



27 June 2024

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in The Chamber, Dungannon at Mid Ulster District Council, Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon, BT71 6DT on Thursday, 27 June 2024 at 19:00 to transact the business noted below.

Yours faithfully

Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive

AGENDA

OPEN BUSINESS

1. Notice of Recording
This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site [Live Broadcast Link](#)
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
4. Chair's Business

Matters for Decision

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| 5. | Council Minutes of meeting held on 23 May 2024 | 3 - 14 |
| 6. | Annual Council minutes of meeting held on 3 June 2024 | 15 - 28 |
| 7. | Planning Committee minutes of meeting held on 4 June 2024 | 29 - 44 |
| 8. | Policy & Resources Committee minutes of meeting held on 6 June 2024 | 45 - 62 |
| 9. | Environment Committee minutes of meeting held on 11 June 2024 | 63 - 70 |
| 10. | Development Committee minutes of meeting held on 13 June 2024 | 71 - 90 |
| 11. | Regulations on Remote Meetings - Transaction of Council & Committee Meetings | 91 - 98 |

12. Consultations 99 - 102

Matters for Information

13. Correspondence Report 103 - 120

Items restricted in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The public will be asked to withdraw from the meeting at this point.

Matters for Decision

14. Council Confidential minutes of meeting held on 23 May 2024
15. Planning Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 4 June 2024
16. Policy & Resources Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 6 June 2024
17. Environment Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 11 June 2024
18. Development Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 13 June 2024
19. Audit Committee Confidential minutes of meeting held on 18 June 2024
20. Tender for Mobile Vending Provision
21. Document for Sealing: Appointment of ICT: Small Settlements Moy Pitch Development. Ref MUDC /TC/C/2022/004
22. Document for Sealing: Improvements to Cottagequinn Cemetery, Dungannon
23. Document for Sealing: Transfer Deed between Mid Ulster District Council and the property owners of 62 Coleraine Road, Maghera.
24. Document for Sealing: Section 76 Planning Agreement between Mid-Ulster District Council and Orchard County Contracts.

Matters for Information

Minutes of Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 23 May 2024 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon

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| Chair | Councillor Molloy |
| Members Present | Councillors Bell, Black, Brown, J Buchanan, W Buchanan, J Burton, Cahoon, Clarke, Corry, Cuthbertson, Forde (BEM), Gildernew, Groogan, Johnston, Kelly, Kerr, Mallaghan, McAleer, McConnell, McElvogue, McFlynn, McGuigan, McLernon, McNamee, D McPeake, S McPeake, McQuade, Monteith, Robinson, Totten, Varsani and Wilson |
| Officers in Attendance | Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive Mr Black, Strategic Director Communities and Place (SD:CP) Ms Campbell, Strategic Director Environment (SD:Env) Ms Canavan, Strategic Director of Organisational Development Strategy and Performance (AD: ODSP) Ms Keys, Marketing and Communications Manager Mr McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSSE) Mr Moffett, Assistant Director of Organisational Development Strategy and Performance (AD: ODSP) Mr Brown, ICT Mrs Forde, Committee and Member Services Manager |

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast.

C093/24 Notice of Recording

Members noted that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

C094/24 Apologies

Councillor F Burton, Carney, Milne, McLean, Graham, Martin and Quinn

C095/24 Declarations of Interest

The Chair, Councillor Molloy reminded Members of their responsibility regarding declarations of interest.

C096/24 Chair's Business

The Chair, Councillor Molloy in his opening remarks said, "I was delighted this month to attend the Go Succeed launch at the Burnavon in Cookstown which highlighted the success of our recent business programmes. The business results from the programmes delivered by our Economic Development team are nothing short of amazing. In addition to the extremely positive feedback from our business owners and managers, an independent evaluation has confirmed some eye watering achievements.

2,992 days of support were delivered to 714 businesses; 344 new jobs were created at an estimated value of £7.33 million; and 32 businesses won new work worth just over £28million. All of which translates into success not just for our businesses but also for Mid Ulster.

Speaking of business success, the Deputy Chair and I joined interim Economy Minister Hargey at the announcement of a £19million investment in Copeland's facility in Cookstown just last week. The investment marks another significant milestone for the Cookstown facility, which has continued to grow and expand since its opening in 1997. It is also good news for our local and regional economy. It represents a vote of confidence by the owners of Copeland in Mid Ulster's manufacturing sector and is evidence of the lasting relationship that maximises economic prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic.

Our events season is also well underway. Thousands of people, including myself, visited sunny Cookstown for the return of the Cookstown Continental Market a few weeks ago. It was great to see so many people enjoy all that there was to offer, not just in the market but also in our local shops and eateries which were packed out, and the great local acts that entertained visitors over the weekend. Credit to Market Place Europe and our own Council employees for making sure the event was delivered so smoothly.

I have attended quite a few events out and about since the last council meeting that have included viewing a fantastic display of Judo by Ren Bu Kan judo club, raising the chequered flag at the Tour of the Sperrins Rally, and having the privilege of being guest of honour with the Timor Leste community in Dungannon at the wonderful cultural celebration held at Hill of the O'Neill to mark restoration of Independence. All very different events, but with one thing in common and that's a very warm welcome from everyone at each one, so thanks must go to everyone I met.

Looking ahead to this weekend, the place to be is Coalisland. I'm looking forward to attending it myself, to cheer on the runners who'll be completing the Newell Stores 5K and 10K runs, to enjoy the family focused entertainment on offer, and to soak up the atmosphere – no matter what the weather has in store for us!

Two announcements in the last 48 hours are of huge significance, the decision by the Irish Government along with Spain and Norway to officially recognise the State of Palestine is a belated but much welcome move. Unfortunately, the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people continues unabated. Secondly, the announcement by Rishi Sunak to call a Westminster election for 4th July will hopefully see the end of an era of misrule by incompetent and uncaring millionaires.

Lastly, a few acknowledgements in relation to members, I sincerely congratulate Cllrs Eimear Carney and Kerry Hughes on giving birth since our last Council meeting. However, sadly in that circle of life, we think this evening of Cllr Ian Milne whose dear wife Kathleen sadly passed away last week.”

The Chair, Councillor Molloy invited Members issues.

Councillor Gildernew reminded Members that at the March meeting of Council she had highlighted the vital importance of the A5 dual carriageway project and the necessity to ensure that it is prioritised and commenced as a matter of urgency. The Councillor spoke of how on 29 April she had joined the staff and students at St Ciaran’s College in Ballygawley to support their campaign to bring the A5 project to fruition. Within 48 hours of that campaign there was another two fatalities on the A5, a student who had participated in the campaign on 29 April and her boyfriend.

Councillor Gildernew reiterated her determination that the work on the A5 begin as soon as possible in order that lives would be saved but also that regional imbalances be addressed and economic and social prosperity improved. As an outcome of the March meeting Council sent a letter to Minister John O’Dowd, Department of Infrastructure again highlighting the urgent need for works on the A5.

Councillor Gildernew drew attention to the Ministers positive response to the letter and extended her thanks to his agreeing to meet with the A5/N2 Cross Border Committee which as Chair she looked forward to facilitating.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy concurred with the comments.

Councillor McAleer drew attention to the lack of Education Authority funded places at local nursery and preschool units, he also welcomed the announcement by the Minister of the Department of Education but stated that clarity should be sought as to when the monies would be available.

Proposed by Councillor McAleer
Seconded by Chair, Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That Council write to the Department of Education welcoming the Minister's announcement of £25m package of measures to support children, parents and providers with early learning and childcare in 2024/25 and request clarification as to whether it will be made available 2024/25 school year and whether additional places will be made available.

Councillor Kerr said he had attended a meeting of the Early Years Forum, Armagh and Dungannon branch and requested that they be invited to make a presentation to Council.

Councillor McElvogue seconded the proposal.

Resolved That Armagh and Dungannon Early Years Branch be invited to make presentation to Council regarding the pressures the sector or facing.

Councillor Cuthbertson concurred.

Councillor Cuthbertson commended Dungannon Ladies RFC Hockey club on their recent success and the William Kerr Memorial Pipe band.

Councillor Cuthbertson drew attention to the recent Cookstown 100 which he had attended on behalf of Council. He highlighted both the success of the event which had over 100 riders, the television coverage, and the economic boost it brought to the district. He said he wondered if Council was doing all it could to promote the event given its coverage and suggested Council sit down with the organisers and Cookstown DEA members to discuss future support. He also highlighted that the event would benefit from social media coverage on council platforms.

Resolved That Council engage with Cookstown 100 organisers in advance of the 2025 event to discuss support for example promotion of event on Council's social media platforms.

Councillor Kerr highlighted that due to the slowing down of engineering some firms had moved to a four-day week, and some were facing payoffs. Councillor Kerr highlighted that some of the firms had received funding via MEGA and Council should be asking what support is being put in place for workforces and further seek accountability in relation to the MEGA funding.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy said that the Labour Market Partnership should engage with firms.

Resolved That Council engage

- (i) with local engineering companies who availed of MEGA funding and who due to slowing down of engineering sector are having to lay off workers or reduce working hours.
- (ii) Council also offer support where possible to workers impacted.

Councillor McConnell requested that the Chair send a letter to St Mary's Primary School in Fivemiletown for winning the best community campaign award in London. He said the campaign to save the school was one of the most endearing issues he had ever seen. He said congratulations should be extended to board of governors in particular Mariad Kelly and the entire group of volunteers who deserve highest praise. He said the campaign had buy-in from across the community and had been both focus driven and inspirational. Councillor McConnell extended highest praise to all who played a key role and said that the school is a massive asset to the community and the accolade was richly deserved.

Resolved That Council send letter of congratulations to St Mary's Fivemiletown in winning the Best Community Campaign Award

Councillor McConnell extended congratulations to the Tyrone under 20 team who won the under 20 title, defeating Kerry. He highlighted it was a fantastic achievement and the second all Ireland title in 3 years and that players, back-room team in particular Paul Devlin had given a real lift to the county group and hopefully the inspiration will continue to get drive and hopefully next year the team will win the Sam McGuire and bring it home to Tyrone.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy said it had been a fantastic achievement.

Resolved That Chair send a letter of congratulations and host a reception for the Tyrone Under 20 Management and Players who won the All Ireland Title.

Councillor McAleer echoed the comments and requested that the Chair send a letter of congratulations to Shea O'Hare the Eir Grid U20 Footballer of the Year.

Resolved That Chair send a letter of congratulations to Shea O'Hare the Eir Grid U20 Footballer of the Year.

Councillor Johnston spoke of the recent death at a quarry in Magherafelt and highlighted the dangers around quarries. She highlighted that quarries are not fun places they put life at risk, they are extremely cold, currents can drag people under water, rock falls, surface can break and you could be sucked down and there was no help on hand. Councillor Johnston said Council could be vital partners in supporting the Health and Safety Executive Stay Out Safety Campaign.

Councillor McFlynn seconded the proposal.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy concurred.

Proposed by Councillor Johnston
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That Council support the Health & Safety Executive Quarry Safety Campaign.

Councillor Forde spoke of the recent passing of former Councillor Bertie Montgomery. She shared he had been a councillor from 1989 to 2005 and during that period had been chair four times. Councillor Forde said that Bertie had been well-known in the community and had worked for everyone. She requested that Council pass on sympathy to the Montgomery family.

Resolved That Council send letter of sympathy to the family of the late Bertie Montgomery former Councillor in Magherafelt

Councillor Mallaghan referred to a meeting of the Department for Infrastructure at which capital projects had been presented by a new director. He advised that the presentation had included the Cookstown Bypass and he had concerns about how it was presented in relation to Mid South West Growth Deal (MSW). Councillor Mallaghan said that it came across that MSW bringing £42m to the table were acting at risk. He said that the A29 was a priority before MSW had tried to help and the project should be treated the same as that of the Enniskillen bypass and having watched the footage he was very concerned that the portrayal looked like MSW were doing something underhand.

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan

Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That Council Officials review the online meeting of the Department for Infrastructure Committee in relation to comments made regarding the A29 Bypass and the MSW Growth Deal support. That Council write to the Chair & Members of the Department for Infrastructure Committee expressing concern at the comments made in relation to MSW Growth Deal operating at risk.

Councillor Wilson supported Councillor Forde's comments in relation to the former Councillor Bertie Montgomery. He said everyone knew him as 'big Bertie' he had been a long time UUP Councillor and chair of a number of committees throughout the community.

Councillor Wilson also concurred with Councillor Mallaghan's comments in relation to the DfI committee's portrayal of matters in relation to the A29, he said it appeared like they were on a solo run.

Councillor Wilson requested that a letter of congratulations be sent to Cookstown Primary School hockey team who won the Pearson Cup.

Resolved That Council send a letter of congratulations to Cookstown Primary School on winning the Ulster Hockey Primary Schools Pearson Cup.

Matters for Decision

C097/24 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in "Open Business" at the Council Meeting held on 25 April 2024

Councillor Kerr drew attention to C084/24 Correspondence and welcomed the news of the departure from Ireland of the Ambassador for Israel. He further welcomed Ireland's decision to view Palestine as a 'free state' and the arrest warning in regard to Zionist leaders.

Councillor Cuthbertson drew attention to C052/24 and C076/24 in relation to the compilation of an itinerary of graffiti throughout the district with the view of working with other agencies to have it removed referring to the fact that the minute was ratified the previous month.

In response the Chief Executive stated the matter would be progressed.

In response to Councillor Monteith's comments regarding Sperrinview and Oakridge the Chair, Councillor Molloy advised that dates had been agreed with Sperrinview and the SHSCT and would be issued in due course.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor McLernon and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Council held on Thursday 25 April 2024 (C072/24 – C084/24 and C092/24) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

C098/24 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Planning Committee Meeting held on 7 May 2024

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 7 May 2024 (P061/24 – P071/24 and P077/24) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, subject to the foregoing were considered and adopted.

C099/24 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 9 May 2024

Councillor Kerr drew attention to PR093/24 Deputation – NIPSA and proposed that Council write to 10 other councils to encourage them to invite NIPSA representatives to make presentation regarding Pay and Grading review for non- teaching staff in the Education Sector.

Councillor Monteith seconded the proposal.

Resolved That Council write to 10 other Councils to encourage them to invite NIPSA representatives to make presentation regarding Pay and Grading review for non- teaching staff in the Education Sector.

Proposed by Councillor McAleer
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee held on Thursday 9 May 2024 (PR089/24 – PR101/24 and PR116/24) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

C100/24 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Environment Committee Meeting held on 14 May 2024

Councillor Wilson drew attention to grass cutting at roundabouts and said that Members were being contacted about grass cutting which had at the Committee been referred back to the working group. He sought clarification as to whether interested Members could attend working groups,

Councillor Cuthbertson, chair of Environment Committee said that the matter referred back, was in regard to wildflower areas and had nothing to do with grass cutting.

Councillor Monteith said like all councillors he too had been approached about grass cutting at Northern Ireland Housing Executive lands, he said when the NIHE are contacted they blame the contractors and it appeared to be potluck if grass received a second cut. Councillor Monteith proposed that Council write to the NIHE to express concern about the ongoing situation and stated people deserve better. He further proposed that Council seek a meeting with them.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy concurred.

Councillor Mallaghan stated that the Council cuts the grass on its property whilst others did not. He stated it was a disgrace especially given the risk of vermin in long grass.

The Chair seconded the proposal stating that people paid rent and deserved better.

Councillor Monteith said that if the grass in a tenant's garden was as high they would receive a letter about it.

Councillor McConnell said that the NIHE had adopted a new approach in dealing with Members queries. He said in the past Members could build a rapport with staff responsible for areas of work, but they were now not allowed to take direct calls instead calls had to be logged and Members contacted in due course. He said the new approach was detrimental to getting situations resolved.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy stated Council would seek a meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor McConnell and

Resolved That Council write to the NIHE expressing concern on the standard and lack of grass cutting throughout the district and seek a meeting to discuss same.

Councillor McFlynn said the matter had been discussed recently at the NILGA partnership panel.

Councillor S McPeake advised that as a party Sinn Féin had met with the Manager of the NIHE earlier in the day and had brought photographic evidence to support their complaints and that although the response had been minimal the Manager had agreed to look at it.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Cuthbertson and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Environment Committee held on Tuesday 14 May 2024 (E096/24 – E111/24 and E121/24) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

C101/24 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Development Committee Meeting held on 16 May 2024

Councillor McElvogue drew attention to D081/24 chair’s Business – Northway Mushrooms and sought an update on the recent testing. He also advised that up to 20 households were currently without water and it was thought this could be due to a connection to the mushroom plant.

The Chief Executive referred the queries back to the Development Committee and said officers would follow up with regards to the water supply issues and revert to members.

Councillor Gildernew said that she too had logged a call with NI Water and was waiting on a call back regarding outcome.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor McLernon and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Development Committee held on Thursday 16 May 2024 (D078/24 – D092/24 and D101/24) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

C102/24 Conferences, Seminars and Training

The HoSS&E sought approval for the previously circulated report on conferences, seminars and training as outlined in Appendix A and B of the report.

Proposed by Councillor McAleer
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That approval be given to submitted requests for conferences, seminars and training as outlined at Appendix A and B to the report.

C103/24 Consultations

The HoSS&E provided update on consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council and sought approval to submit draft consultation response to Dfl on the Water Resource and Supply Resilience Plan 2024 as set out at Appendix B of report.

Councillor Corry drew attention to The Lough Neagh Heritage Resilience Consultation. Closing Date 31 May 2024. She proposed that send a response and grant delegated authority for same. It was further suggested that Council share the consultation on social media platforms.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor McLernon and

Resolved That

- (i) respond to The Lough Neagh Heritage Resilience Consultation. Closing Date 31 May 2024. Delegated authority granted.
- (ii) Council also share consultation on social media platforms;
- (iii) To submit draft consultation response to DfI on the Water Resource and Supply Resilience Plan 2024 as set out at Appendix B of report.

Matters for Information

C104/24 Correspondence

Members noted update on correspondence received for attention of Council.

Councillor McLernon drew attention to the response received from department of Health in relation to respite provision for those with complex needs. She expressed her disappointment especially as the letter focused on learning difficulties and adults with disabilities not complex needs. Councillor McLernon stated that there is a lack of knowledge of the complexities involved and to suggest a nursing home highlighted this fact. She concluded that sometimes a person with complex needs could require 3:1 attention and nursing homes would simply not be equipped to provide such care.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy concurred that the response did not address the issues raised.

Councillor Mallaghan drew attention to correspondence received from Derry City and Strabane District Council seeking support for their motion in relation to a business case for early intervention support for children with autism.

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Chair, Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That Council support Derry & Strabane District Council motion in relation to autism.

Items restricted in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014. The public will be asked to withdraw from the meeting at 7.40 pm

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That items C105/24 to C115/24 be taken as confidential business.

Matters for Decision

- (i) Council Confidential minutes of meeting held on 25 April 2024
- (ii) Planning Confidential minutes of meeting held on 7 May 2024
- (iii) Policy & Resources Confidential minutes of meeting held on 9 May 2024

- (iv) Environment Confidential minutes of meeting held on 14 May 2024
- (v) Development Confidential minutes of meeting held on 16 May 2024
- (vi) Document for Sealing: Appointment of ICT: Small Settlements Moy Pitch Development. Ref: MUDC/TC/C/2022/004
- (vii) Document for Sealing: Appointment of ICT: Small Settlements Castlecaulfield Recreation Grounds. Ref: MUDC/TC/C/2022/004
- (viii) Document for Sealing: Oona Valley Community Association - Release of Charge
- (ix) Document for Sealing: Transfer of title of the Cornmill Car Park, Coalisland (Schedule Ref No. 125) MUDC to Department for Infrastructure
- (x) Document for Sealing: Off Street Car Park Enforcement Contract with Marston (Holdings) Limited
- (xi) Document for Sealing: Maghera Environmental Improvement Scheme Licence Agreement with the Department for Infrastructure

C116/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 7.45 pm

Chair _____

Date _____

Minutes of Annual Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Monday 3 June 2024 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by virtual means

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| Chair | Councillor Molloy (Outgoing) Councillor McConnell (Incoming) |
| Members Present | Councillors Bell, Black, Brown, J Buchanan, W Buchanan, F Burton, J Burton, Cahoon, Clarke, Forde, Graham, Johnston, Kelly, Kerr, Mallaghan, McAleer, McElvogue, McFlynn, McGuigan, McLean, McLernon, McNamee, S McPeake, McQuade, Monteith, Quinn, Robinson, Varsani, Wilson |
| Officers in Attendance | Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities and Place (SD: C&P) Ms Campbell, Strategic Director of Environment (SD: Env) Ms Canavan, Strategic Director of Organisational Development Strategy and Performance (SD: ODSP) Mr McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E) Ms Keys, Marketing and Communications Manager Mrs Forde, Committee and Member Services Manager Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT |

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

The Chair, Councillor Molloy welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast.

