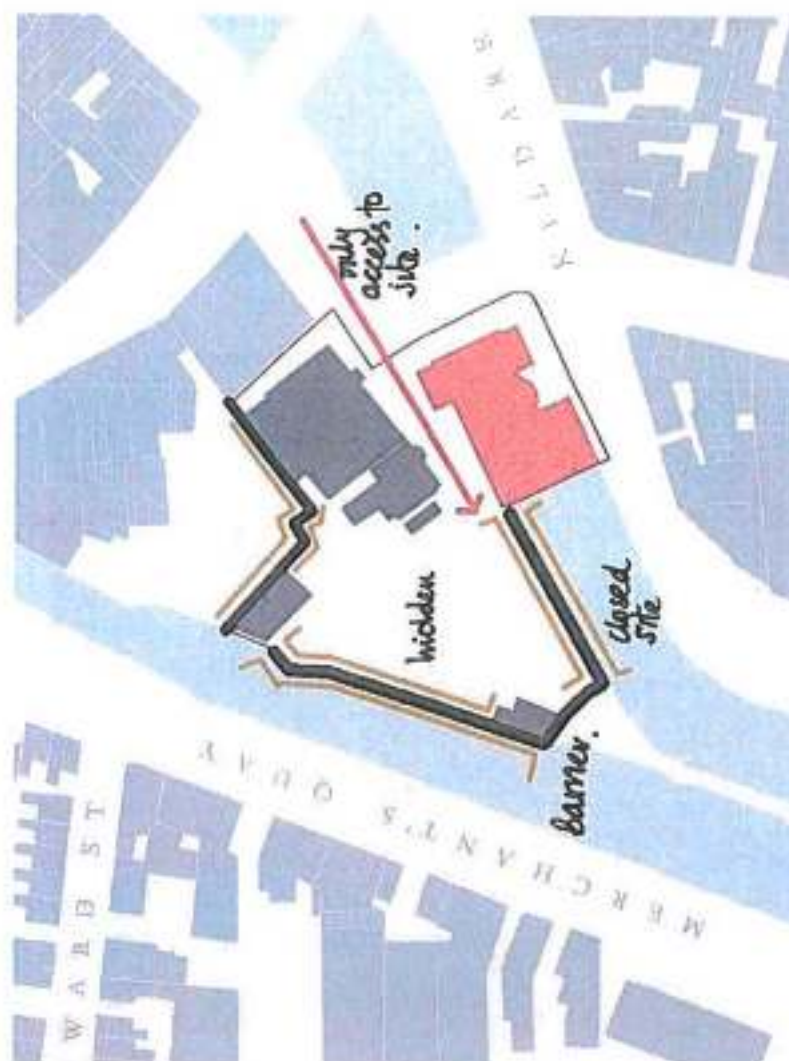
- Retention of SHAC
- Partial demolition of SHAC
- Full demolition and rebuilding of SHAC
- Retain façade of SHAC only
- Full demolition and new build



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Site Analysis

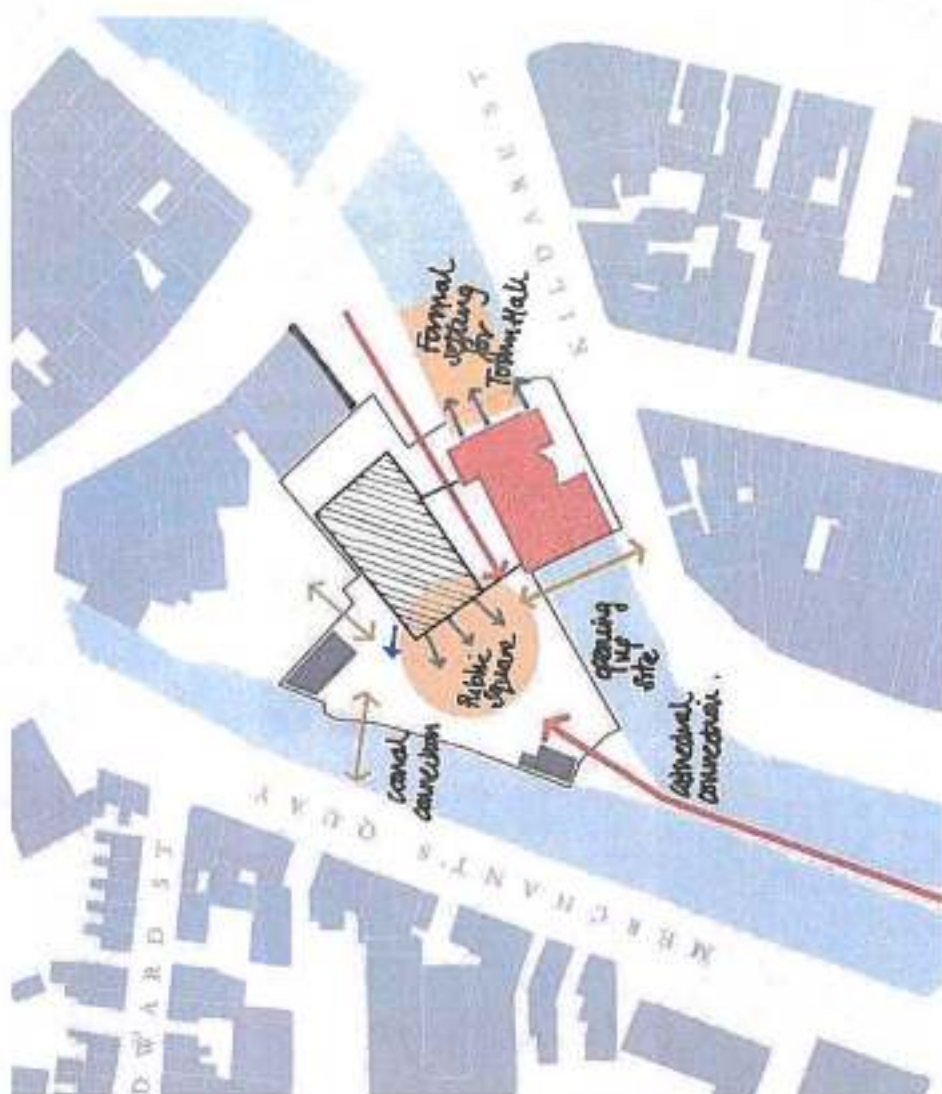
- Historic buildings and setting
- Hidden, concealed site
- Canal and Newry River are barriers
- Limited access from Newry Town Hall

