

## **NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on Tuesday  
17 October 2023 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom, District Council Offices, Monaghan  
Row, Newry and via MS Teams.**

**Chair:** Councillor T Andrews (Chamber)

**In Attendance in Chamber:** Councillor W Clarke Councillor D Finn  
Councillor J Jackson Councillor M Larkin  
Councillor K Murphy Councillor H Reilly  
Councillor M Rice

**In Attendance via Teams:** Councillor C Enright Councillor D Taylor  
Councillor J Truesdale

**Officials in Attendance:** Mr A Cassells, Director Sustainability and Environment  
Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director Waste Management  
Ms G Kane, Acting Assistant Director: Facilities and Maintenance  
Mr A Mallon, Acting Assistant Director: Facilities and Maintenance  
Miss S Taggart, Democratic Services Manager (Acting)  
Mrs L Dillon, Democratic Services Officer

### **SE/102/2023: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

The Chairperson extended congratulations to Saintfield on finishing 3rd place in the large village category of the 2023 Ulster in Bloom and paid tribute to the committee in Saintfield and to everyone involved.

He also extended best wishes to Elizabeth Wilson on reaching her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and requested the Chairperson of Council be notified.

The following apologies were received:

Councillor Savage  
Councillor Magennis  
Councillor Kearns  
Councillor McEvoy

### **SE/103/2023: DECLARATIONS OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST"**

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

**SE/104/2023: ACTION SHEET: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Read: Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 19 September 2023. ***(Circulated)***.

Miss Taggart advised the historic action sheet had been amalgamated with the current action sheet.

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Finn, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, the Action Sheet of the Sustainability and Environment Committee Meeting held on 19 September 2023 be noted and actions removed as marked.**

**NOTICE OF MOTION**

**SE/105/2023: NOTICE OF MOTION  
RE: CLEAN INDOOR AIR**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment regarding a Notice of Motion on clean indoor air. ***(Copy circulated)***

Councillor Truesdale presented the following Notice of Motion which was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee from the Council Meeting held on Monday 2 October 2023:

"Having learned the importance of ventilation and clean indoor air for health and productivity during Covid; and seeking to take all reasonable steps to enable use of all Council facilities by all citizens, including the most vulnerable and so further enable inclusion. By seeking to care for the health and wellbeing of Council employees, this Council will commit to signing and implementing 'The COVID Safety Pledge': to report on steps already taken to prioritise clean indoor air in all council premises within the district starting with Downshire and Monaghan Row sites. To report on what further or additional steps could be taken to improve indoor air quality and information about indoor air quality for employees and service users, and to develop and promote advice that can be followed to provide clean indoor air at events supported by NMDDC".

Councillor Truesdale highlighted the following points:

- Most people spend 90% of their time indoors – outdoor air becomes indoor air
- Council should provide information to people on measures taken to promote clean indoor air in its properties as this is restricting those people with underlying health issues from taking part activities in these properties.
- Scientists are looking at clean air as an important method of keeping people safe, ie, reduce absences in schools and workplace.
- What ventilation plans have Council in place for the new Civic Centre and stressed the need for employers to ensure levels of protection against infection are taken.

- The Covid Pledge has been signed by local authorities in England, the Pharmacists Defence Association, the Scottish Trade Union and Belfast City Council – which protects staff ensuring continuity of service to the ratepayer.
- Council should highlight steps taken to provide good air quality in relevant places, to ensure there is a space where people can feel comfortable.
- Council with it's expertise, can provide advice for the promotion of clean indoor air at events supported by the Council.

Councillor Enright formally seconded the Motion

Discussion followed during which Members raised the following issues:

Whilst recognising the merits of such a proposal, a cost evaluation needed to be carried out before the Council would commit to any scheme.

By law in the UK, public sector buildings are required to be moving towards the nearly zero energy building code and Council buildings will have to be refitted in order to comply with this code in the same way public buildings in the RoI have been doing this past 2 years.

Further work was required on this issue including a full cost evaluation , before a final decision would be taken.

The Covid Safety Pledge needed to be looked at in more detail and establish how it would impact on the organisation and how any concerns could be addressed.

Councillor Rice proposed an amendment to the Motion, to include seeking costs for Council buildings prior to agreeing to any works in terms of air filtration measures, and after discussion it was agreed to include the Downshire Civic Centre and the new Civic Centre in Newry only at this stage.