AC1/24 Notice of Recording

Members noted that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

AC2/24 Apologies

Councillors Carney, Corry, Cuthbertson, Gildernew, Groogan, Martin, D McPeake, Milne and Totten

Mr Tohill, Strategic Director of Corporate Service and Finance (SD: CS&F)

AC3/24 Declarations of Interest

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

AC4/23 Chair's Business

The outgoing Chair, Councillor Molloy expressed sympathy to the family and colleagues of employee Siobhan Farrell, Planning and to Councillor Gildernew on the tragic death of her nephew Fiachra Ó Faoláin who was also grandson of the former councillor Phelim Gildernew.

Speaking on his year in office, Councillor Molloy said, "Just 12 months ago I sat here anticipating an exciting, busy and challenging year ahead, 12 months on I can honestly say that all expectations have been surpassed. The past year has gone in a flash and as it ends, it has been an absolute honour and privilege to have had this opportunity to not only represent this District but to engage with the people who make Mid Ulster the truly special place it is to live, to visit, to work in and to do business with.

During the year, I attended 100's of events and engagements but no matter where I have been, I have been warmly and respectfully received, welcomed into communities, sporting organisations, schools and businesses. The highlights have been many including the various projects of Connecting Pomeroy and its culmination on Thursday past with the opening of new Forest Building and magical trails, the state of the art facilities at the Dungannon Thomas Clarkes, Hallowe'en and Christmas events, Civic Awards, our inaugural Sports awards, The Moy Food Fair, Continental Market, Coalisland Summer Bash to name just a few as well as celebrating our diversity and cultural celebrations such as our Lithuanian and Timor Leste communities, Mid Ulster Pride, Seachtaine na Gaelige & St Patricks Day but in all just meeting people, having the craic with everyone, young and old, enjoying the moments, soaking it up and seeing people smile and laugh.

Some were obviously a bit more formal and it was always an honour to represent the Council and welcome and engage with international representatives such as delegations from Rivas Vaciamadrid and Plurin sur Mer, the US Special Economic Envoy, The Ambassadors to London for Timor Leste, The Peoples Republic of China and the Consular representatives for Portugal, Spain, Italy, the US and China and have conversations not just about tourism and economic interests but most importantly the experiences of their people living, working and making a contribution to life in Mid Ulster. For some events it was particularly important that both myself and the Deputy Chair were present together, sending out that message of unity with respect for difference, so Meta I thank you for your help, support and friendship in what I know was a very personal journey for you and your family.

I obviously have a few thank you's to do before I vacate, firstly to my party colleagues for entrusting me with the position of Chair and their support throughout the year, it has been an honour and a privilege. My employer Linden Foods have been absolutely fantastic and have allowed me the space to fulfil the role. To each and every fellow councillor thank you for your input and respect, not just during meetings but also out and about at various events and engagements.

To the various teams within Council Communications, Economic & Community Development, Tourism, to member support team and particularly to the staff who work so tirelessly at our many events and are the public front for this Council the work you do is immeasurable. To the Chief Executive and officers who as we know do a great job and provided me with sound advice and guidance when needed.

For fear of leaving people out I haven't mentioned many names however two ladies who kept me in craic all year round as I'm sure they do with many of you Jeanette and Christine, always time for a chat and a cup of tea on the go and special thanks to Louise and Jennifer who has made sure that all diary requests and commitments were attended to, between different representatives not one event was missed. Indeed the entire staff of this council are amazing and it was great to get around all our services and facilities at various times to meet so many of the fantastic people we have.

The biggest thank you I owe is to my wife Frances and our family who have had busy years themselves and many evenings and weekends didn't see much of me. There is a growing list of jobs to be sorted! And lastly I wish all those taking up positions for the incoming year the very best of luck and to the incoming Chair and Deputy, embrace it, enjoy it, you will have a great year getting to discover so much more about the work of the Council, our industry but most important of all our people, comhghairdeas agus ádh mór! Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir."

Councillor Mallaghan thanked the outgoing Chair, Councillor Molloy for his excellent year in office which had been both successful and busy. He highlighted that many of the images shared on social media portrayed him as the true character he was especially in how he reached out to all communities. Councillor Mallaghan highlighted in particular East Timor Independence Day celebrations on the Hill of The O'Neill an event of flair and colour which showed Mid Ulster's true light unlike the racism displayed in Cookstown which is most definitely not acceptable. Councillor Mallaghan reflected on Councillor Molloy's first comments as Chair when he shared the family history and spoke of his father, Francie who is now stepping down after 39 years' service. He said that Councillor Molloy had promised to be his own man and he was true to that and had obviously favoured the recent launch in Pomeroy as he had worn a tie! He concluded paying tribute to Councillor Molloy's family and employer who supported him throughout the year.

The outgoing Deputy Chair, Councillor Graham extended sympathy to the Gildernew and Ó Faoláin family on the exceptionally sad death of Fiáchra. She also extended sympathy to the family of Siobhan Farrell.

Commenting on her year in office the Deputy Chair said, "I would like to begin by thanking my nominating officer and party colleague Cllr Trevor Wilson for the faith he had in me to undertake the position of Deputy Chair. It really has been both an honour and a privilege for me to serve all the residents of Mid Ulster this last year.

The year has gone by so quickly, I have been humbled, impressed and inspired by the people of our district who go above and beyond in their efforts to make this a

much better place for all of us. Individuals and groups alike, who come together to forge friendships, support networks and to fill gaps when other services were lacking, welcomed me in and showed me what can be achieved when we work together. The opportunity I had to represent this whole district at various events is truly one which I did not take lightly. I have met people I never would have met and been to places I would never have been otherwise. I have seen more of Mid Ulster than I have ever seen before and I am so grateful to everyone who supported and encouraged me along the way, so that I have been able to carry out my duties in a fitting manner. I have always said that it's much easier for men than for women because men can turn up in the same suit 100 times and people say isn't he well turned out? But if a woman turns up in the same dress twice they say isn't it a wonder she doesn't have anything else?

I would like to thank Adrain for always being so gracious with his time, the council officers and staff who were always on hand to guide and support me and to Dominic who I would like to thank and congratulate. We have different views politically, but you were a credit to yourself, your party and to this council, in the way you carried out your duties. You were always very courteous and obliging to me personally and it was a pleasure working with you.

To the people of Clogher Valley who believed in me and elected me in the first place, I offer my sincere and grateful thanks, for without you none of these things would have happened.

Finally, I just want to say thank you to everyone who has supported me throughout my year in office, especially my family and to say how very much I have appreciated all the kindness, encouragement and prayers for both myself and my family. Thank you for such an amazing opportunity, I have laughed and cried in equal measure but I have had a wonderful year as Deputy Chair and I hope the incoming Deputy Chair enjoys their year as much as I have. Thank you."

Councillor McLean on behalf of the DUP extended sympathy to the family of Siobhan Farrell and to the Gildernew family and said their thoughts and prayers were with both families.

Councillor McLean congratulated both the Chair and Deputy Chair on carrying out their roles and responsibilities throughout the year. He said whilst there is political differences yet it would be remiss not to acknowledge how both carried out their duties. He said as a Council Mid Ulster sets the benchmark and the other 10 councils should emulate how matters are settled, he concluded by commending the outgoing Chair and Deputy. He said like Councillor Mallaghan he too had been in the role and knows the sacrifices made.

Councillor Quinn on behalf of the SDLP extended sympathies to the families of Fiachra Ó Faoláin and Siobhan Farrell stating that thoughts and prayers are with them.

Councillor Quinn added his congratulations to the outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair in how they had carried out their duties and shown Mid Ulster in a fantastic

light. He said they had been First Citizen for everyone and were a credit to themselves, their families, parties and the Council.

Councillor Monteith extended condolences to families Siobhan Farrell and Fiachra Ó Faoláin. In speaking of Fiachra's tragic death he said that he hoped the young people he was friends with stayed strong and supported each other.

Councillor Monteith commended the outgoing Chair saying he had known him for many years and he had been a credit to himself and his family. He also commended the outgoing Deputy Chair and said he had not known her for long but she had carried out a great job in the role.

Councillor Kerr extended condolences to the families of Farrell and Fiachra Ó Faoláin and like Councillor Monteith encouraged Fiachra's friends to be there for each other. He thanked both the outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair for treating him with respect and in how they had carried out their respective roles.

Councillor Wilson extended sympathies to the families of Farrell and Fiachra Ó Faoláin. He too thanked the outgoing Chair and Deputy for the excellent year in office. Councillor Wilson paid tribute to Councillor Molloy and said he had treated everyone with courtesy and been fair across the board. To Councillor Graham he said she had carried out many duties and they both now deserved a rest.

Councillor Mallaghan paid tribute to the outgoing Deputy Chair and said that she had done a great job especially given the difficult time she had had. He concluded that they had stood side by side and showed great leadership.

The Chief Executive on behalf of all the staff said it had been a pleasure to work with the outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair and that both had served the Council well and been fantastic ambassadors for Mid Ulster. He concluded saying that they could now enjoy their return to being noisy back benchers.

The outgoing Chair, Councillor Molloy said that the interest in the Chair and Deputy Chair roles was demonstrated in the huge number of invitations received which augurs well for Council.

AC5/24 Nomination of Councillors to hold Positions of Responsibility for 2024-25 as confirmed at the AGM May 2023

The outgoing Chair Councillor Molloy referred members to the meeting pack containing the agreed grid for Positions of Responsibility for the period 2023-2027, to be filled using the d'hondt method.

Nominations were made as noted.

The outgoing Chair, Councillor Molloy called on Councillor Mallaghan nominating officer for Sinn Féin nominated Councillor to take the Chair.

Councillor Mallaghan nominated Councillor McConnell.

Councillor Molloy stood down from position.

Councillor McConnell took the Chair at 7.20pm

The Chair, Councillor McConnell accepting the position said, “Go raibh mile maith agaibh agus ta failte romhaibh ar fad anseo trathna inniu.

I firstly wish to sincerely thank my party colleagues for entrusting me with nomination to this position for the year ahead, it is a massive privilege and honour for me personally to step into the role.

I feel this is equally shared by the good people of the Clogher Valley area who put their faith in myself by electing me as their Councillor back in May of last year.

I wish to acknowledge the sterling work of our outgoing Chair my party colleague, Councillor Dominic Molloy and the Deputy Chair Councillor Graham.

It was clear for us all to see throughout the year that they both had a great working relationship and Councillor Molloy highlighted that in his comments. Dominic is a good friend and a tough act to follow, Meta is an endearing, engaging and warm person and I would commend you both on how you served the council this past year. This has been a great strength of this Council - people working together in the best interests of the people we all represent. I think you rightly deserve a round of applause. Buladh bós.

This time last year 13 new Councillors entered the Council Chamber for the first time, myself included and now I find myself with the great honour of becoming Chairperson of Mid Ulster District Council.

I entered the political arena following a long period of four decades working in the Civil Service. My retirement was short lived, but I must admit the challenges I now face as an elected representative have been both rewarding and fulfilling.

I now appreciate fully the important and tireless work which Councillors carry out for our communities on a daily basis.

I am very lucky to have a dedicated and committed group of Party Colleagues alongside me working in the best interests of all our constituents within Mid Ulster.

Change is sweeping across the entire island, and as First Citizen of Mid Ulster I look forward to playing my part in building shared and better society.

I am committed to working for all, and to being a Chair for All, with an absolute determination to deliver positive change in this area.

We must continue to strive to do the best we can for all our residents particularly our community and voluntary sector and those who have been greatly affected by Tory cuts and by continued funding constraints.

In the coming year it is my intention to speak with as many of our people and communities as possible.

Our local employers and employees, our businesses and entrepreneurs, our community & voluntary sector and in particular our sporting groups, clubs and individuals who do so much across such a wide range of levels, ability and age and in so many different codes.

As a Council we must use our voice and our strength to fight for those who seek our support. A collective voice is required if we are to force change.

And I look forward to working with you all to achieve better outcomes for everyone.

There will be hurdles and challenges along the way, but I know with co-operation and respect, obstacles can be overcome - "Where there is a will, there is a way".

In closing I would like to thank my colleagues for supporting me in this role and finally the biggest thanks of all must go to my very supportive and understanding wife Kate and my family for their continued love and support without whom none of this would be possible. Go raibh mfe maith agaibh go leir."

The Chair, Councillor McConnell sought a nomination from the DUP for Deputy Chair.

Councillor McLean nominated Councillor Brown

Councillor Graham stood down and Councillor Brown took the role of Deputy Chair.

The Chair, Councillor McConnell invited Deputy Chair, Councillor Brown to speak.

The Deputy Chair, Councillor Brown said he was a man of few words and would keep his comments short. He thanked his fellow councillors for the nomination and his group leader for all the advice and wisdom he had shared with him since entering politics. He said Councillor McLean had encouraged him to run in an election 31 years ago but at that time he had been unsuccessful but had kept coming back until he had attained success in 2019. Councillor Brown said behind every good man is a better woman and his wife Lisa is always there to keep him right. He concluded by saying his faith was important to him and in giving thanks to Almighty God shared Proverbs 3 5-6 "Trust in the Lord your God with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths."

The Chair Councillor McConnell invited Party Nominating Officers from parties to nominate Members to hold the remaining positions of responsibility for 2024-2025.

| Position of Responsibility | Party | Councillor |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| | | |
| Council, Chair | SF | Cllr McConnell |
| Council, Deputy Chair | DUP | Cllr Brown |
| | | |
| Audit Committee, Chair | SF | Cllr McGuigan |
| Audit Committee, Deputy Chair | DUP | Cllr W Buchanan |
| | | |

| | | |
|---|---------------|----------------------|
| Development Committee, Chair | DUP | Cllr Black |
| Development Committee, Deputy Chair | SF | Cllr Gildernew |
| | | |
| Environment Committee, Chair | SF | Cllr McAleer |
| Environment Committee, Deputy Chair | DUP | Cllr J Burton |
| | | |
| Planning Committee, Chair | DUP | Cllr Robinson |
| Planning Committee, Deputy Chair | Ind - Kerr | Cllr Kerr |
| | | |
| Policy & Resources Committee, Chair | SDLP | Cllr Quinn |
| Policy & Resources Committee, Deputy Chair | DUP | Cllr F Burton |
| | | |
| Housing Council for NI | SF | Cllr Mallaghan |
| | | |
| Partnership Panel for NI (term of Council) | SDLP | Cllr Martin |
| | | |
| Reserve & Cadets Association for NI | DUP | Cllr Cahoon |
| | | |
| Policing & Community Safety Partnership (term of Council) | SF | Councillor S McPeake |
| | SF | Councillor McNamee |
| | SF | Councillor Carney |
| | SF | Councillor Varsani |
| | SF | Councillor Mallaghan |
| | SF | Cllr McGuigan |
| | DUP | Cllr Cahoon |
| | DUP | Cllr Cuthbertson |
| | DUP | Cllr Forde |
| SDLP | Cllr McFlynn | |

A7/24 Appointment of Councillors to Committees 2024-25

The Chair, Councillor McConnell invited Nominating Officers from parties to nominate Members to serve on committees. Nominations were made

| Audit Committee | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Position | Party | Membership 2024-2025 |
| 1. Chair | SF | Cllr B McGuigan |
| 2. Deputy-Chair | DUP | Cllr W Buchanan |

| | | |
|-----------|------|----------------|
| | | |
| 3. Member | SF | Cllr McConnell |
| 4. Member | SF | Cllr Groogan |
| 5. Member | DUP | Cllr Brown |
| 6. Member | SDLP | Cllr McQuade |
| 7. Member | Ind | Cllr Kerr |
| 8. Member | Ind | Cllr Montieth |

| Development Committee | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Position | Party | 2024-2025 Membership |
| 1. Chair | DUP | Cllr Black |
| 2. Deputy-Chair | SF | Cllr Gildernew |
| | | |
| 3. Member | SF | Cllr Bell |
| 4. Member | SF | Cllr Clarke |
| 5. Member | SF | Cllr Corry |
| 6. Member | SF | Cllr McLernon |
| 7. Member | SF | Cllr McNamee |
| 8. Member | SF | Cllr Milne |
| 9. Member | SF | Cllr Molloy |
| 10. Member | DUP | Cllr W Buchanan |
| 11. Member | DUP | Cllr F Burton |
| 12. Member | DUP | Cllr Forde |
| 13. Member | SDLP | Cllr McQuade |
| 14. Member | SDLP | Cllr Quinn |
| 15. Member | UUP | Cllr Wilson |
| 16. Member | Ind | Cllr Montieth |

| Environment Committee | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| Position | Party | Membership 2024- 2025 |
| 1. Chair | SF | Cllr McAleer |
| 2. Deputy-Chair | DUP | Cllr J Burton |
| | | |
| 3. Member | SF | Cllr Groogan |
| 4. Member | SF | Cllr Kelly |
| 5. Member | SF | Cllr Mallaghan |
| 6. Member | SF | Cllr McGuigan |
| 7. Member | SF | Cllr McNamee |
| 8. Member | SF | Cllr Milne |
| 9. Member | SF | Cllr Varsani |
| 10. Member | DUP | Cllr J Buchanan |
| 11. Member | DUP | Cllr Cahoon |
| 12. Member | DUP | Cllr Cuthbertson |
| 13. Member | DUP | Cllr Robinson |
| 14. Member | SDLP | Cllr Johnston |
| 15. Member | SDLP | Cllr Martin |
| 16. Member | Ind | Cllr McElvogue |

| Planning Committee | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Position | Party | Membership 2024-2025 |
| 1. Chair | DUP | Cllr Robinson |
| 2. Deputy-Chair | Ind | Cllr Kerr |
| | | |
| 3. Member | SF | Cllr Bell |
| 4. Member | SF | Cllr Carney |
| 5. Member | SF | Cllr Clarke |
| 6. Member | SF | Cllr Mallaghan |
| 7. Member | SF | Cllr D McPeake |
| 8. Member | SF | Cllr S McPeake |
| 9. Member | SF | Cllr Varsani |
| 10. Member | DUP | Cllr Black |
| 11. Member | DUP | Cllr Buchanan |
| 12. Member | DUP | Cllr Cuthbertson |
| 13. Member | SDLP | Cllr Martin |
| 14. Member | SDLP | Cllr McFlynn |
| 15. Member | UUP | Cllr Graham |
| 16. Member | Ind | Cllr K McElvogue |

| Policy & Resources Committee | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Position | Party | Membership 2024-2025 |
| 1. Chair | SDLP | Cllr Quinn |
| 2. Deputy-Chair | DUP | Cllr F Burton |
| | | |
| 3. Member | SF | Cllr Corry |
| 4. Member | SF | Cllr Gildernew |
| 5. Member | SF | Cllr McAleer |
| 6. Member | SF | Cllr McConnell |
| 7. Member | SF | Cllr McLernon |
| 8. Member | SF | Cllr S McPeake |
| 9. Member | SF | Cllr Molloy |
| 10. Member | SF | Cllr Totten |
| 11. Member | DUP | Cllr Brown |
| 12. Member | DUP | Cllr J Burton |
| 13. Member | DUP | Cllr Cahoon |
| 14. Member | DUP | Cllr McLean |
| 15. Member | SDLP | Cllr Johnston |
| 16. Member | UUP | Cllr Wilson |

