

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 17 August 2022 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, District Council Offices, Monaghan Row, Newry and via MS Teams.

Chair: Councillor O Magennis (Chamber)

Members: Councillor T Andrews (Chamber)
Councillor C Casey (Teams)
Councillor W Clarke (Teams)
Councillor D Curran (Chamber)
Councillor A Finnegan (Teams)
Councillor G Malone (Teams)
Councillor K McKeivitt (Teams)
Councillor A McMurray (Teams)
Councillor D Murphy (Teams)
Councillor M Ruane (Teams)
Councillor D Taylor (Teams)

Non-Committee Members: Councillor G Hanna
Councillor H McKee
Councillor H Reilly

Officials in Attendance: Mr A Cassells, Director Sustainability and Environment
Mr K Scullion, Assistant Director Facilities Management and Maintenance
Ms S Murphy, Acting Assistant Director Waste Management
Mrs L Cummins, Democratic Services Officer
Ms L Dillon, Democratic Services Officer

SE/113/2022: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Councillor Owen and Stokes

SE/114/2022: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

No declarations of conflicts of interest were made.

SE/115/2022: ACTION SHEET OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2022

Read: Action Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 23 June 2022. ***(Circulated)***.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed the Action Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 23 June 2022 be noted and actions removed as marked.**

FOR CONSIDERATION AND DECISION

SE/116/2022: NOTICE OF MOTION RE: HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS AT AMENITY SITES

The following Notice of Motion came forward for consideration in the names of Councillor G Hanna and Councillor H Reilly:

"Council has installed height restriction on entry into amenity sites which prevents higher vehicles/vans exceeding amenity sites. Height restrictions should be removed immediately as they prevent a lot of ratepayers disposing of domestic waste at the sites."

Note: It was agreed at the Council Meeting held on Monday 1 August 2022 to defer the above Notice of Motion for consideration at the Sustainability & Environment Committee.

Councillor Hanna formally proposed the Notice of Motion, advising that the amount of complaints received was colossal and the height restraints had significantly reduced ratepayers access to amenity sites, having an impact in reduction in service provided by Council. Higher vans are often required to transport particular types of waste.

Councillor Hanna highlighted that a disabled person was not able to access the amenity site as their vehicle was too high to go under the barriers. Stating that the matter needed rectified as soon as possible and called on all Members to support the motion.

Councillor Reilly seconded the Motion.

During discussion the following points were made:

- Height restrictions was an issue raised regularly across the District at Recycling Centres.
- Barriers had been installed so that Recycling Centres were not exploited by commercial users, however domestic users were being negatively impacted.
- Recycling Centres generated a fair amount of income from commercial users.
- A lot of domestic vehicles are higher i.e: jeeps, people carriers, campervans and disability vehicles which cannot access recycling centres due to height restrictions.

- Was there an update on previous request for permits.
- More promotion required that sites are Recycling Centres and not dumping grounds.
- Opening times especially since Covid had been restricted and traffic issues was a problem, especially access issues at Bann Road, Castlewellan and Chapel Road, Newry.
- A lot of residents don't drive or don't have access to a car and have to hire a van or their only means of transport is a van. How do they dispose of goods?
- More flexibility in staff controlling the use of sites and maybe having an inspection point when it is clear its domestic goods.
- Abuse of staff was not acceptable.
- It was highlighted when height restrictions barriers were introduced it could cause an increase in dumping across the District.
- Domestic items had been turned away at Recycling Centres.
- Collection service for bulky items was unreliable at times if the service was under pressure.
- Not all work vans have builders waste they may have domestic waste of their own.

Ms Murphy responded as follows:

- Height restrictions were introduced to deter commercial waste coming into sites.
- Decision to install height restriction barriers was based on a policy decision in 2019 by Council.
- A bulky collection service to residential properties was available.
- Disabled drivers should be granted access and barriers opened to facilitate this.
- It was important to increase recycling rates and getting out the message of sorting and receiving commercial waste is key, given the difference in the cost of the disposal of the unsortable residual opposed to the recyclable goods, which provided an income.
- Ms Murphy agreed to review Council policy on waste acceptance at the Household Recycling sites.
- Permits – Was a previous recommendation which needed to be implemented and would be addressed in next report.
- Opening times and traffic would be addressed as part of the HRC review.
- Staff abuse was a regular issue before barriers introduced when they challenged people what they were bring to the site, officers welcomed Elected Members support on a no tolerance policy on abuse of staff.
- Bann Road site visibility, access and accidents at barrier was being looked at an extra signage had been increased and kept under review.