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Truesdale seconded by Councillor Enright it was agreed to adopt the Notice of Motion subject to including that before proceeding with any works, that officers obtain costings for air filtration systems in Downshire Civic Centre and the new civic centre in Newry and report same back to the Sustainable and Environment Committee for consideration in due course.**

**SE/106/2023: NOTICE OF MOTION  
RE: REVIEW OF WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment regarding a Notice of Motion on a review of the Waste Collection Service. **(Copy circulated)**

Councillor Jackson presented the following Notice of Motion which was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee arising from the Council Meeting held on Monday 2 October 2023:

"This Council commits to undertake a full cost benefit analysis of the waste collection service for the entire District, including benchmarking total cost of service delivery against private sector providers. This review should include analysis of the volume of missed bins and broken bins

reported both across the entire District and by DEA. This Council is committed to delivering basic Council services efficiently and cost effectively. Every ratepayer should be delivered a quality service”.

Councillor Jackson highlighted the following points:

- To ensure the service is as cost effective as possible for ratepayers
- Given the complaints regarding refuse issues its appropriate to re-evaluate the service and identify where improvements can be made in this key Council service

Councillor Reilly formally seconded the Motion. He said given the Council were currently looking a various types of vehicles etc, with significant changes ahead he felt the Motion was very relevant in terms of examining Council services and identifying where improvements could be made.

Councillor Clarke confirmed Sinn Fein’s opposition to the Motion in it’s current form, their opposition to privatisation of Council services and their solidarity with Council workers who carry out one of the most important roles of the Council, and opposition to putting the ratepayers to this expense.

Councillor Clarke proposed an amendment to remove the wording “*to undertake a full cost benefit analysis of the waste collection service for the entire District, including benchmarking total cost of service delivery against private sector providers*” and to include “*to setting up a Cleansing, refuse Taskforce led by the chairperson of Council to work with all department heads of service, to ascertain what the problems are and develop a framework to resolve them*”

Councillor Rice seconded the amendment.

Councillor Jackson accepted the amendment to the Motion as proposed by Councillor Clarke and seconded by Councillor Rice.

**AGREED:                    It was unanimously agreed to adopt the following Notice of Motion:**

**This Council commits to setting up a Cleansing, refuse Taskforce led by the Chairperson of Council to work with all department heads of service, to ascertain what the problems are and develop a framework to resolve them.**

**This review should include analysis of the volume of missed bins and broken bins reported both across the entire District and by DEA. This Council is committed to delivering basic Council services efficiently and cost effectively. Every ratepayer should be delivered a quality service”.**

**Noted:**                    It was noted issues regarding the telephone system for the Refuse Service section to be addressed.

**SE/107/2023: NOTICE OF MOTION  
RE: ANIMAL WELFARE**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Andrew Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment regarding a Notice of Motion on animal welfare. **(Copy circulated)**

The following Notice of Motion was referred to the Sustainability and Environment Committee arising from the Council Meeting held on Monday 2 October 2023:

"This Council notes with great concern the announcement by DAERA to cut the £1.25m budget for Animal Welfare in Northern Ireland to zero. This has the potential to adversely impact work being done by local government to meet its statutory requirements for non-farmed animals, and risks causing avoidable harm and suffering to animals. This Council will urgently write to DAERA Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey expressing its total opposition to this decision and urging her department to reconsider this retrograde move. Furthermore, recognising the Council's statutory responsibility, and the importance of inter-agency and partnership to support animal welfare, council will establish an Animal Welfare Forum. This Forum will meet regularly and provide strategic direction to and oversight of officers involved in animal welfare and reporting back to the relevant committee. As well as animal welfare officers, it will seek representation from elected members, dog wardens, local kennelling providers, DAERA, local animal shelters, charities and the PSNI. This Council also commits to ensuring that, should this cut go ahead, it will commit the necessary budget to ensure its statutory responsibilities for animal welfare are met, and no services are cut or curtailed".

Councillor Truesdale proposed the Motion, subject to removing the final sentence, and was seconded by Councillor Enright.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- The responsibility to budget for animal welfare lies with DAERA.
- In England Scotland and Wales, the RSPCA are more proactive and have more involvement with local Councils and Councils in Northern Ireland should liaise with the USPCA to develop a similar service.

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Truesdale seconded by Councillor Enright, it was agreed to remove the final sentence of the Notice of Motion.**

**On the proposal of Councillor Clarke seconded by Councillor Rice it was agreed to defer a decision on the Notice of Motion until the outcome of the legal process was known.**

**FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR DECISION**

**SE/108/2023: NMDDC FOOD SURVEILLANCE AND SAMPLING**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Mr A Cassells, Director of Sustainability & Environment regarding NMDDC Food Surveillance and Sampling. **(Copy circulated)**

Ms S Murphy gave a presentation on NMDDC Food Surveillance and Sampling.

**AGREED:** It was unanimously agreed to note the above presentation.

**SE/109/2023: NMDDC – MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Ms S Murphy Assistant Director Environment, regarding NMDDC Mental Health Champions.  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Clarke seconded by Councillor Rice it was agreed to the following nominations from the Sustainability and Environment Committee to be appointed to work with MindWise New Vision as Mental Health Champions for the District:  
-Councillor D Finn  
-Councillor K Murphy

**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 Rice, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting during discussion on items 9-14 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 Finn, seconded by Councillor Larkin it was agreed the Committee come out of closed session.