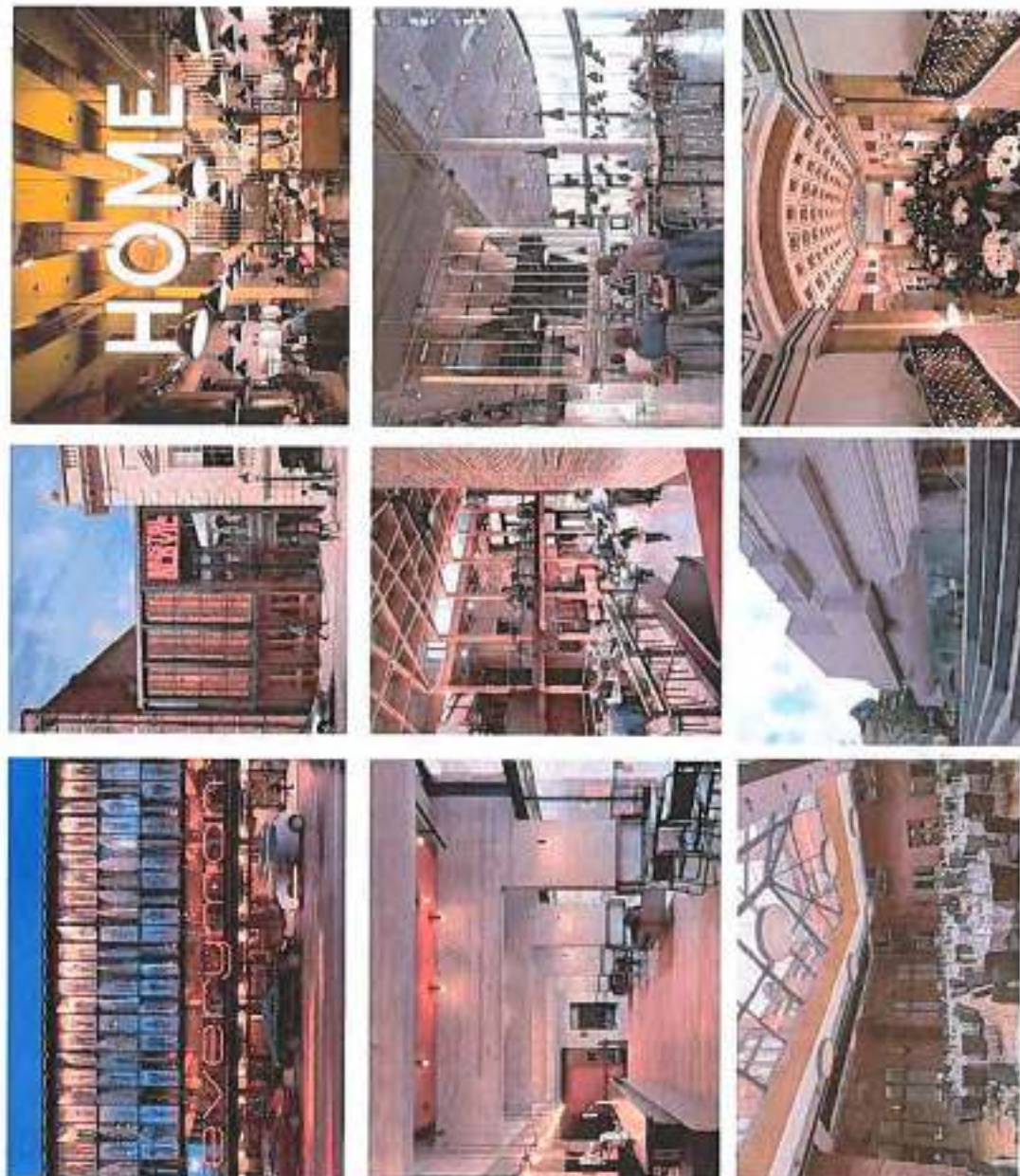


HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Site Analysis

- Historic buildings and setting
- Canal opportunity
- Connection beyond – improved permeability to Newry Cathedral and beyond
- South-facing enclosed space
- Formal response to front of Town Hall






HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY THEATRE / CONFERENCE CENTRE

Precedents

- RIDDEL HALL, BELFAST
- ULSTER MUSEUM, BELFAST
- LANDSDOWN CLUB, LONDON
- EVERYMAN THEATRE, LIVERPOOL
- THE OLD VIC, BRISTOL
- HOME THEATRE, MANCHESTER

Visits undertaken to investigate:

- Function
- Spatial Requirement



Preferred Option

Refurbishment of Newry Townhall and new build-extension

(demolition of Sean Hollywood Centre)

- Based on revised Schedule of accommodation

HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY THEATRE / CONFERENCE CENTRE