A8/24 Appointment of Chair of Mid Ulster Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)

The Chair, Councillor McConnell drew attention to previously circulated report and sought the SDLP nomination to Appointment of Chair of Mid Ulster Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)

Resolved That Councillor McFlynn be appointed to the role of Chair of the Mid Ulster Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)

AC9/24 Confirmation of Outside Bodies

Members noted nominations to Outside Bodies.

| Name | Number of Council Reps | Current Membership |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| A5-N2 Cross Border Group | 4 | Cllrs Gildernew, Robinson, McElvogue, McConnell |

| Name | Number of Council Reps | Current Membership |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Agewell Partnership | 5 | Cllrs Corry, McFlynn, Milne, Clarke, F Burton |
| Caledon Regeneration Partnership | 4 | Cllrs F Burton, McElvogue, Gildernew, Robinson |
| CDM Community Transport and Out and About | 3 | Cllrs F Burton, Milne, Monteith |
| COSTA – Community Organisations of South Tyrone | 5 | Cllrs Gildernew, Graham, McConnell, McQuade, Molloy |
| ICBAN | 4 | Cllrs McFlynn, McPeake, McConnell, Robinson |
| Labour Market Partnership | 5 | Cllrs Kerr, Molloy, J Burton, Quinn, Varsani |
| LGSC Diversity Ambassador | 1 | Cllrs Groogan |
| Lough Neagh Partnership | 5 | Cllrs Milne, McPeake, Johnston, Carney, McLean |
| Mid Ulster Housing Forum | 10 | Cllrs McPeake, McNamee, W Buchanan, Forde, Corry, J Burton, Monteith, Mallaghan, Varsani, McFlynn |
| National Association of Councillors (NI) | 8 | Cllrs Wilson, McFlynn, Black, McConnell, Molloy, Cuthbertson, W Buchanan, Clarke |
| NI Amenity Council | 3 | Cllrs Robinson, Quinn, Bell |
| NILGA (NI Local Government Association) | 8 | Cllrs F Burton, Robinson, McFlynn, McPeake, McConnell, McGuigan, Brown, Graham |
| NILGA Policy & Learning Networks: <i>Elected Member Development</i> | 1 | Cllr McConnell |

| Name | Number of Council Reps | Current Membership |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| NILGA Strategic Policy Network | 1 | Cllr F Burton |
| Northern Ireland Local Government Traveller Partnership | 1 | Cllr McPeake |
| Peace Partnership | 10 | Cllr McGuigan, Forde, J Burton, McFlynn, McNamee, W Buchanan, McLean, McAleer, McPeake, Cahoon |
| Shopmobility Mid Ulster | 5 | Cllrs McFlynn, Forde, McNamee, McLernon, Kerr |
| SHHP Bellaghy Bawn Writers Residency Project | 1 | Cllr Milne |
| Sperrins Partnership | 2 | Cllrs Clarke, McGuigan |
| Sustainable NI | 2 | Cllr W Buchanan, Mallaghan |
| Tullyvar Joint Committee | 5 | Cllrs Gildernew, McConnell, Graham, Robinson, Varsani |
| William Carlton Summer School | 2 | Cllrs McConnell, SDLP |
| Workspace, Draperstown | 1 | Cllr McGuigan |

| Name | Number of Council Reps | Current Membership |
|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Coalisland & Dungannon Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (Dungannon & Torrent DEA) | 12 | Cllrs Monteith, Cuthbertson, Burton, McQuade, Molloy, Varsani, Kerr, McAleer, Carney, McLernon, Quinn, Buchanan |
| Coalisland Town Centre Forum (Torrent DEA) | 6 | Cllrs Kerr, McAleer, Carney, McLernon, Quinn, Buchanan |
| Cookstown Town Centre Forum (Cookstown DEA) | 7 | Cllrs Wilson, Martin, Buchanan, Cahoon, Mallaghan, McNamee, Bell |
| Magherafelt Town Centre Forum | 5 | Cllrs McFlynn, Totten, Clarke, Brown, McLean |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| (Magherafelt DEA) | | |
| Maghera Town Centre Forum (Carrtoghher DEA) | 5 | Cllrs Black, Corry, Kelly, McGuigan, McPeake |
| Pomeroy Forest Centre Advisory Committee (Cookstown DEA) | 7 | Cllrs Wilson, Martin, Buchanan, Cahoon, Mallaghan, McNamee, Bell |

Resolved That the Outside bodies nominations be confirmed.

A9/24 Schedule of Meetings: 2024-25

Members noted the previously circulated 2024/25 Schedule of Meetings for Council and Committee meetings. It was noted that to facilitate Westminster Elections a report would be presented to June Policy and Resources committee to reschedule as appropriate.

Matters for Information

AC10/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7pm and ended at 7.40 pm

Chair _____

Date _____

Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Tuesday 4 June 2024 in Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon

Members Present Councillor Robinson, Chair
Councillors Bell, Black (6.05pm), J Buchanan, Carney, Clarke, Cuthbertson, Graham, Kerr, Mallaghan, McElvogue, McFlynn, D McPeake, S McPeake, Varsani

Officers in Attendance Mr Bowman, Head of Strategic Planning (HSP)
Ms Donnelly, Council Solicitor
Ms Doyle, Head of Local Planning (HLP)
Mr Marrion, Senior Planning Officer (SPO)
Ms McCullagh, Senior Planning Officer (SPO)
Mr McClean, Senior Planning Officer (SPO)
Ms McKinless, Senior Planning Officer (SPO)
Miss Thompson, Committee and Member Services Officer

Others in Attendance Councillor McAleer (6.09pm)
LA09/2021/1546/F Mr Scurfield
LA09/2023/1074/F Mr McCann
Mr Gourley
LA09/2021/0443/O Ms Quinn

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm

P078/24 Notice of Recording

Members noted that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

P079/24 Apologies

Councillor Martin.

P080/24 Declarations of Interest

The Chair, Councillor Robinson reminded members of their responsibility with regard to declarations of interest.

P081/24 Chair's Business

The Head of Strategic Planning (HSP) referred to the recent passing of their colleague Siobhan Farrell who had worked within the planning department from 2017. The HSP stated that colleagues were all very shocked and saddened to hear

of Siobhan's passing and wanted to take the opportunity tonight to again pass on sincere condolences to Siobhan's family and friends.

The Head of Local Planning (HLP) referred to recent judgement in relation to planning applications for infill dwellings considered under policy CTY8 and where the decision of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council was quashed by the Court of Appeal. The HLP stated that a copy of the judgement was circulated as part of the addendum and advised Members to make themselves aware of the judgement in greater detail following tonight's meeting. The HLP outlined some of the key points from the judgement –

Judges considered the wording of policy CTY8 in detail and considered the thrust of the policy which is to refuse the infilling of gap sites, they also addressed what is a small gap site and the definition of a substantially and continuously built up frontage, the balance of planning judgement versus observable facts, the conditions of the small gap exception and the requirement which inherently exists in CTY8 which is to protect those gaps in the countryside that provide relief and visual breaks to maintain rural character. In their conclusion the judges warned against the temptation by planning officers and members of a planning committee to view policy CTY8 as a permissive policy and that unlike other policies in PPS21 CTY8 does not begin by setting out that planning permission will be granted for a certain type of development and that on the contrary it begins by explaining that planning permission will be refused where it results in or adds to a ribbon of development. The HLP stated there is nothing in the judgement which gives cause for concern as to how this Council is interpreting policy CTY8 when considering a gap site. The HLP advised Members to be mindful going forward that this judgement will be considered as a material consideration in the assessment of applications for infill development. The HLP stated that judges also addressed the decision of the planning committee in Newry, Mourne and Down Council not to carry out a site visit to assess the application site for themselves and noted that whilst this was not a legal error they were not satisfied that the planning committee were properly equipped to take the decision they did based on the case officers mis-application of a substantial and continuously built up frontage. The HLP stated again that the judge's decision had been circulated and that she would strongly advise Members to take cognisance of it going forward.

The Chair, Councillor Robinson encouraged Members to take time and read the judge's decision circulated as he felt there will be something to learn and that it highlights the importance of the role of a member of the Planning Committee.

Councillor Black entered the meeting at 6.05 pm.

The Head of Local Planning referred to the below applications which were on the agenda for determination and sought approval to have the following applications deferred from tonight's meeting schedule for an office meeting –

Agenda Item 5.4 - LA09/2023/0340/F - Dwelling and Garage at lands approx. 40m S of 117 Cavanakeeran Road, Pomeroy for Ms Kate McAleer.

Agenda Item 5.6 - LA09/2023/0771/O - Site for a dwelling and domestic garage at approx. 120m E of 65 Moneysharvan Road, Swatragh for Mr Patrick Turner.

Agenda Item 5.7 - LA09/2023/0852/O - Dwelling and garage at 55m E of 64 Aughrim Road, Magherafelt for Mr Andrew Watterson.

Agenda Item 5.10 - LA09/2023/1263/O - Dwelling and garage at land approx. 20m SE of 8 Tullywiggan Road, Cookstown for Mrs Fenella Turkington.

Agenda Item 5.11 - LA09/2023/1265/O - Site for dwelling and garage at 60m SW of 99 Tullyvar Road, Aughnacloy for Mr Jeffrey Reid.

Agenda Item 5.13 - LA09/2023/1410/F - Light industrial unit to include ancillary storage, administration space, and staff facilities, and, associated car parking and landscaping at approx. 145m N of 34 Sydney Street, Aughnacloy for Mr Michael Treanor.

Agenda Item 5.16 - LA09/2024/0177/O - Dwelling and garage in an existing cluster with access onto Curr Road at land adjacent to 33 Moneymore Road, Desertmartin for Thomas and Brigid McGuigan.

The HLP advised that the following applications had been withdrawn from tonight's schedule for consideration of / submission of further information –

Agenda Item 6.2 – LA09/2022/0641/F - Retention of boundary wall/fence at 29 Glengomna Road, Draperstown for Barry O'Kane.

Agenda Item 6.5 - LA09/2023/0916/F - Off site replacement dwelling and garage at 180m W of 16 Carnose Road, Cranny, Moneymore for Mr Gregory McGovern.

Resolved That the planning applications listed above be deferred for an office meeting / withdrawn for consideration of / submission of further information.

The Chair, Councillor Robinson stated he would have to leave the meeting early tonight at which point the Deputy Chair, Councillor Kerr will Chair the meeting.

Matters for Decision

P082/24 Planning Applications for Determination

The Chair drew Members attention to the undernoted planning applications for determination.

LA09/2018/1643/F Residential development comprising of 42 units (30 semi-detached and 12 detached), creation of a new access/right turn lane from Coolshinney Road, open space/private amenity space, landscaping and ancillary site works at lands 100m SW of 13 Coolshinney Road And 20m N of 2 Thornhill, Magherafelt for Mullaghboy Construction Ltd

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2018/1643/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2018/1643/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2021/1546/F **Sand & gravel extraction including access from the Camlough Road and Internal Haul Road. Landscaped earth berms and progressive restoration to a mix of agricultural and wetland nature conservation habitats. At lands E of 220 Camlough Road (Westland Horticultural), Camlough Road, Pomeroy for Loughdoo Aggregates & Concrete Ltd**

The Chair, Councillor Robinson stated that this item will be moved to confidential business as there were some personal circumstances in relation to the application.

Proposed by Councillor Bell
Seconded by Councillor Mallaghan and

Resolved To move planning application LA09/2021/1546/F to confidential business.

Councillor McAleer entered the meeting at 6.09 pm.

LA09/2021/1819/F **Demolition of an existing building and development of 65 dwellings (28 detached, 30 semi-detached, 1 chalet bungalow and 6 apartments) and associated garages, open space, access and site works at land between 1 Spires Manor and 96 Moneymore Road (directly S & E of Spires Manor and S of Spires Integrated PS), Magherafelt for Waterside Leisure (Ni) Ltd**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2021/1819/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2021/1819/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2023/0340/F **Dwelling and Garage at lands approx. 40m S of 117 Cavanakeeran Road, Pomeroy for Ms Kate McAleer**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2023/0484/RM **Phase One of Business Park development (Outline LA09/2018/1361/O), including 3 units for light industrial use, a security gatehouse building, and roadway at lands immediately W of Kilcronagh Business Park, Cookstown for MACM (NI) Ltd**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2023/0484/RM which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2023/0484/RM be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2023/0771/O **Site for a dwelling and domestic garage at approx. 120m E of 65 Moneysharvan Road, Swatragh for Mr Patrick Turner**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2023/0852/O **Dwelling and garage at 55m E of 64 Aughrim Road, Magherafelt for Mr Andrew Watterson**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2023/1074/F **2 storey dwelling and domestic garage at land immediately E of 103D Ballagh Road, Fivemiletown for Caran Ltd**

Mr Marrion (SPO) presented a report on planning application LA09/2023/1074/F advising that it was recommended for approval.

The Chair advised the committee that requests to speak on the application had been received and invited Mr McCann to address the committee in the first instance.

Mr McCann stated he was speaking on behalf of his own family and the other neighbours who have objected to the proposal. Mr McCann stated that the case officers report has been considered and that they would respectfully disagree with the interpretation and a number of the opinions and assertions that have been made. Mr McCann stated that the application is not in keeping with the character of the area and that it is having a significant impact on existing neighbours and their wellbeing. Mr McCann stated he did not believe the application meets the requirements of policy CTY2a and whilst there is reference to a Church as a focal point, local people living in the area see this as a landmark in the area and not a focal point. McCann stated there were also issues with intrusion and privacy and this is reflected in the number of objections which have been made. Mr McCann stated he would also contend that the site cannot be absorbed into the existing cluster and that it will alter the existing character and visually intrude into the open countryside. Mr McCann felt that there are also some questions about the history of planning on the site as it is obvious that applications have been cleverly sequenced to engineer a case for a

cluster. Mr McCann stated that the people who have bought the houses have done so in good faith on the understanding that there would be no more development behind them and are now finding out that there are proposals for further development. Mr McCann asked the Committee to visit the site and take further time to consider the application.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to the application going behind existing houses and asked if there is an issue with windows overlooking.

Mr Marrion stated that separation distances have been assessed between the proposed dwelling and development around it and that it is felt that the separation distances and proposed landscaping is enough to mitigate concerns in relation to overlooking.

Mr Gourley stated he would agree with the case officer's position in relation to policy CTY2a and that all criteria is being met in terms of the number of buildings and dwellings. Mr Gourley stated that the area in question is already significantly developed and stated that the thrust of PPS21 is to cluster development together to have a position of where there is existing development in the landscape that new development should be nestled within it rather than on a greenfield site so that there is no further visual impact. Mr Gourley stated that there are a number of dwellings and community facilities in the form of a Church and that development of the site is in keeping with PPS21 and meets all the individual criteria set out in policy CTY2a.

Councillor Black stated it was important to hear from both parties and whilst it has been said that the proposal meets criteria he felt that objectors concerns should also be considered and that a site visit would allow for this. Councillor Black proposed that the application be deferred for a site visit.

Councillor Graham seconded Councillor Black's proposal.

Resolved That planning application LA09/2023/1074/F be deferred for a site visit.

LA09/2023/1195/F **Demolition of existing buildings, erection of discount supermarket, provision of car parking, landscaping, and associated site works at Nos. 22 and 26 Orritor Road and Nos. 47 and 49 Burn Road, Cookstown for Lidl Northern Ireland**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2023/1195/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2023/1195/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2023/1263/O **Dwelling and garage at land approx. 20m SE of 8 Tullywiggan Road, Cookstown for Mrs Fenella Turkington**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2023/1265/O **Site for dwelling and garage at 60m SW of 99 Tullyvar Road, Aughnacloy for Mr Jeffrey Reid**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2023/1372/F **Installation of CO2 Liquefaction Recovery Unit, associated concrete plinth, pipework and all other site works (Noise Report received) at 20A Granville Road, Granville Industrial Estate, Dungannon for Bio Capital Ltd**

Mr Marrion (SPO) presented a report on planning application LA09/2023/1372/F advising that it was recommended for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor Black and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2023/1372/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2023/1410/F **Light industrial unit to include ancillary storage, administration space, and staff facilities, and, associated car parking and landscaping at approx. 145m N of 34 Sydney Street, Aughnacloy for Mr Michael Treanor**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2024/0086/F **Retrospective garage at 33 Quarry Road, Knockcloghrim for Mr Michael O Boyle**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2024/0086/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor S McPeake
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2024/0086/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2024/0174/O **Dwelling and domestic garage (renewal of LA09/2020/0153/O) adjacent and NE of junction with Mullaghmoyle Road on Colliers Lane, Coalisland for Marianne Sturtridge**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2024/0174/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Carney and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2024/0174/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2024/0177/O **Dwelling and garage in an existing cluster with access onto Curr Road at land adjacent to 33 Moneymore Road, Desertmartin for Thomas and Brigid McGuigan**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2024/0184/O **Renewal of approval LA09/2020/0795/O (dwelling and domestic garage) at land between 37 and 43 Tulnavern Road, Ballygawley for Noel Stinson**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2024/0184/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Varsani
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2024/0184/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2024/0190/O **Dwelling at site adjacent to and immediately SSE of 60 Kilnaslee Road, Kilmore, Galbally for Mr Michael Cummings**

Mr Marrion (SPO) presented a report on planning application LA09/2024/0190/O advising that it was recommended for refusal.

Councillor S McPeake felt a site visit may be useful and referred to the officer's comments that the lane doesn't constitute frontage and asked where the house would have to be to allow frontage as he felt in other cases lanes had been allowed as frontage.

Mr Marrion stated that in this case the application site would be the frontage to the road.

The Head of Local Planning (HLP) stated that PAC are clear that laneways on their own are not frontage and that it is her understanding that the Planning Committee

have not accepted a laneway on its own before. The HLP stated that where a laneway comes to the front of the road there needs to be a defined area on either side to have frontage and in this case the field that is the application site breaks a frontage so the house behind is not considered to have a frontage.

Councillor S McPeake asked if there was a narrow strip alongside the laneway could that constitute a frontage.

The HLP advised that there have been cases where a narrow strip has been maintained as part of a garden area but that in this case it is just the laneway that has frontage to the road.

Councillor S McPeake stated that given the judgement discussed at the start of the meeting was critical that a site visit had not happened he felt a site visit would be helpful in this case and proposed same.

Councillor Varsani seconded Councillor S McPeake's proposal.

Resolved That planning application LA09/2024/0190/O be deferred for a site visit.

LA09/2024/0411/RM Dwelling and garage at approx. 20m SE of 41 Moneyhaw Road, Moneymore for Mr and Mrs L Jordan

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2024/0411/RM which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2024/0411/RM be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2024/0454/O Site for an off-site replacement dwelling and detached domestic garage, with the existing dwelling retained as farm storage at 50m W of 22 Tirgan Road, Moneymore for Mr Malachy McCrystal

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2024/0454/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2024/0454/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

Mr Marrion (SPO) presented a report on planning application LA09/2021/0443/O advising that it was recommended for refusal.

The Chair advised the committee that a request to speak on the application had been received and invited Ms Quinn to address the committee.

Ms Quinn advised that the application site had been left to her by her father and that it was her intention that she would build a home in the area that she grew up in and loves. Ms Quinn stated that the site is beside her home house where her elderly mother lives and that she is the sole carer. Ms Quinn advised that her mother suffers from mental health problems which have worsened since the death of her father and that her mother relies on her hence the need to be in close proximity. Ms Quinn stated that she has lived in rented accommodation for 21 years and that she would like to have a stable home. Ms Quinn stated that she has lived and worked in the area all her life and that her partner has a farm id which she is proposing to use, this farm is 25 miles away and is not suitable because of the need to be close to her mother. Ms Quinn stated she also has a local beauty business which she has built up and stands to lose if she moved from the area. Ms Quinn stated she was aware of another site in the area which had a farming id used to achieve approval. Ms Quinn stated that she would be happy to move the proposal within the site if it helped to overcome planning concerns in relation to ribbon development and stated that there will be no further development on the site.

