

NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 21 March 2023 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 Bowsie (Teams)
Councillor W Clarke (Teams)
Councillor D Curran (Chamber)
Councillor A Finnegan (Teams)
Councillor C King (Teams)
Councillor G Malone (Teams)
Councillor D Murphy (Chamber)
Councillor K McKeivitt (Chamber)
Councillor A McMurray (Teams)
Councillor M Ruane (Teams)
Councillor D Taylor (Teams)
Councillor J Tinnelly (Teams)

Non Committee Members: Councillor C Enright (Teams)
Councillor R Howell (Teams)
Councillor D McAteer (Teams)

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
Mr A Mallon, Head of Maintenance
Ms G Kane, Head of Facilities Management
Ms C McAteer, Democratic Services Officer
Ms L Dillon, Democratic Services Officer

SE/027/2023: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Apologies were received from Cllr. Stokes.

Councillor Magennis Chairperson, said this was the last Meeting of the Committee in the current Council term. She extended her thanks and best wishes to Councillor Dermot Curran, Councillor Gavin Malone and Councillor Gary Stokes who were not seeking re-election in the upcoming Council elections. The Chair paid tribute to Councillor Curran who had given over 50 years service to Council and said he well deserved his retirement.

Councillors Curran and Malone thanked the Members for their kind remarks and best wishes.

The Chairperson then paid tribute to Kevin Scullion at his last meeting of Council. She wished Kevin all the best and said it had been a pleasure working with him over the past few years.

Councillors Andrews, McMurray, Ruane, Taylor, McKeivitt, Clarke, Tinnelly, and Enright also paid tribute to Kevin describing him as an officer who was always on hand to work with Councillors if they had a problem; he understood what Councillors jobs were all about and that when they brought an issue to his attention, it was on behalf of constituents and he was one of the most effective and efficient officials the Council had in dealing with issues raised by Councillors. They extended best wishes to Kevin and his family as he approached this new chapter in his life.

Mr Scullion thanked the Chair and Members for their best wishes. He said he started Council in 1991 and had no regrets during his time working with the Council. He said he had always enjoyed working with this Committee and had found the Councillors to be very supportive of the officers. He wished all those taking part in the elections every success and for those who were leaving good health and long life in terms of what they did next.

The Chair and Members also thanked Colette McAteer and Colette O'Rourke who were retiring from the Council and wished them all the best.

SE/028/2023: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"

Councillor Taylor declared an interest in Item 10 – report on Town Clocks. He said he served as a member of the Select Vestry of St. Patrick's Church.

SE/029/2023: ACTION SHEET OF THE SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2023

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 22 February 2023. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 22 February 2023 be noted and actions removed as marked.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

SE/030/2023: NOTICE OF MOTION – MOU DFI ROADS – ROADS AND FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE DURING COLD SNAPS

Councillor Clarke presented the following Notice of Motion which was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee from the Council Meeting held on Monday 6

March 2023:-

"That this Council notes recent cold snaps which left many roads and footpaths in the district impassable, accepts the logistical challenges facing the workers with responsibility for gritting and maintaining roads and commends them for their efforts; Recognises the resource implication and the operational impact that such periods of colder weather can have on road services; And Calls on Council to engage with DfI Roads as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which will ensure our roads and footpaths are maintained during cold snaps and the public are kept safe".

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Murphy.

Councillor Clarke said the Motion came about during the recent cold snap and said his own area of Newcastle Town Centre was a complete ice rink with a number of constituents contacting him to say they could not get about their daily business. He said the idea of the MoU was that grit would be provided during cold snaps in an agreed selection of towns and cities and the workers involved would be able to spread the grit. He said the MoU was not activated when needed and when he contacted DfI they said it was the Council's responsibility.

Councillor Clarke said Council Officers must now have a discussion with DfI Roads about issues such as the replenishment of salt/grit bins especially in areas with steep hills going down onto main roads e.g. King Street and King Hill, Newcastle and School Hill, Dundrum – schools were located in these areas and carers etc. were unable to get in and out of houses. He said this situation was just not acceptable and even when requests were made to Roads Service there was no response as to why bins were not being replenished.

Councillor Clarke said there also needed to be a review of gritting of Council car parks as Donard Park and Downs Road in Newcastle, which had heavy volumes of cars, were just like an ice rink.

Councillor Clarke said when the current MoU ran out and the Council were entering into a new agreement there had to be an activation point agreed on what constituted a cold snap; who activates the policy and how it would be rolled out.

