

**Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee of Mid Ulster District Council
held on Tuesday 8 December 2015 in Council Offices, Ballyronan Road,
Magherafelt**

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| Members Present | Councillor McFlynn (Chair) Councillors Buchanan, Burton (7.07 pm), Cuddy, Cuthbertson, Gillespie, Glasgow, Kearney, B McGuigan, S McGuigan, McNamee, Mullen, Mulligan, J O'Neill, Totten |
| Officers in Attendance | Mr Cassells, Director of Environment and Property Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure Mr Lowry, Head of Technical Services Mr McAdoo, Head of Environmental Services Mrs McClements, Head of Environmental Health Mr Scullion, Head of Property Services Mr Wilkinson, Head of Building Control Miss Thompson, Committee Services/ Senior Admin Officer |
| Others in Attendance | Councillor G Shields Agenda Item 3 – Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Mr Keys, Customer Relations Manager Mr Maynes, Network Access Manager Agenda Item 4 – TransportNI Mr Hackett, Network Development Engineer Mr Keenan, Network Development Manager |

The meeting commenced at 7.01 pm

E227/15 Apologies

Councillor McGinley.

E228/15 Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declarations of interest.

E229/15 Northern Ireland Electricity Networks (NIEN)

The Chair welcomed Messrs Keys and Maynes to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation.

Mr Maynes proceeded with a powerpoint presentation which provided Members with an overview to Northern Ireland Electricity Networks (NIEN) and the electricity industry structure. Mr Maynes also briefed Members on NIEN's winter preparations

and the meter replacement scheme. Members were also advised of NIEN's involvement in the community and were updated on price control.

Councillor Burton entered the meeting at 7.07 pm during presentation of the above.

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn thanked the representatives for their presentation and advised that the Committee appreciates the work undertaken by NIEN. The Councillor also referred to the value of the priority telephone service provided to Members.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to work carried out by NIEN as part of local Public Realm Schemes and felt that more liaison was required with Councillors and businesses to make them aware of what works were going to be carried out when.

Mr Maynes advised that NIEN will try to work with businesses to keep disruption to a minimum. Mr Maynes referred to Ballymena Public Realm Scheme and advised that an open day had been held to enable those concerned to discuss any issues.

In response to Councillor Cuddy's questions Mr Maynes advised that work in relation to the North/South Interconnector was being carried out by SONI, he also stated that it is critical that the Interconnector is in place by 2019. In relation to connection costs, Mr Maynes advised that there will be competition in connections starting in 2016, he further advised that NIEN are obliged to provide a connection at "least cost". With regard to meter replacement Mr Maynes advised that this is simply a replacement scheme and will have no effect on wastage.

Councillor B McGuigan referred to complaints relating to renewable connections.

Mr Maynes advised that Northern Ireland is favourable with other parts of the EU in relation to renewable connections however he was aware of ongoing issues and realised there were restrictions. Mr Maynes advised that as many connections as possible are being made and that funding is being sought to fund upgrades to the network. Mr Maynes also commented that the North/South Interconnector would help additional connections to be made.

In response to Councillor Kearney's comments regarding insulation to overhead lines Mr Keys advised that the purpose of this insulation is to prevent lines clashing during a storm.

Councillor Gillespie referred to problems acquiring connections to new dwellings, the Councillor advised of homes that were in a finished state but could not be moved in to as they did not have an electricity supply.

Mr Maynes advised that there should be no reason for undue delays but stressed the importance of making a connection application as soon as possible as a new connection may require an upgrade to nearby infrastructure.

Councillor Burton commended the priority telephone service for Councillors advising she had used it in the past. The Councillor also stressed the importance of tree and hedge cutting and asked if electricity poles could be moved as part of a maintenance programme.

Mr Maynes advised that NIEN has an ongoing maintenance programme in which poles, lines, conductors etc can be replaced. With regard to pole replacement, Mr Maynes advised that it was more than likely that this would be replaced in the same location as NIEN would have wayleave agreements with landowners. If a pole was knocked down as a result of an accident, again the onus would be on NIEN to restore electricity supply to customers as quickly as possible and a pole would be replaced in the same location. Mr Maynes advised the Councillor that if her concern related to road safety she may wish to raise this with DRD.

Councillor Glasgow asked if there was an opportunity for an incident centre specifically for Mid Ulster.

Mr Maynes advised that calls from both Cookstown and Dungannon areas are dealt with by the local incident centre in Omagh. Calls from Magherafelt area are dealt with by the centre in Ballymena.

Mr Maynes advised that the diversion of calls was based on customer numbers within an area and stated that he was confident that the level of service within the Mid Ulster area was as good as anywhere else in Northern Ireland. Mr Maynes advised there were no plans to locate a local incident centre within Mid Ulster.