Councillor Bell stated that the dwelling is currently proposed to be sited along the roadside and that the applicant has advised they are willing to move the proposal further back in the field, the Councillor asked if this was attainable and if a site visit would be worthwhile.

The Head of Local Planning (HLP) stated it was up to Members if they wanted a site visit and highlighted that there are four reasons for refusal which involve five policies. The HLP stated that in terms of CTY10 a case has not been proven that there is a need to site away from the group of farm buildings and to move the site back in the field may overcome ribboning but that there would still be CTY15 to overcome in relation to distinction of settlement limits. The HLP referred to the two houses that were approved previously and that these were approved because there was the bookend at that stage and that the discussion at that time that development would go no further. The HLP stated that this application will extend limits further out creating further sprawl and advised Members that all reasons for refusal cannot be overcome.

Councillor Bell stated he recalled a previous application for sheds outside of development limits of Moortown and that exceptional circumstances were made on that occasion. Councillor Bell stated that to the West of the proposed site there is a cluster of buildings that those sheds were built in. Councillor Bell stated that due to the fact that the Committee looked at another application albeit under different circumstances he felt it right that this application is given further consideration and proposed that a site visit be held.

The HLP stated that each application is considered on its own merits and that she was not aware of the circumstances of making an exception to the application Councillor Bell was referring to. The HLP also referred to the court judgement which clearly defines the importance of maintaining visual breaks in the countryside. The HLP stated that policy CTY8 is a dismissive policy, not permissive, and that the importance of CTY8 is to maintain important visual breaks and where there is a gap that could take more than two houses is contrary to CTY8.

Councillor McFlynn seconded Councillor Bell's proposal.

Resolved That planning application LA09/2021/0443/O be deferred for a site visit.

LA09/2022/0641/F **Retention of boundary wall/fence at 29 Glengomna Road, Draperstown for Barry O'Kane**

Agreed that application be withdrawn from tonight's schedule for consideration of further information.

LA09/2023/0652/O **Dwelling on a Farm at site at 150m W of 18A Ballynacross Road, Maghera for Mr David Fulton**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2023/0652/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Black
Seconded by Councillor Buchanan and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2023/0652/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2023/0693/F **Temporary mobile home at 20 Loughbracken Road, Pomeroy for Mr Aidan Molloy**

The Chair, Councillor Robinson stated that, similar to last time presented, this item will be moved to confidential business.

LA09/2023/0916/F **Off site replacement dwelling and garage at 180m W of 16 Carncoose Road, Cranny, Moneymore for Mr Gregory McGovern**

Agreed that application be withdrawn from tonight's schedule for submission of further information.

LA09/2023/1071/O **Dwelling and garage at approx. 50m NE of 2 Cullenramer Road, Dungannon for Mr Michael Walls**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2023/1071/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Varsani
Seconded by Councillor McElvogue and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2023/1071/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

P083/24 Receive Report on Deforestation on Davagh Forest

Ms McCullagh (SPO) presented previously circulated report which advised of statutory consultation received from Forest Service, an Agency of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 (as amended) in relation to a deforestation proposal at Davagh Forest, Co. Tyrone.

Councillor Clarke declared an interest as he is involved in Sperrins Partnership.

Councillor Clarke stated he is glad to see the proposal as he knows the area and felt that it is ground that should never have been planted in the first place. The Councillor stated that Council should be encouraging more of this activity and referred to another area which was planted known as Maeve's Hollow and that there should be more restoration in this area in the future.

Councillor Varsani stated that in her time on this Committee she felt this is one of the most important papers brought forward as it addresses the issue of carbon and native species and supporting natural habitats. The Councillor felt there are lessons to learn when looking at issues in relation to Lough Neagh and praised the recommendations in the report and that more of the same should be encouraged across Mid Ulster.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Varsani and

Resolved To agree and submit response to consultation on proposed deforestation at Davagh Forest as attached at appendix 2 of report.

Matters for Information

P084/24 Minutes of Planning Committee held on 7 May 2024

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved To note previously circulated minutes of Planning Committee held on 7 May 2024.

Live broadcast ended at 6.55 pm.

Councillor Robinson vacated the Chair and Councillor Kerr took the Chair.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Members consider items P082/24 (cont'd) and P085/24 to P090/24.

Matters for Decision

P082/24 Planning Applications for Determination (Continued)
P085/24 Receive Report on Tree Preservation Records
P086/24 Receive Enforcement Report

Matters for Information

P087/24 Confidential Minutes of Planning Committee held on 7
May 2024
P088/24 Enforcement Cases Opened
P089/24 Enforcement Cases Closed
E090/24 Enforcement Live Case List

P091/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 6 pm and ended at 8.19 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the Council's [Planning, Policy & Resources /Environment/ Development] Committee in the Chamber, [Cookstown /Dungannon/Magherafelt].

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast as aforesaid, will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I will let you know before this happens.

I would remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted.

Thank you and we will now move to the agenda.



ADDENDUM TO PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA

FOR PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING ON: 4th June 2024

Additional information has been received on the following items since the agenda was issued.

Chair's Business

Copy of Judgement for Court of Appeal - Gordon Duff v Newry Mourne and Down Borough Council

| ITEM | INFORMATION RECEIVED | ACTION REQUIRED |
|-------------|---|------------------------|
| 5.1 | <p>Application was agreed at May Committee, only change is the addition of conditions 6 and 7.</p> <p>These are in relation to the timing of the provision of and management of the areas of public open space. No other changes or amendments have been made to the application.</p> | Members to note |
| 5.2 | <p>Under 'Description of Proposal' as noted in the body of the report – the following paragraph has been included in error-</p> <p>'The proposal submitted is for Winning and working of minerals (sand and gravel) across and area of c.12 ha, the construction of a new site access and haul route, erection of processing plant and machinery (washing plant),</p> | Members to note |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| | <p>weighbridge and ancillary office, with restoration of the land to agriculture.'</p> <p>The correct description is on the front cover and under planning assessment. No weighbridge, washing plant or office is proposed.</p> <p>Late objection also received</p> | <p>All issues raised have been addressed</p> |
| 5.8 | Late objection received | No new issues raised, members to be advised about ecology |

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 6 June 2024 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Members Present | Councillor Quinn, Chair Councillors F Burton, Cahoon, McAleer, McLernon, S McPeake, Wilson |
| Officers in Attendance | Mrs Canavan, Strategic Director of Organisation Development, Strategy and Performance (SD: ODSP) Ms Dyson, Head of Human Resources (HoHR) Mr McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E) Mrs McNally, Assistant Director of Corporate Services and Finance (AD: CS&F) Mr O'Hagan, Head of IT (HoIT) Mrs Grogan, Committee and Member Services Officer |
| Others in Attendance | Agenda Item 4 – Deputation: Armagh & Dungannon Early Years Ms Tanya Burke Ms Margaret Fitzgerald |

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

The Chair, Councillor Quinn welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor Quinn in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee by referring to Annex A to this minute.

PR117/24 Notice of Recording

Members noted that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

PR118/24 Apologies

Councillors Gildernew, Johnston, Molloy, Totten, Brown, McLean, J Burton.

PR119/24 Declarations of Interest

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

PR120/24 Chairs Business

The Chair, Councillor Quinn advised that he looked forward to working with the committee for the incoming year.

PR121/24 Deputation – Armagh & Dungannon Early Years

The Chair, Councillor Quinn welcomed Ms Tanya Burke and Ms Margaret Fitzgerald to the meeting and invited them to address the committee.

Ms Fitzgerald advised that she was a representative from Brocagh Playgroup in Coalisland and Ms Burke was a representative from Panda Playgroup in Killeeshil. Ms Fitzgerald advised that on 20th May 2024, Armagh & Dungannon branch held their termly meeting and invited MLA's and members of Council to attend, with Councillors Kerr, McElvogue and Cuthbertson being in attendance and also MLAs Colm Gildernew and Deborah Erskine. Through that meeting it was agreed that the group would be invited to attend the meeting tonight to provide committee with an overview of Early Years.

Ms Burke stated the purpose of the presentation tonight was to provide Members with an overview on Early Years (appendix):

- Pre-School Educational Settings from Voluntary, Community and Private Sectors:
 - Provide early years education and care; Support and guide children's learning; Encourage learning through play; Provide opportunities to develop socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually and creatively; Lay foundation skills for early mathematical learning through problem solving and critical thinking; Support Language, developing critical skills such as writing, listening, communication and concentration; Build self-esteem and confidence promoting positive wellbeing; Have a highly skilled staff team; Ensure a well-planned environment meeting all areas of the preschool curriculum; Observe all children to ensure all individual needs are met and any additional needs identified; Provide a safe and secure environment for learning
- Challenges for the Voluntary and Community Early Years Sector:
 - Sustainability; Recruitment and Retention; Increase in Children with Additional Needs; Lack of Value; Inequality with Statutory Sector
- Sustainability:
 - Cost of living; Bills: rent, heating, electric, rates; Wages; Increase in minimum wage; Need for resources; No additional funding provided by EA; Funding is not increasing in line with inflation; Settings are struggling to cover costs and meet all the needs of the settings
- Recruitment and Retention:
 - Harder to find staff; Less entering the childcare path; Staff leaving to the statutory sector due to better rates of pay and less responsibility; Having to employ undertrained staff to keep settings open to meet adult child ratio's; Vetting and medical costs for the sector followed by trust checks and length of time not equal with statutory sector
- Increase in Children with Additional Needs:
 - Lack of funding; Lack of support; Staffing; Access to health professionals; Limited resources

- Lack of Value:
 - Seen as facilitating childcare as opposed to an early learning educational setting; Lack of avenues to further develop skills and career progression; Lack of status and reward for the role staff play in the early years
- Inequality With Statutory Sector:
 - Rates of pay and no set pay scales; Inspection from both social services and ETI; SEN referrals; Displacement on allocation of places; Funding per child in setting; Vetting process; The new 22.5 hour week for pre-school children pilot only completed in Nursery school settings

The Chair, Councillor Quinn thanked Ms Burke for her informative presentation and said that it was clear to hear the emotion in her voice when delivering the presentation which he could really understand. The Chair concurred with Ms Burke's comment about the provision being seen as a babysitting service which was totally disrespectful. He referred to Brocagh Playgroup and said he could not sing their praises strongly enough along with parents he had spoken too, there was nothing but high praise about the work in which the playgroup carries out. The Chair felt that there was a total disrespect for playgroups, there is nursery schools which carry out fantastic work, but they were doing nothing different to what playgroups were doing enhancing children's learning skills and improvement from when a child enters at the start of the year until they leave at the end of the year.

Ms Fitzgerald stated that within Brocagh playgroup, staff were working 3.5 hours per day but were only being funded for 2.5 hours the same way as other playgroups and are just seen as a subsidiary of nursery schools for children who didn't get into nursery schools even though the majority were all first preference. Ms Fitzgerald advised that the Education Authority see playgroups as a backup for nursery schools.

The Chair stated that there seemed to be a total disrespect from other statutory agencies towards playgroups when approaching them about other issues like road safety matters etc and their response was that it was not a school facility and no interest in the matter.

The Chair said that he came from a teaching background himself as both his parents were teachers and it was evident the disrespect classroom assistants get, but the fact of the matter was that teachers could not do their job without them and were just as qualified when it came to teaching and educating children.

Councillor McLernon thanked the group for their presentation and said that it was clear to see the very valuable and well-deserved service being delivered especially when it came to working with children with SEN Education. The member advised that her nephew attended Brocagh Primary School but was now an adult with special complex needs and agreed that there was not enough provision out there especially for those children with SEN and for other needs that needed to be addressed. The member said that Councillors would be more than happy to help and not to be afraid to reach out.

Councillor F Burton thanked the group for their presentation tonight. The member stated that she had recently worked with a family and through their playgroup it was identified that their child had extra needs and required support. The member referred to

access to expertise from health professionals and enquired what Council could do to try and help and change what playgroups were coming up against including a list of things that Council could lobby for or write to the Minister to ensure that these were on his desk. The member said that around the room tonight, each Councillor values preschools and wants the best for our children and were always told that the early years were the most important years of a child's life and was important to get behind this to allow children to get the right support. The member said that she had recently spoken to a local lady and was shocked to learn that she had taken on the role within a playgroup on a voluntary basis going out seeking funding for the playgroup which was a thankless job but was willing to go out to try and better the lives of children in a rural area.

Ms Burke agreed that there was a need for the management committee but that vetting puts volunteers off, some years the playgroup were very fortunate enough that some parents were able to give up their free time to help out. Ms Burke stated that the person who pays the wages was also carries out other roles: treasurer, payroll and signing out money etc and not something that they envisaged when they sent their child to preschool and agreed that this was tough. In the past she had been awarded a wellbeing grant, which was something very nice as she was able to reward the committee taking them out for a meal and felt that this was something to show how much volunteers were valued within the community. In response to query regarding signposting to other professionals, felt that this would be the remit of the educational sector and advised that a playgroup was the first point of contact as they were writing the first record of concern. Ms Burke referred to a recent news report of a young girl being diagnosed with a life limiting condition and advised that she was actually the playgroup leader that the young girl mentioned about bringing it to her attention and although she was going to lose her sight, ability to walk and deteriorate rapidly, she was the person to raise the concern initially. The mother of the young girl did not accept it in the beginning but later approached the playgroup to help sign it off, which was very challenging as the playgroup was handling very delicate information. She felt that this was a very difficult situation as there was very little help out there and people having to go on their own and seek support from health visitors and other health professionals. Ms Burke advised that there was one little girl within her setting desperately needing support and she had tried every avenue and has been turned down, with a principal phoning from a local school advising that there was no support in place and cannot accommodate the child. The child has no statement as Ms Burke was unable to get it for her for September and then people wonder why children were not in placements and why a good solicitor was fighting to get these children the placement they deserve and felt that there was a year in a child's life where they could be helped. She said that schools wished that they could do more also but were only permitted to make two referrals per year and if a school was sitting with 200 pupils, then this was a very small number of pupils they can help and would be confident that schools would also be in favour of this.

Ms Fitzgerald said that there were some children who do not have a place at all, with one place in Primate Dixon with 40 children, with each parent thinking that this was being allocated to their child.

Ms Burke advised that there was a continuous knock-on effect down the ladder, if a child does not get a place, then this can cause stress and mental health issues to parents as well which can impact the health service.

The Strategic Director of Organisation Development, Strategy and Performance (SD: ODSP) advised that she was responsible for Community Planning within Council which includes Education and Health including the Southern Trust, with everyone being at the table. The SD: ODSP felt that it would be worthwhile for the group to be invited to a future meeting of Community Planning to provide a presentation to all the bodies around the table so they can hear the story and challenges being faced on a daily basis. She stated that there could be an influence present who might be able to do something as she was aware of the value of what playgroups do and certainly knew the value of what Ms Fitzgerald did in Brocagh Playgroup. The SD: ODSP advised the committee that she would liaise with the group after the meeting to tie in with a future Community Planning meeting.

Councillor Cahoon thanked the group for their presentation and said that sometimes people do not know what Early Years entails until you know someone working in that sector. The member referred to the importance it plays in the fundamental years of a child's life and the skills they learn for life. The member hoped that the announcement from the Minister a few weeks ago shows that Early Years is valued and although there was an ambitious package of announcements which was correct, there were a few concerns raised through the presentation by the group tonight and advised that these would be brought back to the Minister by herself and Councillor Burton especially around the 22.5 hours and correct provision as this would transform children's lives for decades to come.

Ms Burke referred to 22.5 hours proposal and advised that the playgroup resided in an old Council building, former Killymaddy restaurant and if implemented would be hopeful for that next year. Ms Burke said that she runs a double session and would be beneficial to avail of two rooms together and asked if this was something that Council could consider i.e. implementing a modular building on site as there would be 39 children coming back next year and if she was only able to offer one session of 22.5 hours, there would be some children who would not avail of a place for the incoming year.

Ms Fitzpatrick stated that this was a problem for a lot of the playgroups and this would allow the facilities to run extra sessions.

Ms Burke agreed that this would allow the facilities to run the extra sessions and provide support as this has come in quite rapidly and if implemented would allow the extra places to be given out. There would be challenges otherwise as places have already been allocated and children losing out on a place. Ms Burke said that any help the Council could provide would be greatly appreciated.

The Assistant Director of Corporate Services and Finance (AD: CS&F) referred to comment regarding additional space and advised that this could be something that could be brought to the Capital Planning team to see if this could be progressed.

The Chair thanked Ms Burke and Ms Fitzgerald for attending the meeting tonight and hoped that something could be done by Council to help the group going forward.

The representatives from Armagh and Dungannon Early Years withdrew from the meeting at 7.32 pm.

PR122/24 Member Services

No issues.

Matters for Decision

PR123/24 Corporate Performance Improvement Plan (PIP Plan) 2024

The Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E) presented previously circulated report to consider Council's Corporate Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for period 2024-2025.

Proposed by Councillor McAleer
Seconded by Councillor McLernon and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Council's Corporate Performance Improvement (PIP Plan) Plan 2024-2025.

PR124/24 ICT Strategy

The Head of IT (HoIT) presented previously circulated report to seek approval for the adoption of the New ICT Strategy for Mid Ulster District Council.

Councillor F Burton referred to the cost of implementing the new ICT system for Magherafelt and possibly Dungannon at some stage and said that she had watched a programme on TV today regarding cyber security and enquired if Officers were happy that our security was robust enough due to the high level of hacking and spamming against people and businesses.

The HoIT agreed that cyber security was the biggest challenge and risk facing this organisation and one of the key aims and objectives within the strategy for Officers to enhance and reinforce cyber controls, awareness, technical issues and resources. The Council has committed to resourcing those cyber controls so far as reasonably possible but face the same challenges as the wider world given the regular high-profile compromises recently. The HoIT stated that it was one of the top priorities within Council's strategy and Council is working diligently, restructuring our services to adopt (including a new cyber lead post in position). Council has implemented a SOC and SIEM service which will monitor and look for indicators of compromise, we have reinforced our technical policies and security controls to combat ever changing cyber threats.

The Chair concurred with Councillor F Burton's comments and felt that this was very important. The member said that he receives a lot of messages from older constituents regarding unwarranted emails being received and usually he tells them to just ignore them and asked if it would be possible for Council to send a message to the general public about hacking emails. He referred to an email he had received a few weeks ago about a hacking email indicating that they had accessed his account by using a password and when he investigated the email, he realised that it was an old password that the hackers had accessed through an old website he had used years previously and personal details leaked. The Chair said that he was able to delete the message, but if this was someone elderly, they could pay out very easily as they could think it was

genuine. The Chair enquired if there was any way Council could put out a social media post warning the public against hacking.

Councillor McPeake advised that this was one of the key subjects that PCSP advise of when meeting key groups, the elderly in particular. He said that the Crime Prevention Officer does a specific workshop on the issue, for particularly the elderly and felt that it would be beneficial for Council to link in with PCSP as they have it well on their radar and do sterling work. The member advised that it was very important to make the public aware of hacking and scamming as it was in all facets and advised that he had attended a recent event with Councillor F Burton in the Valley Hotel, Fivemiletown, with the subject amongst the elderly about deadly concerns regarding cyber security.

Councillor Wilson advised that it was just not the elderly that was being targeted, it could be anyone as scamming was getting more sophisticated. He recalled receiving a text message last week "*Hi Dad, this is my new number*" and automatically thought it was from his daughter in Scotland but had the good sense to google the number and realise it was a scam. The member said that if a message was to be issued to the public by social media about email scamming, that text message scamming should also be included.