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Kevin Scullin Assistant Director, Facilities Management and Maintenance, re: Notice of Motion – MOU – DfI Roads; Roads and Footpath Maintenance During Cold Snaps. ***(Circulated)***.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Tinnelly, seconded by Councillor McKeivitt, it was agreed to note the contents of the report and agree that officers engage with DfI Roads to review the Memorandum of Understanding and that issues such as the replenishment of grit bins and responding to requests from Councillors were tabled for discussion.**

SE/031/2023: REVIEW OF TRANSLINK BUS SHELTER REQUESTS

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Gail Kane, Head of Facilities, re: review of Translink bus shelter requests. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to note the content of the report and that officers again contact Translink in relation to the 7 applications which have been submitted to Translink and ask them to make a firm commitment to install a bus shelter at the locations listed. Translink to be advised that the Council find the lack of response from them on this issue to be unacceptable. If no commitment was received from Translink and the request for a bus shelter remained in place, the Council should facilitate the request.**

Councillor McAteer, as a non-Committee Member, referred to the bus shelter request Bridge Road, Burren. He said he had started the request to process this in 2018 and had been ongoing since. He said Translink had a very large project throughout the North for over 300 proposed shelters. He said this business case was supposed to have been completed in 2021, got held up and was supposed to be going to DfI in June 2022 but so far nothing had been progressed. However, another mechanism had been brought to his attention, an example of which was being used in Lisburn and Castlereagh Council where shelters were purchased by the Council through the Translink supplier and were then subsequently adopted by Translink into their shelter portfolio after a number of years. The advantage to this was that they then become part of the cycle where they would be maintained and cleaned by Translink and their Supplier. He asked if a similar process could be investigated and explored for this Council. If this was not going to be successful, then Council officers should proceed with the requests they have received including the one for a bus shelter at Bridge Road, Burren.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor McKeivitt, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed Officers explore the request made by Councillor McAteer in relation to the provision of bus shelters and report back to Committee.**

SE/032/2023: REVIEW OF BUS SHELTER REQUESTS BEING ACTIONED BY COUNCIL

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Gail Kane, Head of Facilities, re: review of bus shelter requests being actioned by Council. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Finnegan, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to note the content of the report and approve the following recommendations:-**

- **The Council bus shelters at Slievenman Road, Bryansford and Annsborough Park, Annsborough to be removed, and the area left safe.**
- **A new bus shelter to be provided at Corlat Drive, Whitecross, to service the local Translink bus stop. A Cantilever style shelter with no side panels to be provided.**

Noted:

It was noted that Councillor Finnegan, on behalf of Councillor Howell who was not a member of the Committee, raised the issue of the bus shelter at Annsborough Park, Annsborough and said the current bus shelter should be removed; the area cleaned up and the bus shelter be re-located beside the bus stop where it would be more widely used. Councillor Howell asked that officials explore this when looking at the location for the new bus shelter.

Councillor Murphy referred to the proposal for the Council to provide a bus shelter at Corlat Drive Whitecross and whilst he welcomed the provision, he said Translink were shirking their responsibility, and this should be conveyed to them.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

SE/033/2023: 2023/24 PUBLIC HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS AND BIN COLLECTION CALENDARS

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Sinead Murphy, (Acting) Assistant Director, Waste Management, re: 2023/24 Public Holiday arrangements and bin collection calendars. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed:-

- **The alternative Refuse Collection Services and opening arrangements for Household Recycling Centres on Public Holidays applying to the 2023/24 financial year with appropriate notification to be issued to residents through the various established communications channels, in advance of each Public Holiday.**
- **The publication of individual household Bin Collection Calendars for residents online, with a PR campaign to inform Householders how to access their calendar and to raise awareness of the importance of recycling right.**

(Cllr. Finnegan left the meeting)

SE/034/2023: CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Sinead Murphy, (Acting) Assistant Director, Waste Management, re: Circular Economy Consultation Response. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McKevitt, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to note the contents of the response provided in Appendix 1 subject to a small amendment to Q12 on page 8 as outlined by Councillor McMurray.

SE/035/2023: REMOVAL OF BRING BANK SITES

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Sinead Murphy, (Acting) Assistant Director, Waste Management, re: removal of Bring Bank Sites *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed to approve the removal of bottle bank "Bring Back" provision at caravan sites as listed in Appendix 1.

SE/036/2023: USE OF HERBICIDES ACROSS THE COUNCIL ESTATE

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Mr A Mallon re: use of herbicides across the Council Estate. *(Circulated)*.

Following detailed discussion and debate on the aim of having a zero application of herbicides containing glyphosate in Year 4 (2023) and how to balance this without significant uncontrolled weed growth on Council property the following was agreed:-

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McMurray, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to note the content of the report and agree to the use of herbicides containing glyphosate for controlling weeds and invasive species on Council property during the calendar year 2023 with a target of applying no more than the amount of glyphosate applied in 2022 and to continue to work towards a 100% reduction.

Agreed officers also undertake a fact-finding exercise in relation to this issue and that a Workshop be held in the new Council term.