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn thanked Messrs Keys and Maynes for their attendance following which they left the meeting at 7.45 pm.

E230/15 TransportNI

The Chair welcomed Messrs Hackett and Keenan to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation to Members.

Members were briefed on notable schemes within the Local Transport and Safety Measures, Bridges and Street Lighting Draft Programme for Mid Ulster for the period 2016-2018. Members also received Autumn Update from Western Division.

Mr Hackett advised that all the proposed schemes were considered to be high priority, had been assessed and represented good value for money. Members were advised however that based on current funding levels it would not be possible to deliver all the schemes included in the draft programme over the 2016-2018 period. Mr Hackett advised that the Division will continue to bid for additional funding and plan ahead by developing schemes in terms of design and land acquisition to ensure additional funding can be utilised should it become available.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to Park and Ride facility proposed at Stangmore Roundabout and felt that this scheme had not been given enough consideration. The Councillor advised that the landowner was not willing to sell the land identified for locating the facility, he further commented that the proposed facility would be located in front of housing which would cause additional difficulties. Councillor Cuthbertson added that the purpose of having the Park and Ride facility would be to divert vehicles from parking on the hard shoulder of the A29-Moy Road, however a large number of employees at a nearby business currently use the hard shoulder for parking and the Councillor felt that TransportNI would be, in theory, creating a car park for their use.

Councillor Cuthbertson advised that TransportNI own a piece of land close to the M1 Motorway service station and felt that this location would be ideal for use as a Park and Ride facility stating that it is close to both Eglisk junction and Stangmore junction.

Mr Hackett advised he was aware of Councillor Cuthbertson's concerns and referred to the success of similar schemes at Ballygawley and Tamnamore. Mr Hackett advised that the aim of Park and Ride facilities is to provide the public with an alternative mode of transport for their journey, he advised that consultants have looked at various sites and emphasised the need to locate these type of facilities close to strategic junctions.

In response to Councillor Cuddy's question regarding relocation of TransportNI offices to within Mid Ulster area Mr Keenan advised there were no future plans.

In reference to Councillor Cuddy's comment regarding quicker journey times throughout Mid Ulster Mr Keenan referred to Cookstown bypass scheme and stated that the preferred route for this was announced in 2010. Mr Keenan advised that the next stage of this scheme would be land vesting and he encouraged Members to lobby for the progression of this scheme. Members were also advised that the A29 is a strategic route and that a number of schemes are ongoing and have been completed along this route in recent years.

In response to Councillor Cuddy's question regarding Castledawson Park and Ride facility Mr Hackett advised that this scheme should be ready to commence in early 2016.

Councillor Cuddy asked how many schemes TransportNI hoped to complete in the next twelve months.

Mr Hackett advised that the draft programme contains an overprofiling of schemes which are subject to resources.

Councillor J O'Neill felt that more priority needed to be given to Safer Routes to Schools scheme at Aghamullan Primary School and that the scheme should not be delayed due to waiting on funding for two warning signs.

Mr Hackett advised that it was slightly more complicated than just the provision of the signs in that electricity connections were also required.

Councillor Kearney acknowledged the inclusion of the Safer Routes to Schools Schemes within the draft programme. Councillor Kearney also queried who provides provision of shelters and toilets at Park and Ride facilities.

Mr Hackett advised that TransportNI will deliver the infrastructure and car park at a Park and Ride facility and that shelters are provided by Translink. With regard to toilet provision Mr Hackett advised that this has not been done at Park and Ride facilities in the past but that TransportNI would be keen to work with Council in this respect.

Councillor Glasgow referred to the large roads network within Mid Ulster which requires additional funding to maintain. The Councillor asked that, out of the five million budget, how much of this money was received within Mid Ulster.

Mr Keenan advised that out of the one million budget for street lighting repairs, Mid Ulster received £75,000. With regards to resurfacing budget Dungannon received £241,000 and Cookstown/Magherafelt received £284,000 between them.

In reference to Councillor Gillespie's request regarding provision of grit in rural areas Mr Hackett advised this would be passed to the relevant department.

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn thanked Messrs Hackett and Keenan for their report following which they withdrew from the meeting at 8.20 pm.

E231/15 Receive and confirm minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Tuesday 10 November 2015

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held on Tuesday 10 November 2015 (E199/15 – E214/15 and E226/15) were considered and, subject to the foregoing, signed as accurate and correct.

E232/15 Chair's Business

Maghera Walled Garden

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn advised Members that Maghera Walled Garden recently received an award from Joseph Rowntree Trust and asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Lorraine Gardner, staff member who is based at the Walled Garden.

E233/15 Flooding

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to recent flooding and damage caused to shops at Linen Green, Moygashel. The Councillor conveyed his thanks to Council officers who provided assistance on Sunday and since.