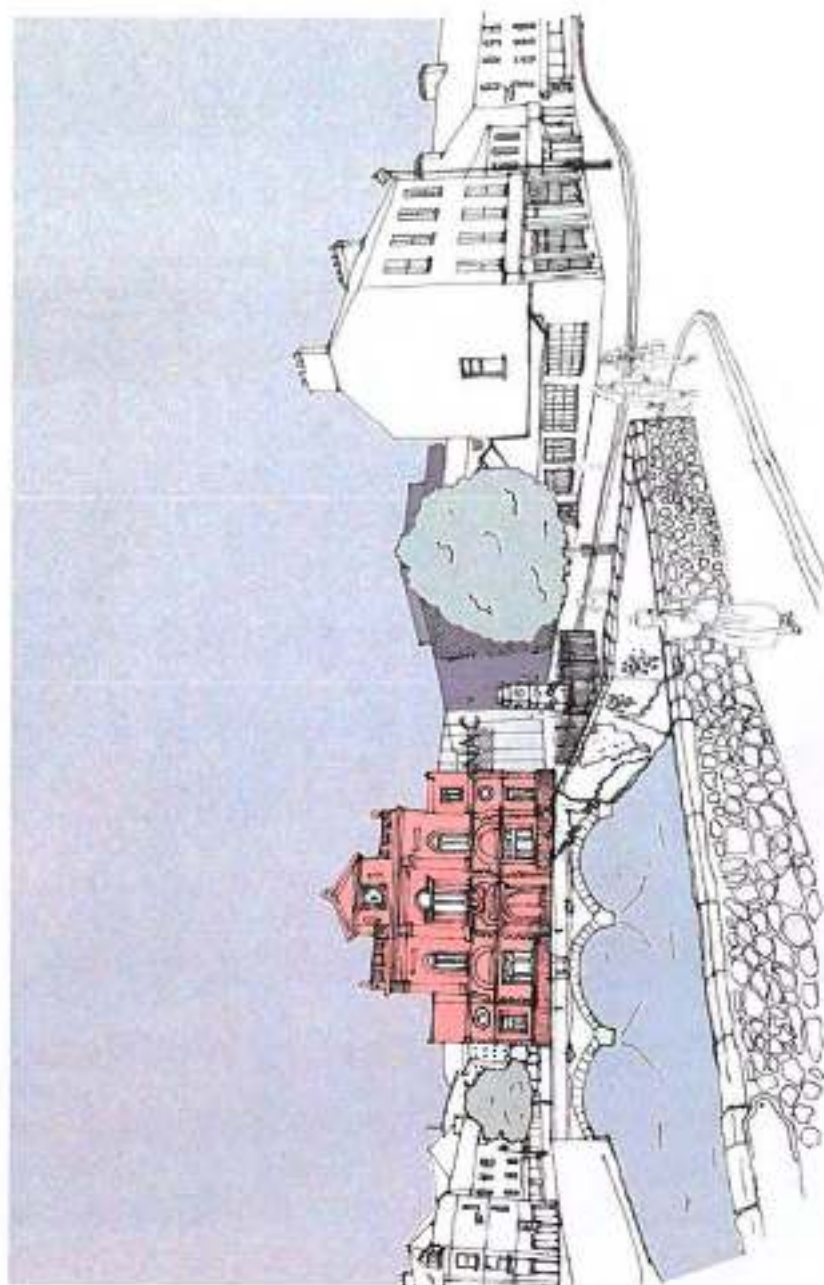
Preferred Option

Refurbishment of Newry Townhall and
new build extension

(demolition of Sean Hollywood Centre)

GIFA: 3375m²

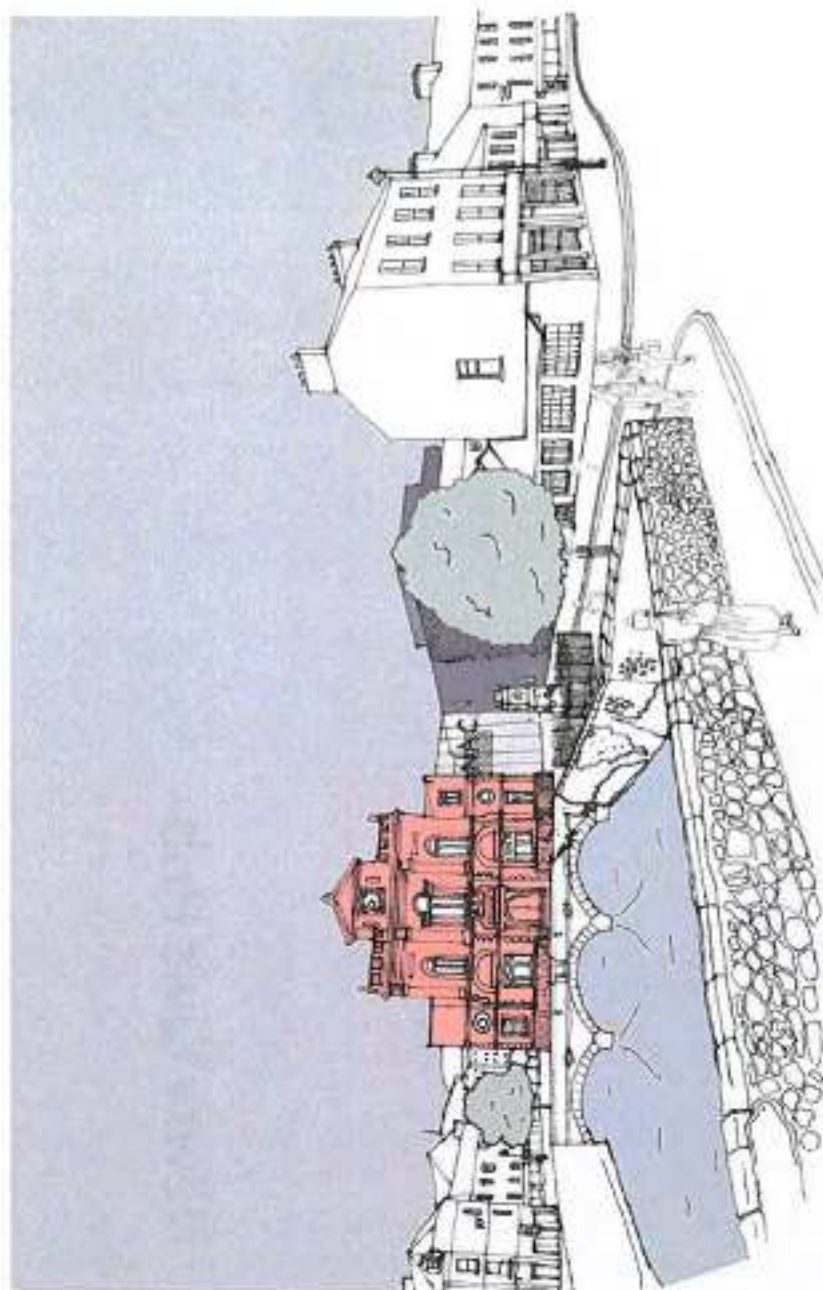
Cost: £9.9M



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY THEATRE / CONFERENCE CENTRE

Preferred Option

- Creation of new building frontages to new public space to Bank Parade and performance square
- Design and cost efficiencies – value for money
- Legibility of new building and style can help enhance Town Hall
- Connectivity beyond to city centre, Cathedral and Bagnel's Castle, pedestrian ground linkages
- Ability to increase occupancy, 125-250 theatre