Councillor Murphy said he understood reasons why barriers had been introduced however problems that had risen for domestic users was unforeseen and needed to be addressed. Councillor Murphy proposed an amendment to include "a report to be brought back to the next Sustainability and Environment committee meeting on Tuesday 20 September 2022 on how to readdress the problem with domestic users." This was seconded by Councillor Magennis.

Councillor Hanna accepted the amendment stating that he wanted a detailed report addressing concerns raised.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed Council officers examine options regarding height restrictions at Council Amenity sites and report back with recommendations to the next meeting of the Sustainability & Environment Committee to be held on Tuesday 20 September 2022.

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

SE/117/2022: QUARTERLY PROVISIONAL ESTIMATES JANUARY – MARCH 2022

Read: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics – quarterly provisional estimates for January to March 2022. *(Circulated)*.

Mr Cassells advised members that Newry Mourne and Down District Council sends a very small percentage of waste to landfill sites and should be commended as it had the second lowest landfill figures out of 11 Councils.

Councillor Clarke stated that he had previously and was still opposed to an incineration plant within the District, recycling was the best way forward and finding new uses for recycled products.

AGREED: It was agreed to note Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics – quarterly provisional estimates for January to March 2022.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

SE/118/2022: UPDATE RE: CHEWING GUM CLEAN UP FUND

Read: Report dated 17 August 2022 from Ms S Murphy (Acting) Assistant Director Waste Management regarding an update on the Chewing Gum Clean Up Fund. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: It was proposed by Councillor McKevitt, seconded by Councillor Magennis to nominate Councillor Andrews as Ambassador to champion the fund.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed to note the Report and nominate Councillor Andrews as an Ambassador to champion the fund.

EXEMPT INFORMATION ITEMS

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

Items 6, 7, 08 and 09 are 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.

On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Mc Kevitt, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on these items.

SE/119/2022: BUSINESS CASE – REPLACEMENT 4X4 VEHICLES FOR CLOSED LANDFILL SITES

Read: Report dated 17 August 2022 from Ms S Murphy (Acting) Assistant Director Waste Management, regarding Business Case – replacement of 4x4 vehicles for Closed Landfill sites. *(Circulated)*

SE/120/2022: CONTRACT EXTENSIONS – NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES ACTION PLAN

Read: Report dated 22 June 2022 from Ms S Murphy (Acting) Assistant Director Waste Management, regarding contract extensions as identified in the Neighbourhood Services Contract Action Plan. *(Circulated)*

SE/121/2022: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN – 30 JUNE 2022

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin held on 30 June 2022. *(Circulated)*.

SE/122/2022: MINUTES OF ARC 21 SPECIAL 'IN COMMITTEE' JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING – 26 MAY 2022

Read: Minutes of Arc 21 'In Committee' Joint Committee Meeting held on 26 May 2022. ***(Circulated)***.

Councillor McKeivitt proposed, and Councillor Murphy seconded, to come out of closed session.

When the Committee was out of closed session the Chairperson reported the following had been agreed:-

SE/119/2022 – Business Case – replacement of 4x4 vehicles for closed Landfill Sites

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to approve the Business Case as per Appendix 1, for the replacement of one Four Wheel Drive Vehicle for use by the Waste Processing section to access and service closed landfill sites across Newry Mourne and Down District Council area.

SE/120/2022 – Contract Extensions – Neighbourhood Services Action Plan

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to note the contents of Report dated 17 August 2022 from Ms S Murphy (Acting) Assistant Director Waste Management, regarding contract extensions as identified in the Neighbourhood Services Contract Action Plan.

SE/121/2022 - Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin dated 30 June 2022

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed to note this bulletin.

SE/122/2022 - Arc21 Joint Committee Meeting 'in Committee' Minutes of 26 May 2022

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed to note these Minutes.

FOR NOTING

SE/123/2022: ACTION SHEET: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES WORKING GROUP MEETING – MONDAY 08 AUGUST 2022

Read: Action Sheet arising from Neighbourhood Services Working Group Meeting held on Monday 08 August 2022.
(Circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to note the above Action Sheet and actions removed as marked.

SE/124/2022: **ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY 26 MAY 2022**

Read: Arc21 JC Meeting Minutes held on Thursday 26 May 2022.
(Circulated)

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was it was agreed to note the above Minutes.

SE/125/2022: **HISTORIC ACTIONS TRACKING SHEET**

Read: Historic Actions Tracking Sheet *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed the Historic Actions Tracking Sheet of the Neighbourhood Services Committee Meetings be noted and actions removed as marked.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.04pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 05 September 2022.

Signed: **Councillor O Magennis**
Chairperson of Sustainability & Environment Committee

Signed: **Mr A Cassells**
Director of Sustainability & Environment