Councillor Cuthbertson advised that part of the mill race which flooded and caused the damage at the Linen Green runs through council property, the Councillor felt that the mill race is in poor condition and that Council needs to carry out any remedial works necessary on the section which runs through property belonging to Council.

Councillor Cuddy concurred with Councillor Cuthbertson's comments stating that it was important for Council to provide assistance in this type of event, to learn from it and reflect on what could be improved upon in future from a Council response point of view.

Councillor J O'Neill also referred to flooding of homes at King's Row, Coalisland and that Council need to investigate what caused the flooding at this location.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure advised that Council will investigate the circumstances which caused the flooding at Linen Green and King's Row.

Matters for Decision

E234/15 TransportNI proposals to Mid Ulster District Council

Members considered previously circulated report regarding proposals from TransportNI to introduce measures to enhance safety and development of the transport network with a range of transport projects.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to endorse the proposals submitted by TransportNI as follows –

- Proposed 30mph speed limit – Coash Road, Gortgonis Road, Washing Bay Road, Ballygittle Road and Lisaclare Road, Coalisland.

E235/15 Department for Regional Development proposals to Mid Ulster District Council

Members considered previously circulated report which sought Members approval in relation to proposals from Department for Regional Development /TransportNI to abandon a length of the Killyliss Road, Dungannon under the (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to endorse the proposal for an abandonment order at Killyliss Road, Dungannon submitted by the Department for Regional Development.

E236/15 Winter Maintenance

The Director of Environment and Property presented previously circulated report which sought approval to enter into an Agreement with DRD/TransportNI in relation to footways in the business centres of the main towns within the Mid Ulster District following heavy snow falls or prolonged freezing. The report also sought the endorsement of Members in relation to the position with regards to car parks at times of ice and snow.

Councillor McNamee referred to the annual service fee paid to Council as per the agreement and was of the belief that in the past Councils were paid for each event a request was made for assistance.

The Director of Environment and Property advised he was not aware of a payment being made per event in the past but confirmed he would investigate.

In response to Councillor McNamee's comments in relation to treatment of car parks at times of ice and snow the Director of Environment and Property advised that Council does not have the necessary resources to carry out such treatment. The Director also advised it was important for Council to have a clear policy in relation to car parks and to adhere to such policy as a defence against any claim.

Councillor Glasgow raised concern that the footpaths on Coagh Street in Cookstown were not included in the schedule of gritting.

The Director of Environment and Property advised that the purpose of the Agreement was to treat the main business areas of the towns identified, he stated that there were limited resources for this task and it would be impossible to treat every street in each town. The Director advised that the list of footways to be treated were taken from legacy agreements.

Councillor Glasgow again expressed his concern that the footpath on Coagh Street was not included within the gritting schedule and referred to the hotel and businesses located on this street and the high volume of people using the footpath. Councillor Glasgow stated he could not support the approval of the Agreement as it stood and asked that further consideration be given to the inclusion of Coagh Street to the gritting schedule.

The Director of Environment and Property advised that the maps provided within the report are the same as those used for legacy agreements and what is proposed is the same as what was done in the past.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to Dungannon gritting schedule and felt that Northland Row should be included.

Councillor McNamee felt that footfall on Union Street in Cookstown along with Coagh Street would warrant footpaths being gritted.

Councillor Kearney left the meeting at 8.45 pm

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that the Director of Environment and Property would review the issues raised by Members in relation to Winter maintenance and report back to committee.

E237/15 Off-Street Car Parking: Disabled Badge Holders; Acceptance of Isle of Man Disabled Parking Blue Badge Scheme

The Director of Environment and Property presented previously circulated report which recommended that Mid Ulster District Council recognises the use of the Isle of Man Disabled Blue Badge within its Off Street Car Parks.

Councillor S McGuigan referred to the difference of opinion within Councils in relation to this matter and asked if DRD had been consulted in relation to same.

The Director of Environment and Property advised that Council had been consulted with regard to off street car parks and that he would investigate if DRD had been consulted in relation to on street parking.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that –
1 Vehicles displaying valid Disabled Parking Blue Badges issued by the Isle of Man government shall enjoy the same parking discretions within the Off Street Car Parks of the Mid Ulster District Council as if they had been issued by any other issuing

authority within the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom, Ireland or other European Union participating authority.

- 2 Director of Environment and Property to check situation with DRD regarding use of Isle of Man Disabled Parking Blue Badges at on street car parks.

E238/15 Commonwealth War Graves Commission Signage: Cookstown Cemetery

The Director of Environment and Property presented previously circulated report which sought approval to allow the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to erect signage at Cookstown Cemetery indicating that war graves are contained within the Cemetery.

Councillor S McGuigan felt this matter should be discussed at the next Good Relations Working Group.