Proposed by Councillor McLernon
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to note the contents of the ICT Strategy and adopt the strategy for Council.

PR125/24 July Committee Schedule

The Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E) presented previously circulated report to seek approval to move the date of the Committee meetings in July to accommodate the General Election scheduled for 4th July 2024.

Proposed by Councillor F Burton
Seconded by Councillor McAleer and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be granted to move the date of the committee meetings in July to:

- Planning Committee: 2 July 2024 at 6.00pm, Chamber, Dungannon
- Environment Committee: 8 July 2024 at 7.00pm, Chamber, Cookstown
- Development Committee: 9 July 2024 at 7.00pm, Chamber, Cookstown
- Policy & Resources Committee: 10 July 2024 at 7.00pm, Chamber, Cookstown

PR126/24 Member Services

None.

Matters for Information

PR127/24 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 9 May 2024

Members noted Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee held on 9 May 2024.

PR128/24 Corporate Services & Finance Directorate Service Plan 2024-25

Members noted Corporate Services & Finance Directorate Service Plan for 2024-25.

PR129/24 Somme Association: 2024-2025 Membership Subscription

Members noted correspondence received from the Somme Association on annual contributions payable for period 2023-2024.

Live broadcast ended at 7.42 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McLernon
Seconded by Councillor McAleer and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Members consider items PR130/24 to PR135/24.

Matters for Decision

PR130/24 Magherafelt Chamber Upgrade
PR131/24 Staff Updates – Organisational Restructure and Other
PR132/24 Staffing Matters for Decision

Matters for Information

PR133/24 Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee held on 9 May 2024
PR134/24 Staff Matters for Information
PR135/24 Contracts and DAC

P136/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 7.52 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the Council's [Policy & Resources/Environment/Development] Committee in the Chamber, [Cookstown/Dungannon/Magherafelt].

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast as aforesaid, will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I will let you know before this happens.

I would remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted.

Thank you and we will now move to the agenda.



Armagh and Dungannon Early Years Branch

OUR EARLY YEARS CONCERNS

Pre School Educational Settings from Voluntary, Community and Private Sectors



- Provide early years education and care
- Support and guide children's learning
- Encourage learning through play
- Provide opportunities to develop socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually and creatively
- Lay foundation skills for early mathematical learning through problem solving and critical thinking
- Support Language, developing critical skills such as writing, listening, communication and concentration
- Build self-esteem and confidence promoting positive wellbeing
- Have a highly skilled staff team
- Ensure a well-planned environment meeting all areas of the preschool curriculum
- Observe all children to ensure all individual needs are met and any additional needs identified
- Provide a safe and secure environment for learning

Challenges for the voluntary and community Early Years Sector

- Sustainability
- Recruitment and retention
- Increase in children with Additional Needs
- Lack of Value
- Inequality with statutory sector



Sustainability

- Cost of living
- Bills : Rent, heating, electric, rates
- Wages
- Increase in minimum wage
- Need for resources
- No additional funding provided by EA
- Funding is not increasing in line with inflation
- Settings are struggling to cover costs and meet all the needs of the settings



Recruitment and retention

Harder to find staff

Less entering the childcare path

Staff leaving to the statutory sector due to better rates of pay and less responsibility

Having to employ undertrained staff to keep settings open to meet adult child ratio's

Vetting and medical costs for our sector followed by trust checks and length of time not equal with statutory sector

Increase in Children with Additional Needs



Lack of funding



Lack of support



Staffing



Access to health professionals



Limited resources

Lack of Value

1

Seen as facilitating childcare as opposed to an early learning educational setting

2

Lack of avenues to further develop our skills and career progression

3

Lack of status and reward for the role we play in the early years

Inequality with statutory sector

Rates of pay and no set pay scales

Inspection from both social services and ETI

SEN Referrals

Displacement on allocation of places

Funding per child in setting

Vetting process

The new 22.5 hour week for pre school children pilot was only completed in Nursery school settings

**Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee of Mid Ulster District Council
held on Tuesday 11 June 2024 in Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown**

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Members Present | Councillor McAleer, Chair Councillors J Buchanan, J Burton, Cahoon, Kelly, Groogan, Johnston, McElvogue, McGuigan, McNamee, Robinson, Varsani |
| Officers in Attendance | Mrs Campbell, Strategic Director of Environment (SD: Env) Mr Conlon, Head of Technical Services (HoTS) Mr Currie, Senior Building Control Officer (SBCO) Ms Donnelly, Council Solicitor Mr Fagan, Legal Representative Mr Fox, Building Control Development Manager (BCDM) Mr Gillis, Licensing Officer (LO) Mr McAdoo, Assistant Director of Environmental Services (AD: ES) Mr Scullion, Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS) Miss Thompson, Committee and Member Services Officer |
| Others in Attendance | Agenda Item 16 – McKinney Hall Entertainment Licence Renewal Mr McKinney |

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

The Chair, Councillor McAleer welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor McAleer in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee by referring to Annex A to this minute.

E122/24 Notice of Recording

Members noted that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

E123/24 Apologies

Councillors Cuthbertson, Mallaghan, Martin and Milne.

E124/24 Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor J Burton declared an interest during confidential business in agenda item 8 - Festive Lighting Replacement - Delegated Authority Request.

E125/24 Chair's Business

The Chair, Councillor McAleer stated that he had not been notified of any Chair's Business for tonight's meeting and asked that for future meetings that Members submit their requests 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

Matters for Decision

E126/24 Bus Shelters Update

The Head of Technical Services (HoTS) presented previously circulated report which provided update on current bus shelter status.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor McElvogue and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that –
- Bus shelter application listed to move from stage 5, under 3.4, is recommended for approval:
1Nr – 3.4.1 – Ardboe Parish Hall Carpark.
 - Bus shelter application listed under 3.7 is recommended for approval to installation this month:
1Nr - 3.7.1 – Farlough Road, Derryvale.

E127/24 Rethinking Our Resources Consultation Response

The Assistant Director of Environmental Services (AD: ES) presented previously circulated report which sought approval to submit a response to the DAERA consultation on Rethinking our Resources: Measure for Climate Action and a Circular Economy in Northern Ireland.

Councillor McGuigan stated that Council have invested heavily over a number of years in recycling centres and the materials that can be collected for recycling and that going by the figures outlined in reports Mid Ulster Council is one of the highest recyclers and sends the lowest amount of residual waste to landfill. The Councillor stated he did not think Council should be changing its processes at this stage as to do so would require further massive investment and that Council already has a system in place that is delivering. Councillor McGuigan proposed the consultation response.

Councillor Cahoon seconded Councillor McGuigan's proposal stating that the commingled option seems common sense, is effective and practical and follows the direction of travel in England. The Councillor added that commingling seems a logical way forward and will keep Mid Ulster Council's recycling figures as one of Northern Ireland's top performing Councils.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the submission of the consultation response to DAERA as outlined at appendix to report by the deadline on 27th June 2024.

E128/24 Chewing Gum Task Force Grant Scheme Funding

The Assistant Director of Environmental Services (AD: ES) presented previously circulated report which provided update on a funding application to the Chewing Gum Grant Scheme.

The Chair, Councillor McAleer commended the AD: ES and his team on securing more external funding for Council.

Councillor McNamee proposed the recommendation and stated that the key thing is education on how people dispose of gum.

The Chair, Councillor McAleer seconded Councillor McNamee's proposal.

Councillor J Burton asked if the machine used is solely for cleaning off chewing gum or if it can be used for cleaning the street as well.

The AD: ES stated that the machine is not used solely for chewing gum and advised that it is also used for cleaning public realm sites which has proven effective.

Councillor J Burton stated that traders in the Dungannon area would like to see a bit more work put in to keep the town clean so it was good to hear this machine can also be used for street cleaning.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve acceptance of the £27,500 funding offer from the Chewing Gum Task Force Grant Scheme.

E129/24 Festive Lighting Replacement - Delegated Authority request

The Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS) presented previously circulated report which sought to award delegated powers for the award of a tender for the supply and delivery for a range of festive lighting to be used in the main towns throughout the district, if required.

Councillor McGuigan referred to the lights that are to be upgraded and asked if there is any possibility of villages or groups getting access to these lights if they are in good condition. The Councillor stated that groups and villages do not have the money required to purchase and replace lights and whilst there is a grant available this does not cover all costs.

Councillor Robinson referred to the total figure of £495k for new and replacement lighting and asked if there is a breakdown of this figure.

The AD: PS stated that the potential reuse of lights that are in good condition can be considered by officers similar to previous community asset transfer arrangement but highlighted that the reason that the lights are being replaced is because they have

come to the end of life. The AD: PS stated that £495k is the overall figure and that there is no specific split in terms of settlements. This will be divided out based on the specification for the items for each town and will be determined at the tender outcome stage.

Councillor J Burton asked if officers will be working with traders in Dungannon to work out the placement of lights.

The AD: PS stated that there are a number of locations in Dungannon that have been identified for additional lights and this has been factored into the tender. The AD: PS stated that officers are working closely with Regeneration Officers in each of the town centres in terms of lighting installations and that the locations for these are largely determined by the infrastructure that is in place to power the lights.

Proposed by Councillor McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor Robinson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that, pursuant to Section 7(1)(b) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014, that authority is delegated to the July 2024 Environment Committee to approve the award of contract for supply and delivery of town centre festive lighting goods, in the event it is not possible to bring a tender report for the appointment to the June 2024 Council meeting.

Matters for Information

E130/24 Environment Committee minutes of meeting held on 14 May 2024

Members noted minutes of Environment Committee held on 14 May 2024.

E131/24 Environment Directorate Departmental Plan 2024/25

Members noted previously circulated report which set out the annual Departmental Plan for the Environment Directorate for the period 2024/25.

E132/24 Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (NI) 2024

Members noted previously circulated report which advised on the new Climate Change (Reporting Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.

E133/24 Building Control Workload

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the workload analysis for Building Control.

E134/24 Entertainment Licensing Applications

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

E135/24 Dual Language Signage Surveys

Members noted previously circulated report which advised of the result of surveys undertaken on all applicable residents on the streets/roads in response to Dual Language Signage Nameplate requests.

Councillor Robinson referred to a road in his locality which recently had signage changed and that a number of residents had been in contact with him to say they did not receive a survey. The Councillor asked how these surveys are posted as the residents in contact with him were adamant they did not receive a survey.

The Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS) advised that surveys go out in the normal post, not by registered mail. The AD: PS stated that in instances where surveys are posted out and residents call in to say they have not received a survey then a duplicate is sent out.

Councillor Varsani referred to the resurveying of Rossmore Road previously agreed by the Committee which has now come back with an emphatic return of 81% in favour. The Councillor thanked the Committee for voting in favour of allowing the resurvey to take place within the policy. Councillor Varsani stated that the residents have made their wishes clear and that she looked forward to the erection of the signage. The Councillor stated that it has been a long road but that the cultural and linguistic heritage is set to be enhanced for those living in and passing by the area.

Councillor Robinson clarified that he did not support the proposal to resurvey Rossmore Road which he stated was a change from policy. The Councillor asked if consideration should be given to posting out surveys by registered post going forward to avoid a similar issue happening again as residents would be unaware to ring in to ask for a duplicate survey if they had not received notification in the first instance.

The Chair, Councillor McAleer stated that the DUP Party have previously made complaints that the cost is excessive in relation to dual language signage but that if Councillor Robinson wanted to make a proposal that surveys are posted by registered mail then officers can look into it.

Councillor Robinson proposed that future surveys in relation to dual language signage be posted by registered mail.

The Chair, Councillor McAleer stated that officers will bring back costings in relation to the proposal.

Councillor J Burton seconded Councillor Robinson's proposal.

The Strategic Director of Environment stated that the proposal will have a cost implication in terms of process and that officers will need to assess this before a definitive decision can be taken.

Councillor McNamee stated there was no issue in bringing back costings in relation to registered post but it was his view that it will be too costly and the system currently in place works well.

Councillor Varsani stated there was no issue in exploring the option and that it be brought back to Committee for decision. The Councillor asked if the issue Councillor Robinson was speaking about was in relation to a change of sign or a new sign.

Councillor Robinson stated that there had been a request for dual language signage and a survey was subsequently issued and that residents on the road in question are adamant they did not receive the survey. Councillor Robinson stated that it was a bit strange of Councillor McNamee to say he was concerned about cost and that he also had concerns about cost. The Councillor stated that he had visited one of the junctions on the road in question and that there were no less than six signs at that junction. Councillor Robinson stated that if there are concerns about cost he questioned why perfectly good road signs were being removed to replace them with dual language signs.

The Chair, Councillor McAleer stated it is what is voted for by residents when the survey has been undertaken.

Councillor McNamee stated there is a dual language signage policy in place and that processes within the policy are followed. The Councillor suggested that Councillor Robinson bring the name of the person to the attention of the AD: PS to see if how they would have voted would have made a difference to the result of the survey.

Councillor Robinson stated he had spoken with two families on the road in question and if they had received a survey it would have made a significant difference to the result which was why he felt it is important that this issue did not arise again.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that officers bring back costings in relation to posting dual language signage surveys by registered post.

E136/24 Dual Language Signage Requests

Members noted previously circulated report which advised of the requests for Dual Language Signage from residents on the streets/roads in question.

Live broadcast ended at 7.28 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor Varsani and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst Members consider items E137/24 to E143/24.

Matters for Decision

- E137/24 McKinney Hall Entertainment Licence Renewal
- E138/24 Contracts for the Receipt and Processing of Kerbside Collected Mixed Dry Recyclable (Blue Bin) Waste
- E139/24 Procurement Frameworks for the Supply of Refuse/Recycling Products

Matters for Information

- E140/24 Environment Committee Confidential Minutes of meeting held on 14 May 2024
- E141/24 Capital Framework – ICT Contracts Update
- E142/24 Capital Framework – IST Contracts Update
- E143/24 Maghera Regeneration Programme Update

E144/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 8.10 pm.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the Council's [Policy & Resources/Environment/Development] Committee in the Chamber, [Cookstown/Dungannon/Magherafelt].

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast as aforesaid, will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I will let you know before this happens.

I would remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted.

Thank you and we will now move to the agenda.

Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 13 June 2024 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Members Present | Councillor Black, Chair Councillors Bell, F Burton, Clarke, Corry, Forde, Gildernew, McLernon, McNamee, McQuade, Molloy, Monteith, Quinn, Wilson |
| Officers in Attendance | Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) Mr Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) Ms Linney, Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) Mr McCreedy, Strategic Programmes Service Manager (SPSM) Ms Spence, Economic Regeneration Service Manager (ERSM) Ms M McKeown, Tourism Service Manager (TSM) Mr O McGuckin, ICT Mrs Grogan, Committee and Member Services Officer |

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

The Chair, Councillor Black welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor Black in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee by referring to Annex A to this minute.

D102/24 Notice of Recording

This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

D103/24 Apologies

Councillors W Buchanan and Milne.

D104/24 Declaration of Interests

The Chair, Councillor Black reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest.

D105/24 Chair's Business

None.

D106/24 Deputation – Arts Council

The Chair, Councillor Black advised the deputation from Arts Council was postponed as they were unable to be in attendance tonight but would be rescheduled and brought back to a future committee meeting.

Councillor Wilson enquired if there was a reason why the Arts Council cancelled their meeting tonight and when did they advise Council.

The Chair advised that the group advised Council of the postponement within the last few days due to unforeseen circumstances.

Matters for Decision

D107/24 Development Report - Brantry Area Rural Development Association

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the following:

- To consider and agree to act as a Sponsor Body for the Community Asset Transfer the development of a community space at 74 Rehaghey Road, Aughnacloy by Brantry Area Rural Development Association.
- Council officers to seek to use the approach taken for this scheme as a test pilot in the development of a policy position for further CAT Sponsorships.

Councillor Gildernew declared a conflict of interest in Brantry Area Rural Development Association.

Councillor Gildernew advised that BARD was a great group and had been assisting them with the Community Asset Transfer and were delighted that Council were going to provide support regarding that. Unfortunately, the way the process works, LPS do not do a valuation until down the line with the group not being able to determine whether it was within their remit to proceed due to affordability, but really appreciate Council support.

Councillor F Burton sought clarification on whether someone who declares an interest is allowed to speak on an actual proposal. The Councillor stated that AD: Dev had taken an outline request and had rightly pointed out, it was the first of its kind brought to Council. The Councillor said that it had come as a shock to her as it was quite down the line and had got no sight of the proposal until the report was received by members and whilst she was not against any group working hard within their community sought clarify on whether Officers could provide information as there were other community groups that could carry Rehaghey in their group and wondered if they got an opportunity to declare or express an interest. The Councillor enquired if any other group wished to declare an interest would they still be considered as we were always mindful when groups expand or create new services, other services can also be displaced within that locality which could be a concern. The Councillor sought clarity on whether another group within the locality who wished to express an interest would have an equal opportunity going forward for Council to sponsor them also or would it be better to defer the recommendation for full Council until the decision was actually taken

as she would like to find out if there were other groups interested to have a fair playing field.

The AD: Dev advised that these opportunities and promoted to the community/voluntary sector by Development Trust NI and Council have a good working partnership and could pass on their details to the Councillor F Burton to pass on to any other interested group to go through the same process. DTNI work with the group in terms of understanding what it is to take on an asset such as this. The AD: Dev said that a previous group did come forward for another public asset being disposed off, but did not get to Council as there wasn't the same awareness that whilst you take on the asset in terms of the delivery, they have to take on the liabilities also which would be the responsibility of the group. The group got to the stage with DTNI that they pulled out as they weren't aware of the LPS valuation which had to come forward. As referenced earlier, this was the start of the process as it was unknown until the outcome of the LPS valuation on whether the group could take it on but would be going through the development up until that. The AD: Dev advised that she could share DTNI contact details with the Councillor to allow any other interested groups to engage and if they get to the stage, their requests would be brought through also.

Councillor F Burton said that there still seemed to be an opportunity for other groups but felt if this proposal was agreed tonight and not deferred to Council, other groups which declare an interest, would this mean that they would be put on the backfoot or would Council sponsor the same.

The AD: Dev advised that Council could put it through indicating that there may be other groups forthcoming which could be presented to DTNI based on what was discussed here tonight.

The Chair enquired if he was right in saying that Council acting as a sponsor body, there was nothing to prevent Council from acting as a sponsor body for another organisation if they should show an interest in the future as an option if the opportunity arose.

The AD: Dev said that properties identified under the D1 process would have to be put through to DTNI. The AD: Dev advised that Officers would share with DTNI that there may be another forthcoming.

Councillor McLernon said that she would be happy to propose the recommendation brought forward tonight.

Councillor Molloy seconded the recommendation.

Councillor Molloy said that this was a good initiative which was similar to sporting bodies including engagement with sporting bodies and schools and felt that this could be upping those services within communities and looked forward to seeing it progressing.

The Chair said that Councillor F Burton had made a proposal to defer the proposal and enquired whether she was happy with what she had heard by way of an update and wished to withdraw her proposal.

Councillor F Burton advised said that she would be happy to withdraw her proposal as long as everyone gets a fair playing field and other groups seeking sponsorship get the same opportunity.

Councillor F Burton sought clarity regarding someone declaring an interest and being allowed to speak on the matter as she would be curious to know as Agewell was involved in different projects being brought back later on.

The Chair said that it was his understanding that there was nothing to prevent a member speaking on a matter so long as a declaration of interest was made and don't propose or second what was on the floor.

The Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P) advised that his understanding was that conflicts of interest are for individual members to consider whether it was a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest on whether comments made contributed to that conflict or not. The SD: C&P stated that the member did declare an interest up front, and it is up to the member to decide whether their comments were appropriate in the context of their particular conflict.

Councillor F Burton stated that members were told at previous meetings that if a person declared an interest, they would leave the room and asked when this actually happened as she did not remember this ever-taking place.