Newry Civic Hub



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Introduction

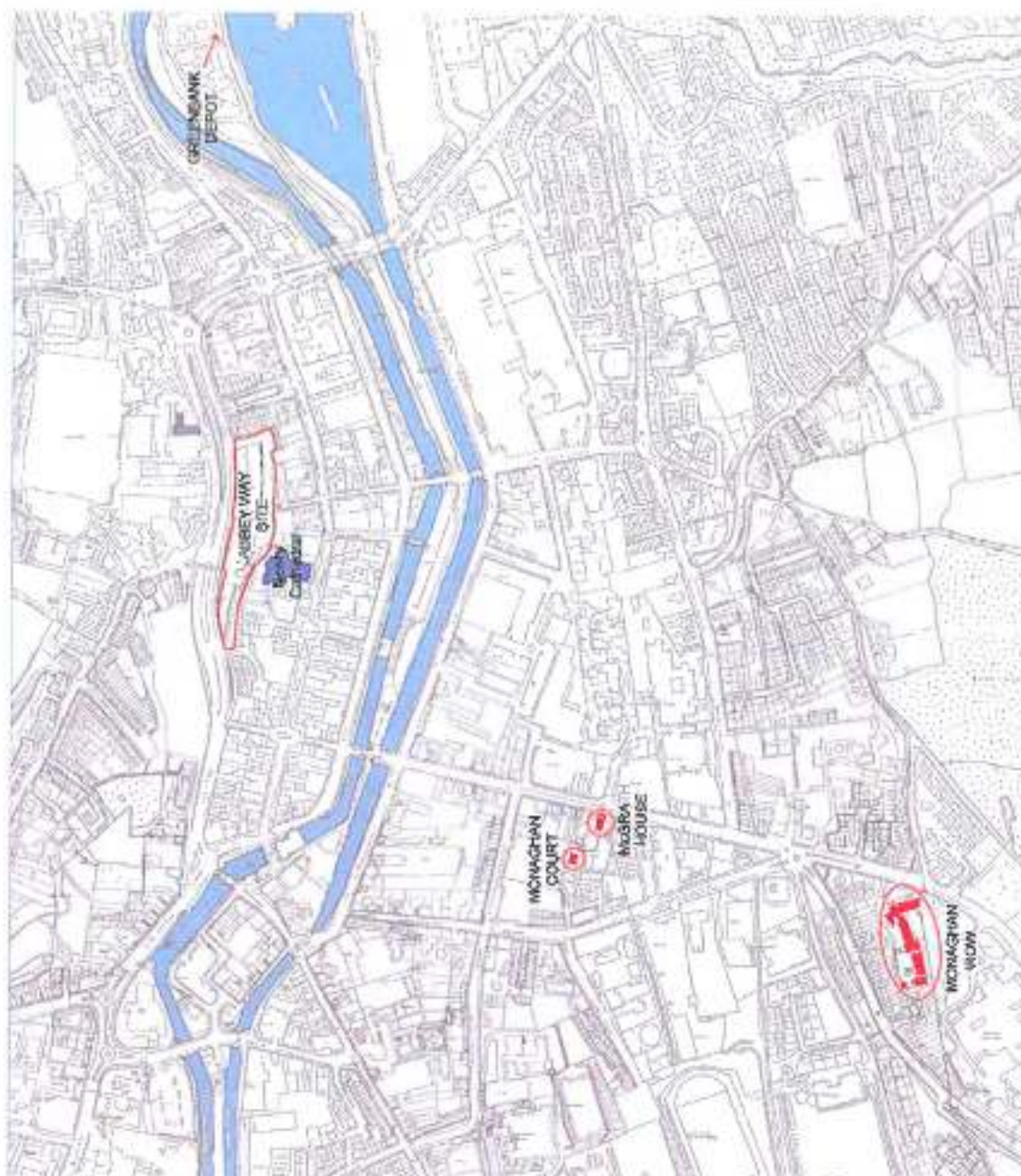
- Brief
- Site & Context
- Topography
- Precedents
- Preferred Option



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Brief

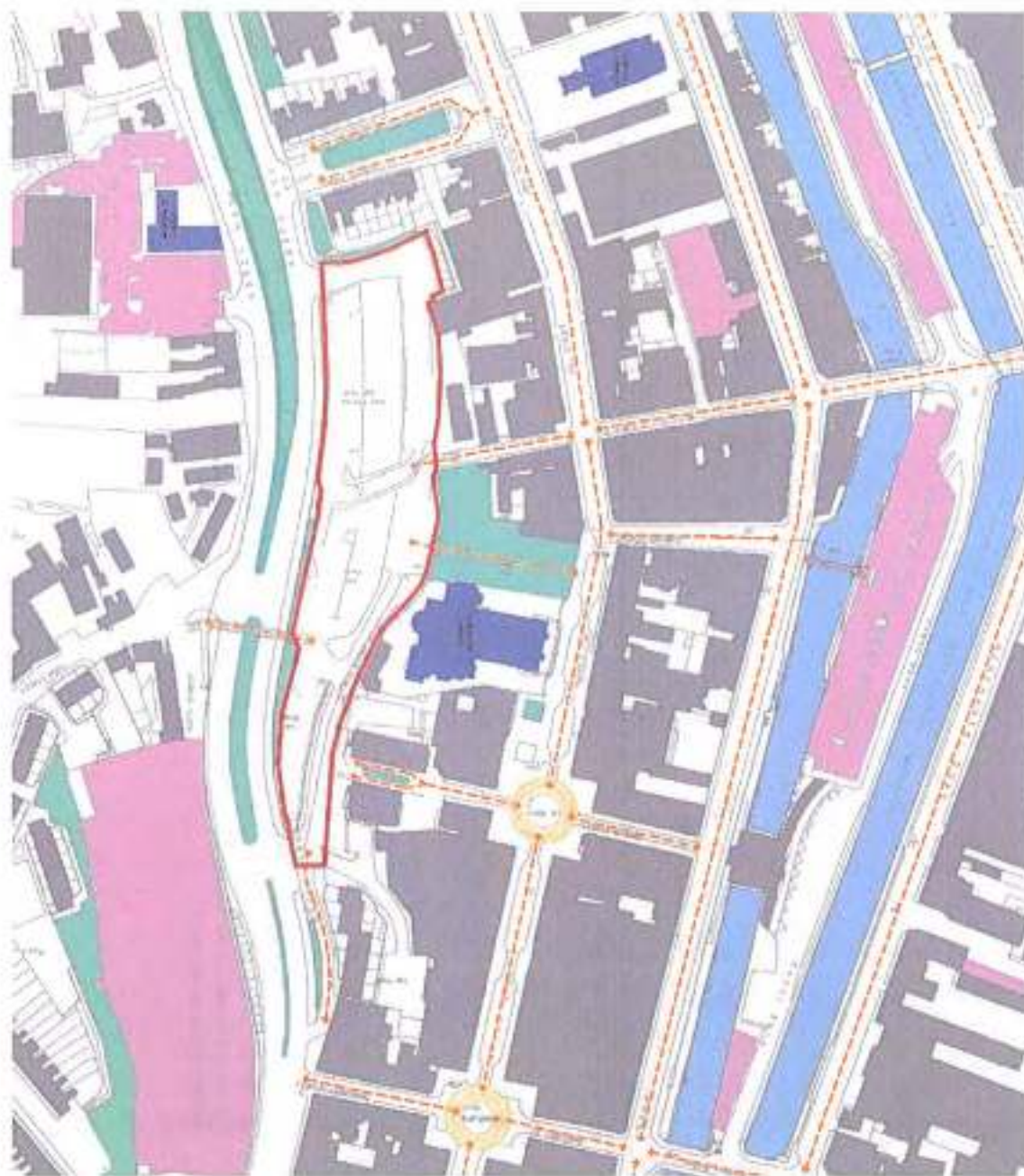
- Centralise Council services
- A building for the Council & public
- City centre regeneration
- Preferred Abbey Way Site
- Improve prominence of Cathedral
- Acknowledge parking issues