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn advised she had no issue with giving permission to erect the proposed signage.

Councillor Cuddy referred to the public interest in war history and that Council should permit the erection of signage.

Proposed by Councillor Buchanan
Seconded by Councillor Glasgow

That Council permit the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to erect 'Green Visitors Signs' at the entrances to Cookstown Cemetery.

Councillor McNamee also felt this matter should be discussed by the Good Relations Working Group,

The Chair, Councillor McFlynn asked Councillor Buchanan if he would withdraw his proposal to allow for matter to be discussed at Good Relations Working Group.

Councillor Buchanan stated he would not withdraw his proposal.

Members voted on Councillor Buchanan's proposal –

For – 5
Against - 7

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that this item be deferred for discussion at next Good Relations Working Group.

E239/15 Street Naming and Property Numbering

The Head of Building Control presented previously circulated report in relation to the street naming of a new residential development at Lurganagoose Road, Curran, Magherafelt.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to name new development at Lurganagoose Road, Curran, Magherafelt as 'Kirk Meadows'.

E240/15 Review of the Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) 1967

The Head of Environmental Health presented previously circulated report in relation to consultation response to be provided to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on the review of the Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) 1967.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to respond to Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on the review of the Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) as per report.

Matters for Information

E241/15 NILGA Reference Guide for Waste and Resource Efficiency

Members noted previously circulated report which provided Members with reference guide on Waste and Resource Efficiency.

E242/15 Rethink Waste Capital Funding

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the outcome of a funding application to the Rethink Waste Capital Fund for 2015/16 in relation to Drumcoo Recycling Centre.

Councillor Cuddy referred to ongoing works at Drumcoo Civic Amenity Site and felt that Members had not been kept up to date with the issues as to why the site will not be reopening this month.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure advised that an update on the Drumcoo scheme was included in the contracts update report due to be presented later in the meeting.

Councillor Cuddy felt an update should have been brought before tonight.

E243/15 Waste Management Plan

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the appointment of consultants for the preparation of a revised joint Waste Management Plan for Mid Ulster District Council, Omagh and Fermanagh Council and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council.

In response to Councillor S McGuigan's question the Director of Environment and Property advised that an appropriate tendering process was undertaken to appoint consultants for the preparation of the Waste Management Plan.

Councillor Cuddy referred to the strategic location of Tullyvar and that it should be kept in mind going forward along with the past working relationships with other Councils.

The Director of Environment and Property advised that the revised Waste Management Plan will cover the period up to 2020. The Director also spoke of Mid Ulster areas strategic position but voiced concern that the local market is not conducive to competition for blue bin material.

E244/15 Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics Report April to June 2015

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the Council's performance in relation to recycling and landfill diversion as outlined in the NIEA Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics Report for April to June 2015.

E245/15 Building Control Workload Analysis

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the workload analysis for Building Control across Mid Ulster District Council.

E246/15 Entertainment Licensing

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on Entertainment Licensing Applications across Mid Ulster District Council.

In response to Councillor McFlynn's question the Head of Building Control confirmed that officers will be conducting inspections of premises over the Christmas/New Year period.

E247/15 Affordable Warmth Scheme

The Head of Environmental Health presented previously circulated report and updated Members on the current position of the Affordable Warmth Scheme.

Councillor McNamee felt that the proposed pilot should only be a short term measure which will be further considered as part of a review of the Affordable Warmth Scheme.

The Head of Environmental Health advised that a review of the scheme will take place in February 2016.

Councillor Glasgow spoke positively with regard to the Affordable Warmth Scheme and requested that his thanks be conveyed to staff involved. The Councillor also stated that any additional funding of the scheme would be welcomed.

Members noted the report.

E248/15 Education for Sustainable Development – Update

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on Environmental and Sustainability educational activities provided through the Council's Sustainability and Biodiversity Programme.

E249/15 Dungannon Public Realm Scheme – Market Square

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure presented previously circulated report which provided Members with an update on the outstanding issues regarding Dungannon Public Realm – Phase 1 and the proposal to proceed to tender for the appointment of design consultants to investigate the potential improvements to car parking, traffic management and pedestrian safety in Market Square, Dungannon.

Councillor Buchanan stated that this Public Realm Scheme did not seem to offer value for money in that additional expenditure was now required.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure advised that the first phase of the Public Realm Scheme had been well received however as a result of comments raised in relation to parking arrangements and pedestrian access it was now proposed to appoint a consultant design team to review the current arrangements and make recommendations as regards options for improvement.

Councillor Burton felt that the review should look at pedestrian access in Market Square as a priority.

Members noted the content of the report.

Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor B McGuigan and

Resolved That items E250/15 – E256/15 be taken as confidential business.

E257/15 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 10.05 pm.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____