The SD: C&P said that it was his understanding, that it depends on the reason of the interest and if the reason was pecuniary or non-pecuniary but re-iterated that it was up to each individual member to satisfy themselves that they not breaching their Code of Conduct.

Councillor Corry said that she wished to come in on the back of the conversation and advised that she was on the Community Wealth Building group and referred to some of the issues raised by Councillor F Burton. The Councillor stated that the group was only developing and were involved with some particular community groups, schools, businesses or whoever the group may be, and it was the case of everyone having an equal opportunity in the collaboration of whatever community benefits that there might be.

Proposed by Councillor McLernon
Seconded by Councillor Molloy

Resolved That it be recommended to Council –

- To agree for Council to be a Sponsor Body to the Community Asset Transfer and development of a community space at 74 Rehaghey Road, Aughnacloy by Brantry Area Rural Development Association.
- To use the approach taken for this scheme as a test pilot in the development of a policy position for further CAT Sponsorships.

D108/24 Development Report

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: Dev) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the following:

- Rolling Community Grant Awards
- PCSP Plan 2024 - 24
- Development Department - Update

Councillor Quinn proposed the report.

Councillor Quinn referred to item 2.3 – Development Update – Gortgonis and Coalisland Canal and stated that excellent news had been received over the last number of weeks regarding the school moving forward and funding being granted along with two other local schools which was great to see. The Councillor said that discussions had been ongoing regarding the Gortgonis Centre from he first became a Councillor in 2014, 10 years later soil has not been broken yet, but plenty ideas and a lot of discussion around the town on what actually happened and hoped that we were on the final stretch getting here. The Councillor referred to the concept of designs and talk about scaling it back and enquired if Council had decided the final outcome going forward or still in two minds about the design.

The SD: C&P advised that following the last engagement with members a number of months ago when news emerged around the Education Authority, Officers had been doing work in the background around revisions to the scheme to build in some of the conversation points raised which has now got to the stage where Officers were content that it reflects what members had alluded to the last time. The SD: C&P hoped that over the summer that engagement would take place with DEA members to take them through the concepts before coming back to Development Committee for consideration.

Councillor Quinn referred to Coalisland Canal project and noted that design options and discussions had taken place previously and enquired if there had been any word back from the Department regarding any extra funding that could be spent towards it.

The SD: C&P advised that there was a lot of work going on in the background in relation to Coalisland Canal with a DEA meeting scheduled to take place on Monday evening for members. The SD: C&P said members would be updated at that meeting and hoped that a direction of travel on how this could be moved forward, with a report being brought back to Development Committee for consideration. He advised that Council were under significant time pressures given that the funding was still time sensitive and spent by 31 March 2025 and hoped that after the DEA meeting that a direction of travel could be sought.

The Chair referred to item 2.3 – PCSP Plan 2024-25 which was very detailed and some good work ongoing. The Chair said that one thing that did jump out at him which was quite concerning was the lack of awareness amongst young people in terms of what PSCP do as 69% of young people not aware of the group. He was aware that some work did take place regarding raising awareness within that demographic but felt that there should be a concerted effort to really try increase this as over two-thirds of people

within that category not being aware was not a particularly good statistic. The Chair felt a further effort to raise awareness of PCSP with young people should be explored.

Councillor F Burton said that each year this last number of years domestic violence has been exceptionally high within Mid Ulster, with members being aware of a woman very recently being murdered in her own home. The Councillor stated that although the murder did not take place within our area, statistics show that this could be something that may come to our area sooner rather than later. The Councillor said that she went through the report and did not see much about domestic violence and felt that this would be important as it was something that usually happens around Christmas time whenever everyone is off and would like to see more clarity around that. The Councillor said that in recent weeks, the Clogher Valley area has had a significant rise in rural farm crime with tractors, trailers and quads being stolen and would like this raised with the PCSP team regarding help that it out there and that farmers are made aware of it.

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor F Burton and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to –

- Approve the Community Grant Awards for Sports Representative Grant
- Note the PCSP Annual Plan 2024-25
- Note the Development update.

D109/24 Tender to Supply Willow Cookstown Leisure Centre

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which sought approval to approve the awarding of delegated powers to the July 2024 Development Committee (and/or Chief Executive if required depending on dates/timelines) for the award of contract to supply Willow Tender for Cookstown Leisure Centre.

Councillor Wilson enquired if the AD: HL&W envisaged that more and better tenders would be received otherwise another source would need to be investigated.

The AD: HL&W said as the tender was currently live, he didn't wish to comment to much on it but advised that it was a market with a limited number of suppliers operating. The AD: HL&W said that it was regrettable the submission received previously did not meet all the criteria as there were a few gaps within their submission but this did not necessarily mean that they couldn't provide the full service requested, but that all their responses were not full and complete so this was the reason the tender had to be readvertised.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to note the contents of this report and in the event it is not possible to bring a tender report for the contract appointment to the Council meeting on 27th June 2024, approval granted that pursuant to Section 7(1)(b) of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014,

that authority is delegated to the July 2024 Development Committee (and/or Chief Executive if required depending on dates/timelines) for the award of contract to supply Willow Tender for Cookstown Leisure Centre subject to normal satisfactory due diligence processes for an initial contract award of 12 months with option to extend for a further 2 x 12 month periods subject to satisfactory performance and at discretion of Council.

D110/24 Choose to Live Better Funding

The Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report to update Council on successful application to the Choose to Live Better Fund and to seek Members approval of the acceptance of the letter of offer from The Northern Healthy Lifestyle Partnership (NHLP).

The Chair referred to 3 projects which were submitted, 2 were successful and one unsuccessful. He stated that the one that was unsuccessful was “Mid Ulster Active and Healthy” and his understanding was that the reason given was that it was seen as a duplication of service and enquired what duplication of service was that seen to be a duplication of. The Chair also referred to the two schemes which had been successful and enquired if these would be delivered by Council Officer resource.

The AD: HL&W referred to unsuccessful application for “Mid Ulster Active and Healthy” and stated that it was linked into the Agewell initiative and because it was a multi-partnership funded initiative through a number of partners; Northern Trust, Southern Trust, PHA and NIHE and funding coming in from other means. The AD: HL&W said that the submitted application was to try and top funding up as an extra contribution, but unfortunately the request was unsuccessful.

The AD: HL&W in referring to delivery of the two successful schemes confirmed that the initiatives would be led by the Council team, through Health & Wellbeing team and Coaches within our leisure centres for summer camps.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to note the contents of the report and due to the deadline for return, that retrospective approval be granted for the signing of the letter of offer from The Northern Healthy Lifestyle Partnership (NHLP).

D111/24 Sperrins Partnership - Annual Update for 2023/24 and New Three-Year Partnership Agreement (April 2024 to March 2027)

The Tourism Service Manager (TSM) presented previously circulated report to provide Members with an update on key activities carried out by Sperrins Partnership for 2023/24 and seek agreement to enter into a new three-year Sperrins Partnership Agreement for 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

Councillor Clarke declared an interest in Sperrins Partnership on behalf of Council.

Councillor Clarke said that after all the years of effort from 2018, great progress has been made and key to the success was that all four Councils have been involved and taking an active part and working really well. The Councillor stated that Council had a very strong team of Officers which were delivering for us and if anyone wished to read the circulated appendix, they will clearly see what it going on and also referred to comment made regarding AONB Management Board being concluded which was great progress and a major way forward.

The Chair concurred with Councillor Clarke regarding a lot of good work ongoing and said that he was aware of this being a topic close to the Councillor's heart and appreciated his comments.

Councillor McNamee proposed the recommendation.

Councillor Corry said she wished to reiterate Councillor Clarke's comments and was aware of the work which has been done by the member and also TSM and her team which has taken many years to get to this stage. The Councillor said that she looked forward to the management plan coming into place and seeing fruition of all the years of hard work and promoting Sperrins as an asset within our local area.

Councillor F Burton enquired about other areas having input into the consultation in the next round, as previously it was Broughderg and asked if it would be widened out into other areas.

The TSM advised that consultations have taken place across all of the Sperrins and that was why there was two additional further dates due to the high influx of people who wished to attend when originally dates didn't suit. It was agreed at the end of July there would be two further dates to accommodate people who live in the Sperrins to give their views and consult on the draft, with dates and venues to be confirmed. It is hoped that after this an update would be brought back to Development Committee in September for members to see what the first final draft of the Management Plan would look like.

Councillor Clarke said that he had met a visitor in Davagh this morning from Dingle in Kerry. This was an outdoor person who had travelled all around Ireland and ended up in the Sperrins for a fortnight and to them it was one of the most wonderful landscapes they have ever come across.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Corry

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to –

- a) **Note** update on Sperrins Partnership Project activities for 2023/2024.
- b) **Approve** the new Sperrins Partnership Agreement (Appendix 1) between the four partner Councils for the next three financial years (2024/2025, 2025/2026 and 2026/2027) and authorise Council's Chief Executive to sign and return the Agreement on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council.

- c) **Agree in principle** that Council fund Sperrins Partnership for a three-year term, as highlighted at 5.1 (b) above. **Approve** a Council funding contribution of £22,000 to Sperrins Partnership Project for the 2024/2025 financial year and **note** that Mid Ulster District Council's financial contributions in years 2025/2026 and 2026/2027, will be determined annually, when budgets are finalised.
- d) **Note** that Sperrins AONB Management Plan consultations will be delivered by external consultants, S3 Solutions, on behalf of the Sperrins Partnership. Members attention is drawn to two dates when public consultations will be held in Mid Ulster:
 - Broughderg Community Centre - Tuesday 11 June 2024 (12noon - 2pm)
 - An Carn, Maghera - Thursday 13 June 2024 (6.30pm – 8.30pm).

Matters for Information

D112/24 Development Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 16 May 2024

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 May 2024.

Councillor Quinn referred to meeting with Minister regarding Blackwater. The Councillor said that he had checked Environment Committee minutes and there was nothing on it regarding meeting between Minister, MUDC and ABC Councils and asked if there was any update and if not could one be sought.

Councillor Monteith referred to and sought update on the following:

- 1) D088/24 and enquired if there was any date arranged yet for workshop in relation to Housing Fitness Standards.
- 2) D090/24 and enquired if any date was arranged yet in relation to Ballysaggart Lough
- 3) D090/24 – pitch provision at Benburb where people have been invited in to see what Council can do for them

The Councillor also raised the ongoing issue of the lack of GAA pitches where four clubs operate of three pitches in Dungannon town. The Councillor said that he had spoken informally to the AD: HL&W already regarding the significant downturn in usage of two soccer pitches at Drumcoo especially since the 4g pitch has been installed and proposed to move forward to looking at the feasibility of utilising the back two pitches for GAA purposes as well as soccer if needed.

Councillor Monteith said that whilst he was on the subject of Drumcoo, which was an issue that had done the rounds of previous Council also, proposed that a DEA meeting be arranged again due to the initial talk about a proposal, expansion, development of land currently owned by Council at Drumcoo which has not been developed, working with Sperrinview and Oakridge about creating an urban park. The Councillor said that these ideas were initially explored and had not been progressed and proposed that a DEA meeting be arranged to merge all this stuff together otherwise it will never be done.

The AD: HL&W in response to Member's query regarding Housing Fitness Standards workshop advised that Environmental Health team were currently working on this with a number of different partners and agencies which needed to be engaged with. The AD: HL&W said there was a need to make sure when doing the workshop that it was going to hit the brief in terms of what Members and other stakeholders expect to get out of it. He said that the workshop was more likely to take place by the end of the summer, during September time. It was also anticipated time is needed to bring forward an analysis and assessment on the recent introduction of the Private Tendencies Act to make sure that there was a sufficient enough update as much as possible but would be linking in with AD: DEV's team and other agencies. He said that the aim was to get a date for Members Diaries within the next few weeks with a workshop taking place before the end of summer or during September.

The AD: HL&W in response to Member's query regarding Black Lough advised that he was due to attend a Board meeting in relation to Reservoirs and what needed to be done at the site. The AD: HL&W said that he would go back and raise the issue again to try and get a DEA meeting arranged as soon as possible.

The AD: HL&W in response to Member's query regarding Benburb advised that Council were engaging with the Club, the Pitches Strategy allows Officers the mechanism to work up proposals for the site. The progress between the last committee and this committee meeting was that Council had appointed a Consultant to draw up the designs and plans for what the future Benburb pitch could look like should Council be in a position to leverage in funding and make funding applications, which was a strategic recommendation within the Pitches Strategy. This is currently on the radar and hope to go back into the community to engage once the design are worked up.

The AD: HL&W in response to Member's query regarding Drumcoo advised that one of the strategic recommendations within the Pitches Strategy recommends Council officers to continue to keep an ongoing eye and review all of Council's assets, how they were being used and where emerging future demand is coming in as well. He concurred with Member's comments regarding a number of pitches at Drumcoo, some well used and some not so well used and with an emerging need in that area. The AD: HL&W confirmed that Officers were looking at the work involved to convert one of the pitches for additional sporting use in terms of the line marking and also the provision of the equipment. He stated that there was a ringfenced pot of money within the approved Pitches Strategy and hoped that this could be brought to fruition over the summer months.

In response to query regarding DEA meeting around Drumcoo Masterplan, the SD: C&P stated that members may be aware that Council has a very ambitious Capital programme including Gortgonis, Coalisland Canal, MUSA and many others members would be aware of. There was a need to look at how resources were being assigned in relation to delivery against that ambition and as a result there's going to be a review of the Capital programme which the Strategic Director of Environment (SD: Env) was going to lead over the next number of months, so additional requests coming to the table which have not already been captured within the Capital plan need to be considered through that process to ensure that Council has the resources to be able to fulfil those ambitions. The SD: C&P said that there was a need to make sure what was

agreed within the Capital plan, there needs to be the internal resources to deliver that, so Drumcoo which is not currently on the Capital programme is something that if the Council wished to take forward, then this was the process in terms of raising that and including as part of the plan so resources can be assigned appropriately.

The Chair sought clarification on comment raised around the two particular pitches and additional sporting uses etc and asked if this was something that needed to come back to committee for approval or has it already been approved through the Pitches Strategy.

The AD: HL&W advised that this was one of the recommendations that has already been considered and approved through the Pitches Strategy but would always aim to give it due consideration which includes looking at the booking analysis in last period of time, engaging with local known groups that also use those facilities and any emerging needs also. The AD: HL&W said that before anything can be done there was a need to make sure that due consideration was given, and with this approach being approved through the Pitches Strategy, Officers can review these matters and keep them under review, but there was also the need to engage with local groups to make sure it's the right thing to do as well.

Councillor F Burton referred to page 242 and enquired if there was any more information in relation to lobbying taking place with DAERA in particular to rural villages and smaller towns as some of them were in critical need of help and support. The Councillor said that there was a need to provide help with the painting of these shops to make sure they look open and would appreciate an update. The Councillor referred to circulation of Gift Cards during our Ladies' Events and said that she had been contacted by a number of women stating that there were unable to use the cards.

The Economic Regeneration Service Manager (ERSM) said that following the dereliction meeting with DAERA in attendance, they indicated to Council that at the moment they were very much waiting on approval from Ministers. The ERSM stated that there may be potential money coming down the line but there were no guarantees at this stage.

In response to query regarding the Gift Cards, the ERSM advised that she was aware of concerns being received regarding several people being unable to use their cards. She advised the Member that Officers had went out to those businesses again and got the cards re-swiped, what was found was that some of the gift cards needed re-swiping again whenever a business terminal changed. The ERSM stated that sometimes businesses forget to inform Council of a change and was more of a technical issue.

Councillor F Burton enquired if there was anywhere else Council could seek funding from other than DAERA, as there was a fantastic Chamber of Commerce in the Clogher Valley area and Fivemiletown. Every time a business closes and moves out of a property, they are really on the ground trying to get someone back in but the like of Aghnacloy and Caledon with smaller businesses like other areas are struggling to try and maintain properties over the time, every winter properties take a real hit and more so this year when we didn't have a good spring. The Councillor enquired if there was any other avenue that financial support could be sought as members hear about it every day when they are out amongst the traders and something really good for this Council to do in trying to help these businesses.

The ERSM in response to funding streams for businesses said that there was a need to be mindful as these were issues for both urban and rural businesses across the district and advised the Member if an opportunity came along it would most certainly be grabbed with both hands and moved forward, but unfortunately at the moment there were no opportunities but would certainly keep it on the radar if something develops.

Councillor Wilson advised that he had previously raised concerns regarding the Pitches Strategy and numerous concerns for the provision of Hockey within both Cookstown and Dungannon. He said that this sport was classed within the report as a minority sport yet 1,000 people play it each week but a sport like bowling had quite little participants including a closed season. The Councillor felt that this was something that needed to be looked at whilst the AD: HL&W indicated that there was a mechanism which was passed within the Pitches Strategy for officers to be able to do A,B and C, the Councillor said that he would like to see things coming back to this Committee to make sure it was properly scrutinised to make sure fairness and equality is adhered to.

Councillor Molloy said that he would be happy to second Councillor Monteith's proposal regarding Benburb's pitch proposal and facilities as he was aware of Council's footprint being already there. The Councillor said that it would be beneficial to assist the community organisations in particular Dúiche Neill Hurling Club and Riverdale Football Club as the development of these sites would have the potential to help the whole community across different sports.

Councillor Molloy said that he accepted what the SD: C&P alluded to regarding the Capital Projects around Drumcoo, but there had been a piece of work done which came to Council three years ago with a plan, working with the school next door and better access into Drumcoo Park which would start that whole opening up. The Councillor said if Members stop talking about it and taken off the agenda, it will disappear completely and important to keep it on the radar.

The SD: C&P said that he was not suggesting that Drumcoo should not be on the list as it was not his role and all he was saying was that Council had a very ambitious Capital Programme and Council resources were assigned to enable us to deliver that programme. There was going to be a process in relation to prioritisation and up to members to decide and agree what needs to be included going forward.

In response to Chair's query regarding clarity, Councillor Monteith said that although the SD: C&P indicated that Drumcoo was being looked at, he confirmed that he would be proposing that a DEA meeting be held to make sure that things are not held up as Drumcoo was in dire need of upgrading, if not a major investment, then some mechanism needs to be in place to fix up the area very quickly as assurances had been given to the community that upgrade works would be part of a bigger plan for Drumcoo. The Councillor stated that some of the apparatus at Drumcoo was unacceptable and has been for quite a period of time and felt that a DEA meeting would provide an update on where the situation currently was at and how to progress going forward to make Drumcoo fit for purpose.

The Chair stated that it may be beneficial to arrange DEA meetings to discuss current operational issues at the site and for the wider regeneration to be considered as part of the capital programme review.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council –

- 1) That a DEA meeting be arranged to look at options for pitch provision and community facilities at Benburb.
- 2) That a DEA meeting be arranged to discuss current operational issues relating to Drumcoo.

D113/24 Communities & Place Departmental Service Plan 2024-25

Members noted Communities & Place Departmental Service Plan 24/25.

D114/24 Lough Fea Footbridge

Members noted update on progress on replacement of footbridge at Lough Fea.

The Chair said that he was aware of the damage done at the site a few months ago and his concern would be the timeframe being suggested to get this sorted which was in the region of 3 to 4 months. The Chair said that it was far from ideal in terms of coming into the summer months as Lough Fea was used by a lot of people in the locality and also the concern regarding not being able to walk around the area in a circular way. The Chair asked that pressure be kept on to get this resolved as soon as possible. He said that it was his understanding that an Engineer's report was awaited in regards to next steps and potential costings and asked that an update be brought to the next committee meeting to see how things have progressed to make sure that it was resolved as soon as possible.