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Abbey Way Car Park Site & Context

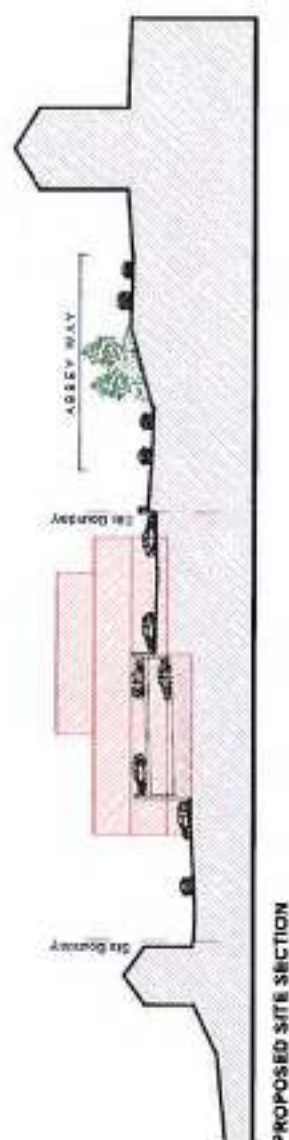
- Site Area: 0.96ha
- Building GIA: 4,270m²
- Cost: c.£7 million
- Connectivity to Cathedral, Bagenal's Castle, North Street car park, Town Hall and proposed Theatre & Conference Centre
- Movement and linkages
- Opportunity to promote presence of Cathedral within city
- Topography of site
- Parking provision



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Topography

- New building to be cut into site contours as per existing car park
- Undercroft parking with public and office space above
- Stepped roofline to address topography of site



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY CIVIC HUB

Precedents

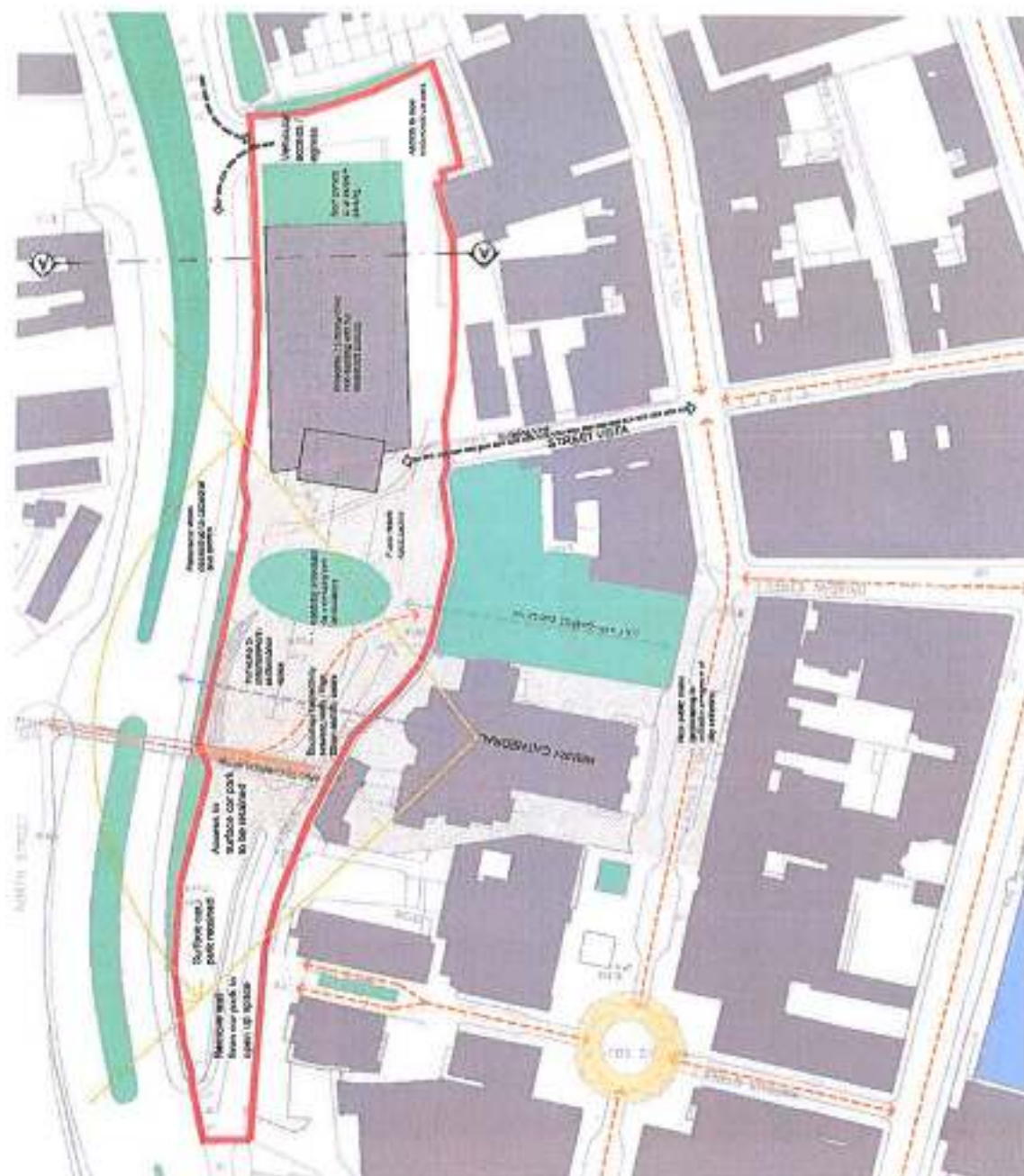
- HARD & SOFT LANDSCAPING
- TERRACING TO ADDRESS LEVEL CHANGE
- CIVIC BUILDING WITH CLEAR ENTRANCE & ASPECT TO 'CATHEDRAL SQUARE'
- WELCOMING FOYER & PUBLIC SPACES
- HUDDLE SPACES
- BREAK-OUT MEETING PLACES
- BUILDING & CIVIC SPACE PUBLIC CAN BE PROUD OF



- Site levels utilised to provide undercroft parking (c.165)
- Site opened up more to enhance presence of city cathedral and adjacent gardens.