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

**SE/110/2023: BUSINESS CASE RE: MAINTENANCE SERVICING OF COUNCIL LIFTS**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Mr A Sweeney, Facilities Co-ordinator (East) regarding a Business Case for Maintenance Servicing of Council Lifts. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED:** On the proposal of Councillor Reilly, seconded by Councillor Clarke, it was agreed to note the content of the report and associated business case.

**It was also agreed to accept the conclusion of the business case that option 4 is chosen as the preferred option. Option 4 will see the appointment, through a tender process, of a competent contractor to service, maintain and complete safety checks on all**

**32 No. lifts in the Council asset register, together with updating all autodiallers to GSM Sim Card units.**

**SE/111/2023: PROCUREMENT OF HIRE VEHICLES**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Barry Torley, Interim Head of Fleet regarding Procurement of Hire Vehicles. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Larkin, the following was approved:**

- **The business case to procure a contract for Vehicle Hire services in Appendix 1.**
- **The award of Single Tender Action for vehicle hire services to current suppliers as outlined in section 2.3 of the officer's report.**

**SE/112/2023: PROCUREMENT OF ENGINE OILS AND LUBRICANTS**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director, Environment regarding procurement of engine oils and lubricants. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Rice, seconded by Councillor Finn, it was agreed to approve the business case to procure a motor oils and lubricants as in appendix 1 of the officer's report.**

**SE/113/2023: PROCUREMENT OF CONTRACTS FOR HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE WASTE STREAMS**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director, Environment regarding Procurement of Contracts for Household Recycling Centre Waste Streams. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to approve the following:**

- **The economic appraisal for the procurement of a contract to collect/receipt, treat and process residual waste, including large domestic items, from Downpatrick, Castlewellan and Ballynahinch HRC sites and large domestic items collected from the kerbside (bulky collections) in the Downpatrick area in appendix 1 of the officer's report.**
- **The business case for the procurement of a contract to collect/receipt, treat and process paper, cardboard and hard plastic materials at all Council HRC sites.**

**SE/114/2023: PROCUREMENT OF DEEP CLEANSING SERVICES**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director, Environment regarding Procurement of Deep Cleansing Services. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor K Murphy, it was agreed to procure Deep Cleansing Services as outlined in appendix 1 of the officer's report.**

**FOR NOTING – The following items are deemed to be exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014**

**SE/115/2023: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' MONTHLY BULLETIN AND MINUTES – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Read: Arc21 Joint Committee Members' Monthly Bulletin held on 28 September 2023. **(Circulated)**.

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Larkin, it was agreed to note the bulletin.**

**FOR NOTING**

**SE/116/2023: CALL FOR EVIDENCE RESPONSE ELECTRICITY CONNECTION POLICY FRAMEWORK REVIEW**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director, Waste Management (Acting) regarding Call for Evidence Response – Electricity Connection. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to note the submission of the attached Call for Evidence response, subject to amendments presented by Councillor Enright. (see Appendix 1).**

**SE/117/2023: CONSULTATION ON CARBON BUDGETS DAERA**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Mr A Cassells, Director Sustainability & Environment regarding Consultation on Carbon Budgets DAERA. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to note the submission of the attached Consultation response (see Appendix 1).**



**SE/118/2023: DFI RE: SLIDDERYFORD BRIDGE TO MURLOUGH**

Read: Correspondence dated 04 October 2023 from Department for Infrastructure regarding Slidderford Bridge to Murlough.  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to note the above correspondence.**

**SE/119/2023: TREE STRATEGY**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Mr A Mallon, Assistant Director Facilities Management & Maintenance regarding tree strategy.  
**(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed:**

- 1) To agree endorsement of the key concepts within the Tree Strategy and to approve this document.**
- 2) Tangible schemes will continue across the district with the intention of increasing Health & Wellbeing District Wide.**

**SE/120/2023: RECYCLE WEEK 2023**

Read: Report dated 17 October 2023 from Ms S Murphy, Assistant Director, Environment regarding Recycle Week 2023. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to note the report.**

**SE/121/2023: ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY 31 AUGUST 2023**

Read: Minutes of ARC21 Joint Committee Meeting held on Thursday 29 June 2023. **(Copy circulated)**

**AGREED: On the proposal of Councillor K Murphy, seconded by Councillor Truesdale, it was agreed to note the Minutes of the ARC21 Committee Meeting held on 31 August 2023.**

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.45pm.

For adoption at the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 06 November 2023.

**Signed: Councillor T Andrews**  
**Chairperson of Sustainability & Environment Committee**

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