The AD: HL&W wished to assure members that this was being treated as a priority and trying to move at pace. He advised that the report members had in front of them had been written approximately two weeks ago in order to meet committee papers deadline but would be happy to provide members with a further verbal update tonight. The AD: HL&W advised that today work had taken place around dismantling and completely removing the existing bridge with the Contractor due to attend site tomorrow morning to finish the site clean-up. It was anticipated that a Structural Engineer would also be in attendance tomorrow to inspect the headwall as it was until the existing bridge is removed that we can understand the full condition and to also make sure that the headwall can support the new bridge. All being well, the design could be completed out next week which will allow Officers to move forward to the procurement for a contractor for the manufacturing of the bridge. The AD: HL&W advised that his team were working closely with the Property Services and Capital Planning teams within Council, working at pace but there were a number of processes which had to be followed e.g. procurement process but could assure members that Council officers also wish to have this bridge opened as quickly as possible.

Councillor Wilson said that he was aware the Council was working at pace at Lough Fea as he was down at the site today. The Councillor asked if it was possible in the short term to erect a pontoon bridge further down to allow pedestrian access across.

The AD: HL&W advised that focus had been on removing the existing bridge and making it fit for purpose, with a fit for purpose replacement. Discussions with Structural Engineers were ongoing, but the time and effort to implement a temporary measure and costs associated could outweigh the benefit. He said that he appreciated that current visitor and experience wasn't where it needs to be in terms of the circular loop but it would be more beneficial to allow for the period of time to get the proper solution in place. The AD: HL&W advised that Officers were focused and keen to get a solution as swiftly as possible for the long term, rather than the short term. He said that although he understood members frustration, it was about getting best value for money and the use of public funds to progress this forward as swiftly as possible.

Councillor Wilson said that his thinking was that when the bridge was removed and if the walls are intact, that a structure could be made that would go on top of the two pillars and then removed when the permanent structure was ready to be put in place.

The AD: HL&W said that this would appear to be a perfectly common-sense approach but there was a need to give due consideration to health & safety issues and insurance concerns although he agreed that on the surface it did seem a simple enough approach. However, he said that all being well a design can be submitted next week from the Structural Engineer to allow officers to navigate a way through procurement which will be moved forward as quickly as possible.

Councillor McNamee concurred with the Chair's comments as it was a prolonged period of time to mid-October. The Councillor said that it would be important to get the complete full circle dealt with first as people were walking halfway around, turning back and this caused congestion. He was delighted to hear that Council was moving at speed to try and get it completed as quickly as possible.

The Chair said that it would be beneficial and appreciated if an update and associated costings could be brought to the next committee meeting.

D115/24 Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Report – OBF

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the following key activities –

- All-Island Strategic Rail Review
- A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Minutes 19.3.24 and Updated Terms of Reference
- Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – Multiply Programme
- Taste Mid Ulster Food Heritage Events
- Maghera Regeneration Programme – Town Centre Public Realm
- Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Achievements 2023/2024

The Chair referred to Maghera Public Realm scheme and said that it was great to see progress being made in respect of the project and recent appointment of the Contractor. The Chair advised that a great piece of work was ongoing in Maghera which would be greatly welcomed by the local residents and local businesses, although there may be a little bit of disturbance during the construction period, he anticipated that it would be all worth it in the end to reach a good outcome for all.

Councillor Quinn referred to item 2.1 – All-Island Strategic Rail Review and felt that there wasn't much on the report and basically pointed out what we all know already, that if it came to fruition the amount of things that it would unlock, particularly for Mid Ulster and something we need to push forward on. The Councillor said that there were a number of projects people want to do around the country and the amount of money it would take to implement this would be colossal, but we are always looking at ways to Green our future and there would be no better project than an All-Island Strategic Rail Network. He hoped to see this happening in the future and felt that it would be important for our constitutions to push this forward.

Councillor Molloy also welcomed the All-Island Strategic Rail Review and said that now it was the final report published, did that mean it was out in the public domain.

The Strategic Programmes Service Manager (SPSM) advised that the final review and recommendations was due early Spring but with the forthcoming elections, he would anticipate if not coming forward next month, that it would be delayed until the Autumn. The SPSM stated that the review document and recommendations still had to be agreed by both jurisdictions.

Councillor Quinn left the meeting at 7.57 pm.

Councillor Monteith referred to item 3.3 – Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP) – Multiply Programme. The Councillor said that although he had no issue with what was in front of members tonight, he wished to raise the issue of employability and no-one being able to get a grasp of it. The Councillor stated that for a number of years there has been masses of young people learning trades i.e. joinery, electric, plumbing, bricklaying etc and cannot access placements, with the situation being that a young person can only go so far and if they don't get a placement then their education or carrying forward a trade will end. The Councillor said that this was a major issue and the difficulty in trying to get a tradesperson to do work at someone's home was a major stumbling and strategic fundamental problem within our local labour force. The Councillor advised that he had been contacted by a parent today regarding needing a joinery placement for her son with a local firm, that local firm is doing work in Dublin as a sub-contractor, the young person cannot be used because he was not qualified, which was ridiculous that in a border area, there were these restrictions. He said that it was hard enough for young people to get these placements without this kind of bureaucracy and requested that this be investigated. The Councillor said he was unsure if this was an LMP matter but this needed to be tackled and taken forward as a priority as we were talking to these businesses all the time and they need to be told that they need to be willing to be taking on young people and not always the responsibility of the public sector to train young people all of the time and just not good enough. He said that there were young people out there that want to better and make a good life for themselves but were hindered because they cannot get placements.

Councillor Quinn returned to the meeting at 7.59 pm.

Councillor Monteith proposed that Officers liaise with local colleges and businesses to try and encourage them, whether it be an incentive scheme or whatever to say that they will take on placements. He said that it was unfair as young people has made the decision to go down a certain route and being hindered and proposed that this be taken forward.

The Strategic Programmes Service Manager (SPSM) said that he would take on Councillor Monteith's comments and raise same through Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership. The SPSM updated members on future position of LMP following Communities Minister's announcement on budget priorities and continued departmental funding for Labour Market Partnerships which was very welcome news.

The Chair concurred with Councillor Monteith's comments regarding placements and stated that it did not meet supply and demand as there was more demand for tradespeople and less supply and anything that Council could do to try and remedy the matter would be greatly welcomed.

Councillor Monteith asked if it would be possible for SPSM to liaise with local colleges to see how many people were struggling and for Council to contact any databases which they have in relation to construction firms and contractors to try and encourage people to come forward. The Councillor said that many young people were very much left to their own devices to find the local firm themselves which can be quite overwhelming as some are 17, 18, 19 years old having no contacts within their trade industry. The Councillor felt it would be beneficial for Council to intervene in the interim as a lot of these young people need placements for September and asked Officers to contact businesses on their databases and consult with local colleges. He suggested a publicity campaign through social media to encourage businesses to get involved should be explored as this would be to the benefit of everyone in the long run.

The Chair enquired if there was a possibility or scope to arrange an event to bring businesses and young people together to try and further conversations. He said that this was only a suggestion and beneficial for the SPSM to raise through the appropriate channels.

The SPSM stated that the local colleges participate on the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership, and he would raise the elected members concerns.

Councillor Corry seconded Councillor Monteith proposal.

Councillor Corry referred to her old school St Colm's High School, Draperstown and said that the school were doing a scheme along with Workspace and local businesses within the town. This scheme worked with young people doing apprenticeships aged 16, 17, 18 years old including, joinery, construction, accountancy, hairdressing and right across the board for all different types of placements. The Councillor felt that it would be useful for Officers to investigate this initiative and possibly speak to Workspace as it has been a really successful programme in giving young people other choices apart from going to university.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that Officers bring to attention of Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership difficulties for young people trying to access work placements.

Councillor Corry referred to Chair's comments regarding Maghera Public Realm scheme and said that she recently attended the CivCo Ltd public engagement event which give the local community an opportunity to come and see what was going on and speak to the Contractors and discuss any concerns they may have about parts of the town being closed etc. The Councillor said that this was a very welcome scheme and would be delighted to see the first works beginning in the summertime.

The Chair concurred with previous comments and said that key to Maghera's success was the ongoing dialogue and communication between all parties involved which was very important in the delivery of the scheme in the smoothest transition as we possibly can.

Councillor F Burton concurred with Councillor Monteith's comments regarding young people's career paths. The Councillor advised that she had been in contact with a mother who was having difficulty in trying to get her child into work experience from a secondary school and agreed with comment about having difficulty in trying to contact businesses. The Councillor said that it would be important for Council to use their links to the schools as they are invited and attend their school career events and felt that this could link in very well.

Councillor F Burton referred to All-Ireland Strategic Rail Review which has been on the cards for some time and going to take a massive amount of work to ever get it to Mid Ulster. She felt as a Council we really need to push for this for the West of the Bann at every opportunity and referred to one local MLA who had raised the issue at Stormont and would really encourage all the parties sitting around this table to do the same. The Councillor advised that there had been an effort made by Fermanagh, which sought to be included in the Rail Review, but was passed over, which was a real negative and certainly would not help us within this area but hoped that going forward this can be rectified.

Councillor F Burton referred to A5 Cross Border Committee and enquired if there was an opportunity within that role for potential rail funding if the project was successful. The Councillor said that it would be beneficial to have some feasibility study so that it would be future proof if there was some money at some point to be given to the rail review that it could be built into the plan at that time. She said that there were continuous discussions about climate change and taking cars off the roads, but if we continue to build more roads, then more cars are going to be accommodated and looked forward to the day that rail infrastructure comes to this area as it has been a letdown for this area and a real down service. The Councillor stated that the Chief Executive indicated that he had it built into every possible avenue he possibly could going forward and felt that Council really needed to give it another push as it just

seemed to be talked about and concurred with Councillor Quinn's comments about it being on the agenda but not really telling us much.

Councillor Wilson left the meeting at 8.08 pm.

Councillor Monteith left the meeting at 8.10 pm.

The Chair agreed with previous comments regarding the connection to the West, although it was positive that it was being looked at, but members were correct in what it would look like around the huge hole for the West of the Bann and in and around Fermanagh.

The Chair said that he was unsure of what stage this was at and asked the Strategic Programmes Service Manager (SPSM) whether there was an opportunity to provide that feedback into the process again with regards to disappointment with there not being more extensive network into the West. The Chair appreciated that this was all down to money and a feasibility study at this stage and would be curious if there could possibly be an opportunity to reiterate this point again with the ongoing dialogue that there continues to be.

The SPSM said that he would take on board elected members comments. In terms of investment within Mid Ulster, the most recent paper recommended the reopening of the Portadown, Dungannon, Omagh, Strabane, Derry, Letterkenny as one potential rail route. He said that he would be happy to raise the issue as we would like more extensive Railway Infrastructure investment towards the West. The SPSM advised members that Into the West Group had also been actively lobbying in terms of investment for the Northwest and had provided a presentation to the Development committee.

Councillor McNamee said that in the past discussions had taken place regarding setting up a Working Group across the Councils to deal with all these issues, representation from each Council, then it was agreed that Council Officers would meet at this level. The Councillor felt that it may be a possible way forward in setting up a Working Group.

The Chair said that this could be something that could be raised within that forum in regard to any merit or benefit in doing so to see if there was any appetite for that. He said that without making a commitment asked if this was a question worth raising to see if there was any desire to move forward on that or not.

Councillor Quinn concurred with comments from Councillors Monteith and Corry regarding apprenticeships as he was aware of issues around construction and quarrying within Mid Ulster, unfortunately there was a lot of concerns at present.

Councillor Quinn referred to item 3.3 - LMP and said that he had noticed within the last few years issues with people not having the adequacy literacy or numeracy skills for the workplace. The Councillor advised that people were willing and able to work in big companies but were held back because of the fear of not being able to pass exams again after failing initially. The Councillor stated that a message needed to be sent out to people advising that schools and colleges were willing to help anyone to gain the qualifications required to have a career of their choice.

The live broadcast ended at 8.15 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor F Burton
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public be asked to withdraw from the meeting whilst members consider items D116/24 to D118/24.

Matters for Decision

D116/24 Cookstown Saturday Market Scoping Study

Matters for Information

D117/24 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 16 May 2024

D118/24 Macmillan Move More Programme

D119/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7pm and ended at 8.30 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the Council's [Policy & Resources/Environment/Development] Committee in the Chamber, [Cookstown/Dungannon/Magherafelt].

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast as aforesaid, will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I will let you know before this happens.

I would remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted.

Thank you and we will now move to the agenda.

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Report on | Regulations on Remote Meetings - Transaction of Council & Committee Meeting |
| Date of Meeting | Thursday 27 th June 2024 |
| Reporting Officer | J Mc Guckin, Head of Strategic Services and Engagement |
| Contact Officer | J McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services and Engagement |

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon | Yes | |
| | No | X |

| | |
|------------|--|
| 1.0 | Purpose of Report |
| 1.1 | To update members on activity being undertaken by the Department for Communities (DfC) on preparing and bringing forward regulations to enable Councils to opt to continue with fully remote and/or hybrid meetings. |
| 1.2 | To give consideration to the Council position on transacting future council and committee business by remote means, subject to the passing of regulations through the NI Assembly in the form of the <i>Local Government (Remote Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024</i> . |
| 2.0 | Background |
| 2.1 | From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic Council had been transacting its council and committee meeting business by virtual means by convening hybrid meetings initially over Webex before migrating to using Zoom. Hybrid meetings whereby some members attended in person and others virtually, initially to comply with social distancing requirements, were undertaken under section 78 (local authority meetings) of the coronavirus Act 2020 and subordinate legislation passed by the NI Assembly which came into operation on 1st May 2020. |
| 2.2 | Extension Orders to this provision were made on a number of occasions but came to an end on 6th March 2024. With the ability for Councils to transact its business by remote/virtual means having ceased such meetings stopped in March 2024. All meetings are now in-person only. |
| 2.3 | DfC) has now drafted regulations for consideration by the Minister for Communities and subsequent consideration by the NI Assembly. It is the understanding of Council that the draft regulations have been through the DfC Solicitor and is the intention of the Department to bring them forward to the NI Assembly as soon as practicable . The regulations are currently titled <i>the Local Government (Remote Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024</i> . |

| | |
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| 2.4 | The most recent communication from the Department on this matter has been the 3 rd May confirming a second draft of the regulations and that the matter is still receiving the consideration of the Department. |
| 3.0 | Main Report |
| 3.1 | The Department sought commentary from all Councils on the draft Regulations as initially issued in mid-March. |
| 3.2 | Council submitted commentary by way of two specific points at that time as to their wording and the standing orders required to be incorporated into our Standing Orders to transact business. |
| 3.3 | DfC issued further correspondence, dated 3 rd May as attached, together with a further final draft of the Regulations. Refer to appendix A. |
| 3.4 | Although the recent correspondence gives an indication that it wishes to make the regulations as soon as possible to keep the gap in legislative provision to a minimum it has not yet confirmed a definitive timeline for bringing forward regulations to the NI Assembly. |
| 3.5 | <p>Of the understanding that DfC is working towards having them considered before the NI Assembly summer recess it would be October 2024, at earliest, before we could reconvene hybrid meetings by virtual means. New Regulations, should they pass the Assembly, will require a change in our Standing Orders which requires a minimum of 2 months or two council meetings to do i.e. any change to our standing orders is required to be scheduled onto a council meeting agenda and debate on same stands adjourned until the next available meeting. Should they not be brought before the NI Assembly within this timeframe then it will be later in our business year before hybrid meetings could be reconvened. The NI Assembly goes into summer recess on 5th July.</p> <p>Initial Preparations & Decision Required</p> |
| 3.6 | In the interests of being prepared should the regulations pass the NI Assembly, particularly before its summer recess, consideration is being given to the required changes to our Standing Orders to facilitate a migration back to transacting our business by remote means. Committee services are liaising with the Legal team who are considering the necessary changes with a view to having them ready to be brought as soon as practicable to a Council meeting after the remote meeting regulations are passed the NI Assembly. |
| 3.7 | The remote meeting regulations will provide the Council with the ability to hold remote meetings but not compel it. To allow officers to continue with preparations Council should give official consideration on whether it wishes to opt to hold future council and committee meetings by remote/hybrid meetings, going forward. A council decision on this will allow us to ensure we are able to meet the will of the Council and make the necessary preparations. |

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| 4.0 | Other Considerations |
| 4.1 | Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications |
| | Financial: N/A |
| | Human: N/A |
| | Risk Management: By making a determination on whether it wishes to opt to transact by remote means will expedite the implementation of the Regulations once considered by the NI Assembly, to facilitate future remote/hybrid meetings. |
| 4.2 | <u>Screening & Impact Statements</u> |
| | Equality & Good Relations Implications: Regulations are the responsibility of DfC and any associated considerations required. Officers will give consideration to any potential implications as they come up and mitigate any negative impacts identified before their implementation as part of any screening, where possible. |
| | Rural Needs Implications: Regulations are the responsibility of DfC and any associated considerations required. Officers will give consideration to any potential implications as they come up and mitigate any negative impacts identified before their implementation as part of any screening, where possible. |
| 5.0 | Recommendation(s) |
| 5.1 | That members give consideration as to whether it wishes Council to opt to transact its council and committee meetings by fully remote and/or hybrid means, subject to regulations being passed by the NI Assembly. |
| 6.0 | Documents Attached & References |
| | Appendix A: Final Draft of the Remote Hybrid Regulations |

DRAFT STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN
IRELAND

2024 No.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**The Local Government (Remote Meetings) Regulations
(Northern Ireland) 2024**

Made - - - - *X Month 2024*
Coming into operation - *X Month 2024*

The Department for Communities (a) makes these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by section 2(1) to (4) of the Local Government (Meetings and Performance) Act (Northern Ireland) 2021(b).

Citation, commencement and interpretation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Local Government (Remote Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 and shall come into operation on X Month 2024.

(2) In these Regulations—

“the 2014 Act” means the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014(c);

“council” means a district council;

“council meeting” means a meeting of—

- (a) a council;
- (b) an executive of a council (within the meaning of Part 6 of the 2014 Act);
- (c) a joint committee of two or more councils; and
- (d) a committee or sub-committee of anything within subparagraphs (a), (b) or (c).

“remote access” means the ability to attend or participate in a meeting by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcasts, and live interactive streaming; and

“remote attendance” is to be construed in accordance with regulation 2(2) and (3).

(a) See section 1(7) of the Departments Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (c.5 (N.I.)).
(b) 2021 c. 8 (N.I.).
(c) 2014 c. 8 (N.I.).

Remote attendance

2.—(1) A reference in any enactment to a council meeting is not limited to a meeting of persons all of whom, or any of whom, are present in the same place and a reference to a “place” where a meeting is held, or to be held, includes reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.

(2) In any enactment where there is a reference to a council meeting, a member of a council (“a member in remote attendance”) attends the meeting at any time if all of the conditions in paragraph (3) are satisfied.

(3) Those conditions are that the member in remote attendance is able at that time—

- (a) to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance;
- (b) to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public in attendance in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting; and
- (c) to be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public in attendance.

(4) In this regulation, any reference to a member, or a member of the public, attending a meeting or being in attendance includes that person attending by remote access.

(5) A council must make other standing orders governing remote attendance at meetings of that council, which shall—

- (a) specify the basis or process for considering whether (including who is to assess or decide whether) council meetings should or are to be held remotely;
- (b) govern the arrangements for and conduct of such meetings whenever such meetings are to be held remotely; and
- (c) regulate—
 - (i) the public’s access to such meetings, and
 - (ii) the availability to the public of documents pertaining to such meetings,

whenever such meetings are to be held remotely.

Related modifications

3.—(1) In section 28(7) (overview and scrutiny committees: supplementary provision) and paragraph 9 of Schedule 5 to the 2014 Act, a reference to a person attending a meeting, or before a meeting, includes that person attending by remote access.

(2) Schedule 5 to the 2014 Act (meetings and proceedings) applies as follows—

- (a) any reference to being “present” at a meeting includes being present through remote attendance; and
- (b) in paragraph 5(1)(a) after “the offices of the council” insert “and on the council’s website”.

(3) In sections 39 (simple majority) and 40 (qualified majority) of the 2014 Act references to “members present and voting on the decision” includes a member being present through remote attendance.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department for Communities on X Month 202x.

(L.S.)