- 'Cathedral Square' is created with additional public realm works
- Cathedral garden and new landscaping can be used as promotion for wedding facilities
- Public entrance to building clearly defined
- Existing vehicular access from Abbey Way retained
- Better connectivity of pedestrian routes to town centre

- Existing decked car park to be demolished with loss of c.147 spaces
- 83 parking spaces lost due to public realm landscaping



HAMILTON ARCHITECTS | NEWRY SPWG

Preferred Option

- Presence of city cathedral and gardens enhanced
- 'Cathedral Square'
- Abbey Way subway enhanced
- Better connectivity of pedestrian routes to town centre



Civic Hub - Site Identification Process

- 2015 – 2019 Corporate Plan
- 2015 Deloitte Process
 - Single Site Envisaged
 - 23 Sites 8 Longlisted 4 Shortlisted
- 2017 CharcoalBlue Report
 - Retain Town Hall
 - Ross Thompson Theatre/ Conference site
 - June 2018 SP&R
- 2018 & 2019 Soft Market Engagement
 - Sought Site Development Opportunities
 - Procurement Strategy



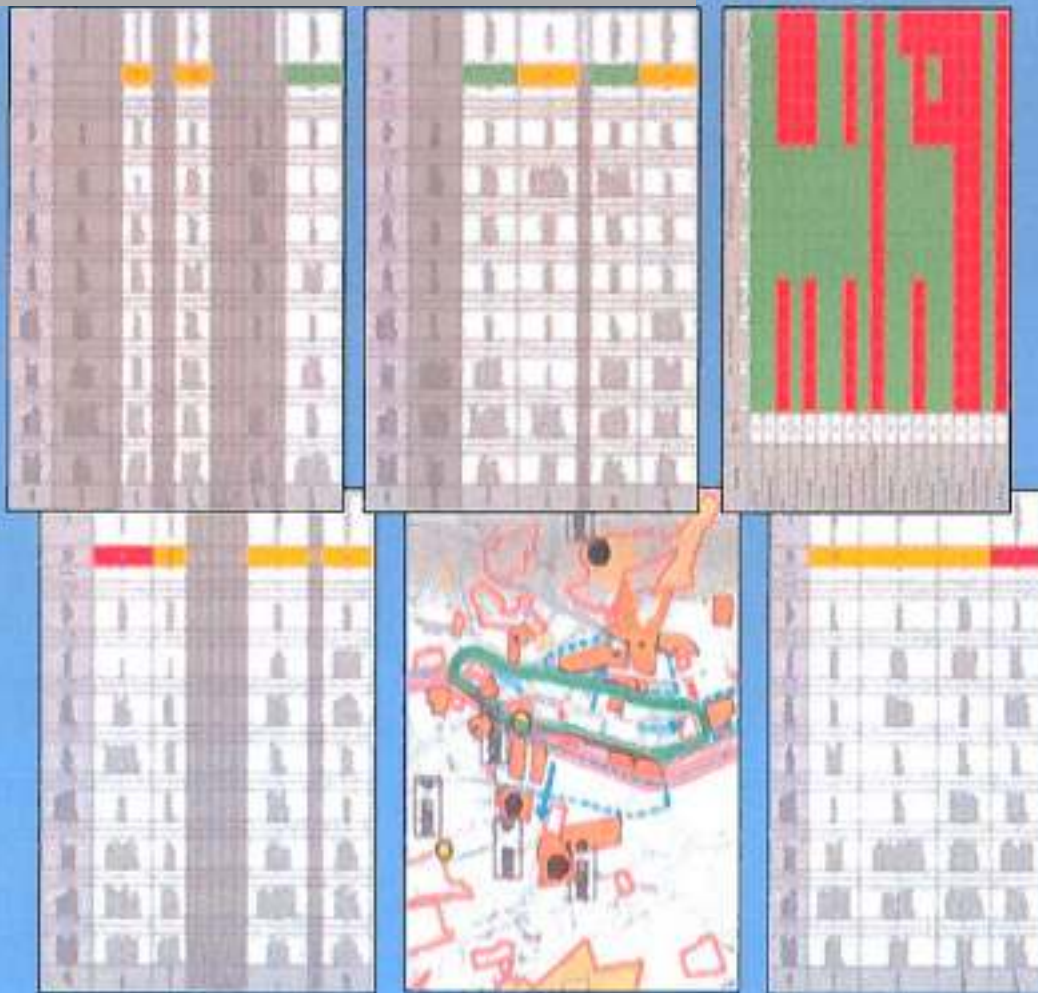
2018 – 2019 Site Analysis

Criteria; Regenerative Impact. Vehicular Access.
Site Specific Considerations. Transportation.
Availability. Planning. Sustainability

Spatial Analysis; Placemaking. Parking Provision.

Summary;

- Total of 33 Sites considered
- 16 Long Listed
- 3 Immediately Available
- Abbey Way highest scoring Council ownership.



Abbey Way - Pros & Cons

- Pros;

- No Acquisition Costs
- High Regenerative Impact
- Strong Abbey Way Transport Linkage
- Strong Civic Presence
- Newry Cathedral Place Making
- Direct Link to Hill Street & Wider Public Realm
- Strong Link to Mill Street/ Bus Station & Water Side
- Immediately Availability for Development

- Cons;

- Parking Displacement
- Existing Structures
- Sloping Topography
- Title Registration
- Noise/ Vibration Abbey Way

[illegible]

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 May 2024
Subject:	Statutory reporting – Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
Reporting Officer:	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy
Contact Officers:	Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	For noting only	X
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<p>The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (the Act) became operational for government departments and district councils on 1 June 2017 and for the remaining public authorities listed on the schedule to the Act on 1 June 2018.</p> <p>In order to fulfil its statutory duty under the Act, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) must publish a Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report detailing the information compiled by public authorities on how they have exercised the due regard duty under section 1 (1) of the Act.</p> <p>DAERA has forwarded a note commissioning the annual returns for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.</p> <p>DAERA have requested that completed returns be sent to rural.needs@daera-ni.gov.uk by Friday 21 June 2024.</p>
1.2	The appendix accompanying this report, will be submitted to meet DAERA's return deadline i.e. Annex I - Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>There is a duty on public authorities to monitor and report. Under section 3(1) of the Rural Needs Act, Council must, in such manner as may be directed by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compile information on the exercise of its functions under section 1 of the Act, • include that information in the public authority's own annual report; and • send a copy of that information to DAERA.
3.0	Recommendation
3.1	To note the completed annual return prepared and submit to DAERA to meet their requested deadline of 21 June 2024;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1 - Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	No financial or resources implications are anticipated.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p>

	Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/>
7.0	Appendices
	Appendix I: Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report for period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
8.0	Background Documents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Appendix 2 - Template for Information to be Compiled

Information to be compiled by Public Authorities under Section 3(1)(a) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

(To be completed and included in public authorities' own annual reports and submitted to DAERA for inclusion in the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring Report).

