

**Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Monday 6 October 2014 at 7 pm, in Cookstown District Council Offices**

**Members Present:** In the Chair, Councillor Kearney (Chair)  
  
Councillors Bell, Clarke, Cuthbertson, Glasgow, McEldowney, McKinney, McPeake, Mallaghan, Quinn (7.08 pm), Reid and Robinson

**Officers in Attendance:** Mr Tohill, Chief Executive  
Mr Boomer, Area Planning Manager  
Mr Moffett, Change Management Officer  
Mrs Grogan, Secretariat (Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council)

**Others in Attendance:** Ms Hilda Clements, Senior Planning Officer

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

**P12/14 Apologies**

Councillors Bateson, Gildernew, Mullen and J Shiels.

**P13/14 Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest.

**Matters for Decision**

**P14/14 Receive and Confirm Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Monday 1 September 2014**

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan  
Seconded by Councillor Bell and

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Monday 1 September 2014, (P6/14 – P11/14) were considered and signed as accurate and correct.

**P15/14 Receive Paper on Accommodating Population Growth across Mid Ulster**

The Area Planning Manager introduced Ms Hilda Clements and stated that she was responsible for the preparation of the paper on Population and Growth. He advised that it was for information purposes only at this stage.

Ms Clements took members through the paper which provided information on:

- (i) a profile of the population including the different Section 75 groups of people, identifying those which the plan is likely to have an impact on;
- (ii) population growth and population projections up until 2030;
- (iii) a settlement strategy for accommodating growth

Councillor T Quinn entered the meeting at 7.08 pm.

Councillor Reid stated the population growth in Dungannon is greater than Greater Belfast due to the migrant worker population.

Councillor Clarke stated that population is growing and that measures need to be put in place to best facilitate this. Mid Ulster District Council area has a massive rural structure which needs to be looked at in all situations including villages and hamlets. He added the older generation needs to be considered in all of this and appropriate facilities such as adequate housing, hospitals and acute services would be required.

Councillor McPeake stated planning did not currently fit the area and enquired how the Committee could influence change.

The Area Planning Manager advised that this is still in the very early stages and evidence would need to be built. The next paper will be much more on the urban and not so much on rural policy. She added it would not be wise to cut the housing growth indicator as people are living longer and if we did not accommodate young people in the countryside there could be difficulties. Mid Ulster District Council area is in an advantageous position with its strong links with construction and engineering.

Councillor Mallaghan stated the rural economy in Mid Ulster is working well. He added that many companies have started on a small scale and have continued to expand. Councillor Mallaghan stated that planning policy was restrictive and did not allow for small family business expansion thus the need to be supporting businesses.

Councillor Reid agreed with Councillor Mallaghan and felt that land needed to be zoned for such purposes away from residential housing.

The Area Planning Manager advised this is what Mid Ulster prides itself in, from quarrying, cement works to joinery.

Councillor Reid stated that PPS 21 was causing tremendous difficulties and asked if anything that could be done.

The Area Planning Manager advised that PPS21 aimed to avoid clustering of housing the countryside. Referring to the paper being presented and PPS21 elderly people with special circumstances and children with special needs could have the opportunity for an extension, but elderly people would not have an opportunity for new builds as this could result in an escalation of houses being built.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated that it would be interesting to ascertain the number of lapsed planning applications within the countryside as a way of meeting housing targets to meet population growth.

The Area Planning Manager advised that he would investigate, where the information was available.

Councillor Bell enquired and raised the issue of social housing provision, especially for the elderly and young people.

The Chief Executive advised that it could take up to five years to prepare the Development Plan and enquired on the process to be undertaken by Planners.

The Area Planning Manager stated that land supply needs to be looked at for housing and businesses and involve two stages; core strategy; and land zoning. He stated that it was ambitious but felt the time frames could be met to have the plan prepared and adopted in five years.

Councillor Quinn stated he was concerned about social housing provision indicating that although there was a need for it in the rural area it was of a greater need in the urban area. He added that there was a high number of people on the waiting list for social housing in the Cookstown area, with 240 people on the waiting list 10 years ago compared to 232 in recent times. Councillor Quinn concluded that nothing had been achieved in this 10 year period to relieve the dependency.

Councillor Bell raised concern about the high volume of young people emigrating and felt that planning should be thoroughly looked to revive the construction sector.

Councillor Reid enquired how much control the Council would actually have or would other agencies still have an input in decision making.

The Area Planning Manager advised that there would be parameters to work within but the Council would have a lot of scope to do things differently. He said it would be all new but would have no doubt that Mid Ulster would be testing the boundaries.

Councillor McPeake left the meeting at 8.15 pm.

## **P16/14      Planning Study Visit**

The Chief Executive presented a report to assist the committee on making preparations for a Planning Study visit to a local authority currently delivering and managing a planning function, to strengthen member capacity and knowledge.

The Change Management Officer outlined the proposed itinerary for the visit and recommended a two day visit to North Ayrshire Council, Scotland on Wednesday 12 November, avoiding clashes with Mid Ulster District Council business. It was agreed that the study visit be targeted at the current members of the Council's Planning Committee and relevant officers.

The Chief Executive advised that if any member could not attend another member could attend in their place.

**Resolved:** That it be recommended to the Council that members of the Planning Committee participate in a Planning Study Visit to North Ayrshire Council, Scotland on Wednesday 12 November 2014.

**P17/14      Guidance on Planning Element of Councillors' Code of Conduct**

The Chief Executive presented a letter dated 25 September 2014 from the DOE enclosing a copy of a document entitled 'Consultation on Guidance on Planning Element of Councillors' Code of Conduct' and urged members to refer to it as it would be important to all members represented on the Planning Committee. He added that the Code of Conduct used by North Ayrshire Council planning committee members could be considered as part of the Study Visit.

**P18/14      Duration of Meeting**

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.45 pm.

CHAIR \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_