(Councillors Ruane, Taylor and Malone left the meeting)

EXEMPT INFORMATION ITEMS

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

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 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 any particular person (including the Council holding that information) and the public may, by resolution, be excluded during this item of business.

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor McKeivitt, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

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

SE/037/2023: TOWN CLOCKS – PROPOSALS FOR CONSIDERATION

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Mr K Scullion re: Town Clocks – proposals for consideration. (*Circulated*).

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to:-

- **Note the content of the report.**
- **In relation to the proposal to refurbish Dan Rice Hall Clock, a Business Case would be prepared for presentation to Committee. The Business Case would consider the three options recommended by the Council contractor for refurbishment of the clock and would also consider the additional building maintenance works which had been identified as requiring attention to the Clock Tower structure.**
- **In relation to operation of the Market House Clock, Ballynahinch, the following works would be undertaken - electrification of the hand rotation and installation of an electromechanical bell hammer striking against the existing bell.**
- **In relation to the maintenance of St Mary's Parish Church Clock, it was recommended that it be included in the Council's maintenance schedule for Town Clocks. It was recommended that for single repair works exceeding**

£500.00 that Council approval is obtained prior to agreeing to the works.

SE/038/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR THE DEMOLITION OF ALBERT BASIN STORE AND ASSOCIATED ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Mr K Scullion re: Business Case for the demolition of Albert Basin store and associated environmental clean. (*Circulated*).

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Murphy, seconded by Councillor McKeivitt, it was agreed to:-

- **Note the content of the report.**
- **Approve the findings of the Business Cases presented. The Business Case concluded that Option 3 was the preferred option. Option 3 would see the appointment of a contractor under the Council's Civil Engineering and Minor Works Framework to demolish the Store and undertake an environmental clean of plant and materials to be retained. Officers to liaise with other user groups who used the Waterway, prior to the demolition taking place to make them aware of the demolition.**
- **Once environmentally cleaned, items owned by third parties would be returned to them, through signed agreements.**

SE/039/2023: BUSINESS CASES FOR REPLACEMENT VEHICLES 2023-2025:

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Ms S Murphy re: economic appraisals and business cases for replacement vehicles for 2023-2025. (*Circulated*).

AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to approve the Business Cases/Full Economic Appraisals at:-

- **Appendix 2 for the replacement of Refuse Collection Vehicles**
- **Appendix 3 for the replacement of and additional Mechanical Sweeping Vehicles**
- **Appendix 4 for the replacement of medium size chassis tipping vehicles**
- **Appendix 5 for the replacement of small and large vans with Electric Voltage (EV) small and large vans**
- **Appendix 6 for the replacement of small and large vans with Diesel small and large vans**

- **Appendix 7 for the replacement of small vans and Four by Four vehicles**
- **Appendix 8 for the replacement of ATV vehicles**
- **Appendix 9 for the replacement of Ride-on Mowers**

SE/040/2023: BUSINESS CASE FOR REPLACEMENT OF SKIPS AND COMPACTORS AT HRCs

Noted: It was noted this report was deferred and was not included on the agenda.

SE/041/2023: RETAINING WALL AT DOWNPATRICK HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Ms S Murphy re: Retaining Wall at Downpatrick Household Recycling Centre. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Curran, seconded by Councillor Murphy, it was agreed to approve the capital budget in the sum stated in the report, for the procurement of a contractor to undertake specified works to construct a retaining structure along the base of the slope between private land and Council land at Downpatrick Household Recycling Centre (HRC).**

SE/42/2023: FEASIBILITY REPORT – PROPOSED PUBLIC TOILET IN THE VILLAGE OF KILLOUGH

Read: Report dated 21 March 2023 from Mr K Scullion re: Feasibility Report – proposed public toilet in the village of Killough. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Andrews, seconded by Councillor Curran, it was agreed to note the content of the report.**

SE/043/2023: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS’ MONTHLY BULLETIN – 23 FEBRUARY 2023

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Members’ Monthly Bulletin held on 23 February 2023. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Bowsie, seconded by Councillor Magennis, it was agreed to note the above Bulletin.**

CORRESPONDENCE

SE/044/2023: REQUEST TO PRESENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ON RECYCLING AND THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Read: Letter dated 31 January 2023 from Mervyn Storey, Consultant, Keep Recycling Local re: seeking an opportunity to present to Committee to help raise awareness about recycling in Northern Ireland. *(Circulated)*.

AGREED: **On the proposal of Councillor Curran, seconded by Councillor Andrews, it was agreed to hold a Workshop in the new Council term and invite Mr Storey to present on the issue of recycling.**

FOR NOTING

SE/045/2023: HISTORIC ACTIONS TRACKING SHEET

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

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

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.30 pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 3 April 2023.

Signed: Councillor O Magennis
Chairperson of Sustainability & Environment Committee

Signed: Mr A Cassells
Director of Sustainability & Environment