Name of Public Authority:

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Reporting Period:

April 20 23 to March 20 24

The following information should be compiled in respect of each policy, strategy and plan which has been developed, adopted, implemented or revised and each public service which has been designed or delivered by the public authority during the reporting period.

<i>Description of the activity undertaken by the public authority which is subject to section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016¹.</i>	<i>The rural policy area(s) which the activity relates to².</i>	<i>Describe how the public authority has had due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising the policy, strategy or plan or when designing or delivering the public service³.</i>
Developing the Active and Healthy Communities Business Plan 2023-2024	Cross cutting	The Active and Healthy Communities Business Plan details positive actions for all the community, however there are some specific actions identified which will directly positively impact on people living in the rural areas. An example is the continuation of the Home to Hospital volunteer driver scheme to help rural citizens in The Mourne and Slieve Gullion areas access health appointments.
Developing a Business Continuity Policy	Cross cutting	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Chief Executive's Department Business Plan 2023-2024	Cross cutting	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.

While the aim of the document is to deliver positive change for the community, there are specific indicators included in the plan which are scored by measures which will have positive impacts for people living in rural areas. These measures have now been updated in 2023 with new data becoming available. Examples include broadband delivery and rural crime data.		
Revising the Conflict of Interest Policy and associated Conflict of Interest Procedures	Cross cutting	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Corporate Services Business Plan 2023-2024	Cross cutting	There are some specific actions which will directly positively impact on people living in the rural areas. Capital project delivery is an objective with the Corporate Services directorate and some of the proposed projects identified will be delivered within rural areas. Responsibility of ensuring that Council meets their statutory duty in relation to The Rural Needs Act sits within the Corporate Services department.
Developing the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor (DBEC) Partnership Strategy and Action Plan 2022	Cross cutting	The core nature of the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor Partnership Strategy and Action Plan has not been influenced significantly by rural needs but consideration of the specific issues that may affect individuals and businesses in rural areas allow adjustments to be made to the modes of delivery to ensure equal access and participation. Issues considered in relation to the socio-economic needs of people in rural areas include promotion, access to support services/training etc., adjustments to delivery to facilitate attendance for young people, older people, women, etc. who may live in rural areas and experience travel challenges, and childcare challenges.
Revising the Dealing with Changed Circumstances Policy	Rural Business	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing a public service tourism rebrand for Newry, Mourne and Down	Rural Tourism	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund	Agri-environment	Through the Rural Needs Impact Assessment it was identified that engagement will be localised across all Council areas to increase awareness and improve

			accessibility to the Fund in all communities and all parts of Northern Ireland. Funding Call workshops will be alternated between urban and rural areas for each call.
Revising the Down County Museum Collections Development Policy	Internal		No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Down County Museum Collections Care and Conservation Policy	Internal		No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Performance Improvement Objectives 2023-2024	Cross cutting		<p>Consultation and engagement on the performance improvement objectives and corporate priorities highlighted the following issues in relation to rural areas and rural communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More investment in coastal and rural areas, • As leisure facilities are only in the main towns community centres need to be improved to allow for the provision of such services in rural areas, • More community clean ups in towns and villages to encourage civic pride. <p>‘Supporting actions’ that have been developed to address the needs and issues which have been identified to deliver positive outcomes for rural areas include Performance Improvement Objective 1: Number of capital leisure projects progressed, and Performance Improvement Objective 3: Support for community clean ups.</p>
Developing the Emergency Communications Plan	Internal		No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Emergency Management Plan	Cross cutting		No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Directorate Business Plan 2023-2024	Cross cutting		The Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism Directorate Business Plan details positive actions for all the community. However there are some specific actions which will directly positively impact on people living in the rural areas. This includes promoting the revitalisation of rural areas, improvement in rural connectivity and continue to develop The Mourne Gateway Tourism project.
Designing Council's implementation of Forest	Rural Tourism		Park charges were already in place in two of the

		Council owned parks in the district. By introducing parking charges in all Council owned parks and also offering residents one pass per household for one public park of your choice, Council has now created a consistent approach where all residents benefit equally.
Revising the Newry, Mourne and Down Museum Collections Care and Conservation Policy Statement 2023-2026	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing a Forward Plan for Newry, Mourne and Down Museums 2023-2026	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising Newry, Mourne and Down Loans Policy and Procedures 2023-2026	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Newry, Mourne and Down Museums Documentation Policy 202-2026	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Newry, Mourne and Down Sustainability Policy 2023-2026	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Newry, Mourne and Down Museums Volunteer Policy	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revision of the Performance Improvement Policy	Cross cutting	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Implementing a Retention and Disposal Schedule	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Street Trading Designation Policy	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Street Trading Enforcement Policy	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Street Trading Mobile License Policy	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.

		No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Street Trading Stationary License Policy	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Revising the Street Trading Temporary License Policy	Internal	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Sustainability and Environment Directorate Business Plan 2023-2024	Cross cutting	No social or economic needs specific to people in rural areas were identified by the Council in relation to the policy.
Developing the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2028	Rural Tourism	<p>When developing the strategy, action plan and undertaking the Rural Needs Impact Assessment, it was determined that the local rural communities must be invested in when developing and promoting the region as a tourist destination.</p> <p>Under Strategic Priority 5: Prioritise investment in tourism-related infrastructure the strategy states that it is important to note that investment in tourism-related infrastructure provides wide-ranging benefits that encompass improving the experience for visitors, maximising opportunities for Newry, Mourne and Down's tourism industry, and improving the quality of life (including the generation of social and economic benefits) for Newry, Mourne and Down's local community.</p>

NOTES

1. This information should normally be contained in section 1B of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.
2. This information should normally be contained in section 2D of the RNIA Template completed in respect of the activity.
3. The information contained in sections 3D, 4A & 5B of the RNIA Template should be considered when completing this section.

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 May 2024
Subject:	Statutory reporting - Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2024
Reporting Officer:	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy
Contact Officers:	Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	For noting only	X
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1.0	Purpose and Background
1.1	<p>In line with Council's Section 75 statutory duties and commitments within our approved Equality Scheme, policy screening reports are published quarterly.</p> <p>The Quarterly Policy Screening Report for the period January – March 2024, including screening reports, is available on Council's website https://www.newrymournedown.org/corporate-policy-and-equality. This information has also been forwarded to our equality consultees.</p>
2.0	Key issues
2.1	<p>As per the Council's approved Equality Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies Council proposes to adopt must be equality screened, prior to implementation, to assess the likely impact of the policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations. • Council must publish quarterly reports on equality screening which are available on Council's website and forwarded to equality scheme consultees.
3.0	Recommendations
3.1	To note the Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2024.
4.0	Resource implications
4.1	No financial or resources implications are anticipated.
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)
5.1	<i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i>

	<p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	<p>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</p>
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>Appendix I: Section 75 Policy Screening Report – Quarterly Report for period January – March 2024.</p>
8.0	<p>Background Documents</p>

	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Equality Scheme.

**Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Section 75 Policy Screening Report
Quarterly Report January – March 2024**

Policy	Details of policy	Screening Outcome
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's draft Performance Improvement Objectives 2024-25	<p>The following five performance improvement objectives have been developed, all of which are clearly linked to the Community Plan and draft Corporate Plan 2024-27.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will support the health and wellbeing of local people by improving our leisure facilities and services 2. We will grow the economy by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs 3. We will improve the cleanliness of our District by addressing littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents 4. We will improve our sustainability and reduce our impacts in relation to climate change 5. We will improve the processing times of planning applications and enforcement cases by implementing the Planning Service Improvement Programme 	No EQIA considered necessary
Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2028	<p>The purpose of this plan is to provide a clear roadmap and practical guidelines to maximise opportunities for the Newry Mourne and Down district (NMD) as a tourism destination for the period 2023-2028. This plan follows the Tourism Strategy 2017-2021 that represents the first tourism strategy coordinated by Newry Mourne Down District Council (established as a local authority in Northern Ireland in 2015).</p> <p>The Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2028 clarifies the goals, objectives and strategic priorities that can maximise opportunities and position NMD as a leading tourism destination in Ireland. To that end, this plan is set out in two parts:</p>	No EQIA considered necessary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic Analysis: a summary of the research and recommendation outcomes that inform the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2028• Action Plan 2023-2028: outlining the strategic priorities and associated actions that should be undertaken over the upcoming years	
Tourism Re-brand for Newry, Mourne and Down – Ireland’s True Nature with a geo locator Mourne, Gullion, Strangford	Creation of a tourism brand offering representing the Council district.	No EQIA considered necessary

Report to:	Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 May 2024
Subject:	Annual report for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 on requests related to naming Council facilities, planting trees and to locate artworks/sculptures on Council property.
Reporting Officer:	Colin Moffett, Head of Corporate Policy
Contact Officers:	Suzanne Rice, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer

Confirm how this Report should be treated by placing an x in either:-

For decision	For noting only	X
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1.0	Purpose and Background																
1.1	<p>Requests related to naming Council facilities, planting trees and to locate artworks/sculptures on Council property fall within the scope of the following Council policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy on naming Council facilities• Policy on requests to plant a tree on Council property• Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property <p>Applications are administered as per each policy’s specific agreed guidelines and associated procedure.</p>																
1.2	<p>During the reporting period Council received fourteen applications; eight related to the policy on naming Council facilities, three related to the policy on requests to plant a tree on Council property and three related to the policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property.</p>																
1.3	<p>The following table sets out details related to the applications received and considered during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2024:</p> <table><tr><th>Applicant</th><th>Relevant Policy</th><th>Detail of request</th><th>Decision</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Policy on naming Council facilities</td><td>To place a plaque to recognise the Warrenpoint - Omeath Ferry at the Marine Parade Slipway, Warrenpoint.</td><td>Approved</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Policy on naming Council facilities</td><td>To locate a ‘Chatty Bench’ in Kilmorey Park, Newry.</td><td>Approved</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Policy on naming Council facilities</td><td>To erect two information panels, one in Crossgar and one in Forkhill explaining their link to the Titanic and noting</td><td>Approved</td></tr></table>	Applicant	Relevant Policy	Detail of request	Decision	1	Policy on naming Council facilities	To place a plaque to recognise the Warrenpoint - Omeath Ferry at the Marine Parade Slipway, Warrenpoint.	Approved	2	Policy on naming Council facilities	To locate a ‘Chatty Bench’ in Kilmorey Park, Newry.	Approved	3	Policy on naming Council facilities	To erect two information panels, one in Crossgar and one in Forkhill explaining their link to the Titanic and noting	Approved
Applicant	Relevant Policy	Detail of request	Decision														
1	Policy on naming Council facilities	To place a plaque to recognise the Warrenpoint - Omeath Ferry at the Marine Parade Slipway, Warrenpoint.	Approved														
2	Policy on naming Council facilities	To locate a ‘Chatty Bench’ in Kilmorey Park, Newry.	Approved														
3	Policy on naming Council facilities	To erect two information panels, one in Crossgar and one in Forkhill explaining their link to the Titanic and noting	Approved														

			the specific victims from these locations.	
	4	Policy on naming Council facilities	To locate a bench in Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor to mark a 70th birthday.	Approved
	5	Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property	Request to place an artwork on the Council bus stop at Fords Cross, Silverbridge - Reimaging Project.	Approved
	6	Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property	Request to place an art mural at Quayside Play Park, Ardglass.	Approved
	7	Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property	Request to paint the walls and design a mural/wall art for the main wall at the Greater Linen Hall area, Newry.	Approved
	8	Policy on new Artworks/Sculptures on Council property	Request to place an artwork behind Saintfield Community Centre, Saintfield on the wall opposite the community garden.	Approved
2.0	Key issues			
2.1	No issues have been identified.			
3.0	Recommendations			
3.1	Members are asked to note Annual report for the 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 period on requests related to naming Council facilities, plant trees and locate artworks/sculptures on Council property.			
4.0	Resource implications			
4.1	No financial or resource implications.			
5.0	Due regard to equality of opportunity and regard to good relations (complete the relevant sections)			
5.1	<p><i>General proposal with no clearly defined impact upon, or connection to, specific equality and good relations outcomes</i></p> <p>It is not anticipated the proposal will have an adverse impact upon equality of opportunity or good relations</p>			
				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5.2	<p><i>Proposal relates to the introduction of a strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or sensitive or contentious decision</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) has been equality screened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The policy (strategy, policy initiative or practice and / or decision) will be subject to equality screening prior to implementation <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.3	<p><i>Proposal initiating consultation</i></p> <p>Consultation will seek the views of those directly affected by the proposal, address barriers for particular Section 75 equality categories to participate and allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be 12 weeks <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Consultation period will be less than 12 weeks (rationale to be provided) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p>
6.0	<p>Due regard to Rural Needs (please tick all that apply)</p>
6.1	<p>Proposal relates to developing, adopting, implementing or revising a policy / strategy / plan / designing and/or delivering a public service</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please complete the following:</p> <p>Rural Needs Impact Assessment completed <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.0	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>N/A</p>
8.0	<p>Background Documents</p>
	<p>N/A</p>