Anthony Carleton
A senior officer of the Department for Communities

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations are made under section 2(1) to (4) of the Local Government (Meetings and Performance) Act (Northern Ireland) 2021. These Regulations make provision regarding the running of council meetings.

Regulation 1 sets out preliminary matters and defines terms used in these Regulations.

Regulation 2 makes provision for remote attendance at council meetings by members of the council and requires a council to make standing orders regarding the decision to hold a meeting remotely, the conduct of the meeting and access by the public.

Regulation 3 makes related modifications to the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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|--------------------------|---|
| Report on | Consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council |
| Date of Meeting | 27 June 2024 |
| Reporting Officer | Joe McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services & Engagement |
| Contact Officer | Ann McAleer, Policy Engagement and Equality Officer |

| | | |
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| Is this report restricted for confidential business? | Yes | |
| If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon | No | x |

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report |
| 1.1 | To update members on the consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council. |
| 2.0 | Background |
| 2.1 | Council is a consultee for many government departments, statutory agencies and other bodies, and as such receives consultation documentation inviting commentary on a wide range of issues that may be pertinent to council services and/or the District. |
| 3.0 | Main Report |
| 3.1 | Documentation relating to the aforementioned consultations can be accessed via the links provided in the table provided in Appendix A. |
| 4.0 | Other Considerations |
| 4.1 | Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications |
| | Financial: N/A |
| | Human: N/A |
| | Risk Management: N/A |
| 4.2 | Screening & Impact Assessments |
| | Equality & Good Relations Implications: None |
| | Rural Needs Implications: None |
| 5.0 | Recommendation(s) |
| 5.1 | Members review and note consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council. |
| 6.0 | Documents Attached & References |
| | Appendix A: Details of Current Consultations |

Appendix A: Details of Current Consultations

| Organisation | Consultation Title | Issue | Closing Date | Response Currently Being Developed |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| Department for the Economy | Proposal for primary legislation to resolve issues in regard to the department's financial powers | The Department for the Economy is proposing some clauses via primary legislation (a 'Financial Provisions Bill') to resolve issues in regard to some of the department's financial powers. | 1 August 2024 | No |
| | Link to Consultation | https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/consultations/proposal-primary-legislation-resolve-issues-regard-departments-financial-powers | | |
| | Delegated Authority required to be granted to a Committee if Council agrees that a response should be made (where an extension is not given)? | | No | |
| Organisation | Consultation Title | Issue | Closing Date | Response Currently Being Developed |
| Department for Communities | Equality Impact Assessment consultation on his initial decisions on the Department for Communities 2024-25 budget. | The Executive considered and set the NI Budget 2024-25 on 25 April 2024. This document details the Minister for Communities' initial Budget 2024-25 decisions and how they will impact on the Department's ability to deliver public services. | 3 September 2024 | Yes |
| | Link to Consultation | https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-department-communities-budget-2024-25-allocations | | |
| | Delegated Authority required to be granted to a Committee if Council agrees that a response should be made (where an extension is not given)? | | Yes, DA is sought for the CE to approve. | |
| Organisation | Consultation Title | Issue | Closing Date | Response Currently Being Developed |

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| NIHE | Community Involvement and Cohesion Strategy 2024-2029 | This draft strategy sets out how NIHE propose to continue to support and work with our communities to deliver services that are co-designed to create stronger, vibrant and inclusive communities. | 5 July 2024 | No |
| | Link to consultation | https://www.nihe.gov.uk/working-with-us/partners/consultations | | |
| | Delegated Authority required to be granted to a Committee if Council agrees that a response should be made (where an extension is not given)? | | Yes, DA sought for Chief Executive approval. | |
| Organisation | Consultation Title | Issue | Closing Date | Response Currently Being Developed |
| Department for Infrastructure | Department for Infrastructure Budget 2024-25 Equality Impact Assessment Consultation | The Department for Infrastructure has launched a public consultation on the equality implications of the budget impact on spending proposals for the 2024-25 financial year. | 5pm on 6 th September 2024 (initial comments requested by 8 July 24) | Yes |
| | Link to consultation | https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/consultations/dfi-budget-2024-25-equality-impact-assessment | | |
| | Delegated Authority required to be granted to a Committee if Council agrees that a response should be made (where an extension is not given)? | | Yes, DA requested for September P&R Committee meeting. Additional authority is sought for the CE to submit initial comments by 8 th July 2024. | |
| Organisation | Consultation Title | Issue | Closing Date | Response Currently Being Developed |
| Department of Health | Department of Health Budget 2024-25 Equality Impact Assessment Consultation | The Department of Health's Equality Impact Assessment document provides an Equality Impact Assessment of the 2024-25 Budget Outcome for the | 29 August 2024 | Yes |

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|--|--|---|------------------------------------|--|
| | | Department, and the Department are seeking your comments on the equality implications. | | |
| | Link to consultation | https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/equality-impact-assessment-2024-25-budget-outcome | | |
| | Delegated Authority required to be granted to a Committee if Council agrees that a response should be made (where an extension is not given)? | | Yes, DA requested for CE approval. | |

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| Report on | Correspondence to Council |
| Date of Meeting | Thursday 27 June 2024 |
| Reporting Officer | J McGuckin Head of Strategic Services & Engagement |
| Contact Officer | E Forde, Committee & Member Services Manager |

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| Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon | Yes | |
| | No | x |

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report |
| 1.1 | Provide an update on correspondence received for attention of Council. |
| 2.0 | Background |
| 2.1 | This paper refers to correspondence to be brought to the attention of Council. Items are referred to in 3.0 below. |
| 3.0 | Main Report |
| 3.1 | <p>Correspondence from Department for Infrastructure</p> <p>The Chair has received a response from the Department for Infrastructure in response to Council's letter regarding prioritisation of A5 STC. Refer to Appendix A</p> |
| 3.2 | <p>Correspondence from Department for Education</p> <p>The Chair has received a response from the Department of Education in response to Council's letter regarding Early Learning and Childcare Measures 2024/25. Refer to Appendix B</p> |
| 3.3 | <p>Correspondence from Police Service of Northern Ireland</p> <p>The Chair has received a response from the Police Service of Northern Ireland in response to Council's letter regarding the closure of enquiry offices. Refer to Appendix C</p> |
| 3.4 | <p>Correspondence from Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)</p> <p>A response has been received from NIHE following Council request for a meeting to discuss grass cutting issues across the district. A meeting took place on 19 June 2024. Refer to Appendix D</p> |

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| 3.5 | Correspondence from NI Water The Chair has received a response from NI Water in response to Council's letter regarding NI Water discharges. Refer to Appendix E |
| 3.6 | Correspondence from Remembering Srebrenica UK Correspondence has been received from the Remembering Srebrenica UK (cross party genocide education charity funded by the Department of Levelling UP, Housing and Communities regarding commemoration day. Refer to Appendix F |
| 3.7 | Correspondence from Department for Education The Chair has received a response from the Department of Education in response to Council's letter regarding school places for Special Educational Needs/Disability. Refer to Appendix G |
| 4.0 | Other Considerations |
| 4.1 | Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications |
| | Financial: not applicable |
| | Human: not applicable |
| | Risk Management: not applicable |
| 4.2 | Screening & Impact Assessments |
| | Equality & Good Relations Implications: not applicable |
| | Rural Needs Implications: not applicable |
| 5.0 | Recommendation(s) |
| 5.1 | That Council notes and considers, as necessary, the correspondence received. |
| 6.0 | Documents Attached & References |
| | Appendix A: Department for Infrastructure Appendix B: Department for Education Appendix C: Police Service of Northern Ireland Appendix D: Northern Ireland Housing Executive Appendix E: NI Water Discharges Appendix F: Srebrenica Memorial Week Appendix G: Department for Education |

From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure
JOHN O'DOWD MLA

Councillor Dominic Molloy
Mid Ulster District Council
Dungannon Office
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 6DT

James House
Gasworks Business Park
2-4 Cromac Avenue
BELFAST
BT7 2JA
Telephone: (028) 9054 0105
Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference: C052/24
Our reference: COR-1258-2024
20th May 2024

Dominic, a chara,

A5WTC

Thank you for your letter dated 5 April 2024, expressing your Council's proactive support for the A5 dual carriageway project and requesting I ensure it's prioritisation.

I can assure you that I am committed to progressing the delivery of the A5 flagship project, in line with my statutory duties, which will not only improve road safety and save lives but is also of significant strategic importance to the region, helping to tackle regional imbalance, improving the economy, job prospects and prosperity, and connecting communities.

My Department received the final advisory Report from the Planning Appeals Commission on 31 October 2023 in relation to the latest public inquiry on the project. Careful consideration is being given to the points raised and detailed recommendations made within this report, some of which are complex and wide ranging, and legal advice has been sought by officials on key issues.

Once my officials have completed this work and presented all information relevant to the project for my consideration, I will make an announcement in line with my statutory duties.

Is mise le meas,



JOHN O'DOWD MLA
Minister for Infrastructure

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER



Councillor Dominic Molloy

Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
Rathgill
BANGOR
BT19 7PR

private.office@education-ni.gov.uk

4 June 2024
Your ref: C096/24

CORR-1557-2024

Dear Councillor Molloy

Thank you for your email of 3 June regarding my Written Ministerial Statement on 23 May 2024 setting out my plans for early learning and childcare support measures during 2024/25. The statement is available for you to read on the DE website at [Written Ministerial Statement - Early Learning and Childcare Measures 2024/25 | Department of Education \(education-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/written-ministerial-statement-early-learning-and-childcare-measures-2024-25)

As you may be aware, the development of an Executive Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Strategy, including the standardisation of pre-school education programme (PSEP) sessions, remains one of my top priorities. The package of measures I have set out in my Statement will be implemented in 2024/25 within the £25m budget set aside by the Executive and will inform longer-term strategy development. Work to confirm the operational detail is ongoing and this will be communicated in due course.

In terms of PSEP provision, this marks the beginning of a period of transition from the current mix of approximately 40% full-time (minimum of 22.5 hours per week) and 60% part-time (minimum of 12.5 hours per week) to a universal offer of at least 22.5 hours for all pupils. The evidence for providing at least 22.5 hours pre-school education per week is strong in terms of its impact on supporting social and emotional development and preparing children for school. I am committed to maximising this long-term positive impact on children's development as well as ensuring that their families can benefit from the difference that a longer pre-school day can have in terms of the costs of childcare.

It is my intention that the funding made available will enable the Education Authority to bring forward proposals for approximately 100 pre-school settings to transition from a part-time to full-time pattern of delivery, commencing September 2025. It is my intention that the current position, where sufficient funded pre-school education places are made available in all areas to accommodate every target aged child whose parents want a place for them, will be retained at every stage of the implementation of the standardised session length. This will require careful planning

over a period of time, with implementation dependent on the necessary resources being made available to my Department at each stage.

I trust you find this information useful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul Givan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "P" and a horizontal flourish at the end.

**PAUL GIVAN MLA
MINISTER OF EDUCATION**



Police Service of Northern Ireland

Mid Ulster District
Magherafelt PSNI Station
45-49 Meeting Street
Magherafelt
BT45 6BW

Email: Michael.O'Loan@psni.police.uk
Tel: 028 90 650222

3 June 2024

Councillor Molloy

Thank you for your correspondence.

The decision to close enquiry offices has not been taken lightly however, given the dire financial situation the Police Service continues to face, these closures were unavoidable. The unrealistic and unsustainable funding arrangements for policing in Northern Ireland mean that as a Police Service we must ensure prudence in financial planning in order to maximise our ability to keep communities safe, this includes protecting the function of Neighbourhood Policing.

Please be assured that my priority remains keeping the communities of Mid Ulster safe through Neighbourhood Policing.

Yours sincerely

Michael O'Loan

Michael O'Loan
District Commander

From: [McCartan, John](#)
To: [Eileen Forde](#)
Cc: _____
Subject: FW: Correspondence Mid Ulster Council - Meeting Request
Date: 06 June 2024 18:10:35
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[C100.24 NIHE Grass Cutting Call log system.pdf](#)

Hi Eileen

With reference you correspondence in regards to Grass Cutting in the Mid Ulster area, which the Chief Executive has asked me to respond in regards to.

The comments with regards to the lack of a grass cutting schedule and the impact on the appearance of locations which lie within the responsibility of the NIHE we accept. There are a number of mitigating factors, which I have summarised below, which I trust will be taken into consideration:

- The end of an 8 year grounds maintenance contract on 21st April 2024, involved the stand down of existing operations in conjunction with the mobilisation of the new contractual arrangements from 1st May. This involved the acquisition of new plant, machinery and personnel and thus delayed the grass cutting regime.
- The situation was exacerbated by adverse ground conditions from March to April which prevented the deployment of the large grass cutting machinery and with the warm May there was significant grass growth
- The first cutting cycle though delayed has now been completed and the second cutting cycle is currently in progress with a return to our normal specification thereafter.

In relation to the concerns around the 'new call log system for Members which has removed the opportunity to speak directly with officers to resolve issues' I would like to assure Members that there has been no change to the existing arrangements. I appreciate that communication went out to members informing them of a change, this message was miscommunicated and applied to our internal reporting and monitoring arrangements, members can continue to contact our grounds staff in the normal manner and we can also provide them with a contact address for our Customer Service Unit which they can report issues to directly should they wish to do so. I apologise for any confusion caused and again assure that our staff are available to be contacted by Members in the normal fashion.

I am happy to meet in regards to these issues and can do so either in person or Teams, whichever is most convenient for you, if there are dates and times that are suitable.

Regards

John McCartan
Assistant Director
South Region

Northern Ireland Water
PO Box 1026
Belfast
BT1 9DJ
www.niwater.com
Tel: 0345 7440088



Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

14th June 2024

Dear Dominic

Re: Your ref: C084/24 – NI Water discharges

Thank you for your letter, which we received on 17 May 2024, reference the query above from the Council, regarding recent coverage in the press, of spills from NI Water assets.

I apologise for the delay in responding. Given the general nature of your query, the Stakeholder Management Team with our Engineering & Sustainability Directorate have been liaising with Democratic Services in the Council, to try and identify in more detail the specific issues which you wish to address.

Regarding the issues raised at the Council meeting on 25 April 2024, NI Water would respond as follows:

1. 20 million tonnes of sewage being dumped into rivers and waterway

NI Water do not deliberately release raw sewage into rivers and waterways. Final treated wastewater from our Wastewater Treatment Works is discharged to watercourses through the works' outfall pipes. All discharges are regulated by NIEA.

During periods of heavy rainfall highly diluted wastewater may also be discharged from Sewer Overflows (SO), which are essential design features on a wastewater system, acting as emergency relief points. The SOs prevent the flooding of homes, businesses, and schools with wastewater which would present a significant public health hazard.

2. Major environmental issues at Lough Neagh

The lead agency in relation to the Lough Neagh issues is DAERA. NI Water's Head of Environmental Regulation and Head of Drinking Water Regulation attended a Council meeting on 11 September 2023 along with DAERA staff in relation to the Lough Neagh issues. Our Head of Investment Management Dr Steve Blockwell also attended a Council meeting on 23 November 2023 at which the Lough Neagh issues were discussed. A subsequent written

response from NI Water outlined that all discharges are regulated by NIEA. The main contribution to the nutrient issues affecting Lough Neagh is from agricultural run-off. NI Water has NIEA consent standards which set the specific the level of Phosphorous (P) reduction required in its discharges.

3. Discharges at Washing Bay

We believe this relates to the discharge from the Wastewater Treatment Works located at Coalisland (referred to as Clonoe in your meeting). During the last year NI Water has undertaken a number of operational interventions to improve the day-to-day performance of the works. In addition to the work already completed we have plans to install further equipment to improve the reliability of the plant. It is hoped that this work will be completed during the next financial year. However that is dependent on the availability of funding, which at this time has not been confirmed.

In relation to the further issues raised by the Council, in an email received 7 June 2024, please refer to the responses below:

4. Request for a record of which waterways were affected by their network; their current status and what they are doing to improve the situation

In August 2023 we published a map on our website detailing the locations of all our Storm Overflows throughout Northern Ireland along with their receiving watercourses. This map also provides the locations of the outfall pipes from all of our Wastewater Treatment Works that return final treated water to the environment.

Following this, in March of this year we published the '**predicted**' spill information from all our Drainage Area Plan (DAP) models, which detail the predicted spills for each of our assets in areas where DAPs have been completed. For the avoidance of doubt these are predicted spills as part of a modelling exercise and not '**actual**' spills. Within the last week NI Water has added information to the discharge map on Event Duration Monitors (EDMs) for ca. 82 assets. This provides information on the number of times these assets have spilled over a 12-month period. The installation of EDMs on discharging assets and sharing of information is part of an ongoing programme that will continue in the coming years. As more EDMs are installed and verified these will be added to the map.

This information can be accessed on NI Water's website and via the links below:

[Storm Overflows \(niwater.com\)](https://www.niwater.com/storm-overflows)

[NIWaterModelledSpillsMay2024.xlsx \(live.com\)](https://www.niwater.com/NIWaterModelledSpillsMay2024.xlsx)

[Lough Neagh Blue-Green Algae \(niwater.com\)](https://www.niwater.com/lough-neagh-blue-green-algae)

[Event Duration Monitors \(niwater.com\)](https://www.niwater.com/event-duration-monitors)

NI Water has a programme to upgrade ca. 100 Storm Overflows during the PC21 Price Control period (2021/22 – 2026/27). However, due to historical underinvestment in wastewater services it will take 2 – 3 Price Controls, or 12 – 18 years, to begin to address these issues.

5. Regarding the issue raised of raw sewage flowing into the Lough near Ballyronan Marina

The Ballyronan Wastewater Treatment Works is near the marina and returns final treated final water to Lough Neagh. A capital upgrade of the works is currently underway and is due to complete in late summer 2024. NI Water are not aware of any instances of spills of untreated wastewater in this area.

NI Water has a programme of engagement with all Councils in Northern Ireland and commits to visiting each Council once a year. As stated above NI Water staff have visited Mid Ulster District twice within the current Council calendar year. Given timings it would not be possible to arrange attendance at another meeting ahead of the summer break.

We will be writing again to all Councils in late summer to agree calendar dates for the next Council calendar year. We will be happy to agree an early meeting date with Mid Ulster District Councillors and to discuss any issues you may have.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Sara Venning
Chief Executive



To: Mid Ulster Info <info@midulstercouncil.org>

Subject: Srebrenica Memorial Week 2024



Dear Councillor,

I am writing to you as Chair of Remembering Srebrenica UK which is a cross-party genocide education charity funded by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities and supported by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Our aim is to commemorate the 1995 Bosnian genocide in which just under 100,000 Muslims were killed, two million people were displaced, and the genocidal rape of up to 50,000 women took place simply because of their Muslim identity. This was, according to the UN, “the worst atrocity on European soil since the Second World War.”

Since its creation in 2013, Remembering Srebrenica has educated over 200,000 young people on the lessons from Srebrenica, promotes 1,000 annual memorial activities in schools, local authorities, places of worship, community centres and police forces right across the UK and has created 1,500 Community Champions who pledge to stand up to hatred and intolerance in their communities.

I am writing to invite Mid Ulster District Council Council to join local authorities across the country in commemorating Srebrenica. The number of local authorities commemorating the Srebrenica genocide is growing, with many local authorities having incorporated the charity’s educational resources into their community safety and resilience strategy.

Remembering Srebrenica has developed resources, event templates and speeches which can be found [here](#). Further resources and ideas can be found [here](#).

Tackling hatred and intolerance in our communities has never been more important. With current world events in Gaza and other conflicts flaring hate crime and violence here in the UK, tolerance, societal cohesion are at risk. As alarming Home Office reports show, race hate crime has risen year by year

from 2013 to 2022. In this period 50% of religious hate crime offences were targeted against Muslims, with the next most targeted group being Jewish people. These worrying trends remind us of the challenges our communities face.

I very much hope that we can count on your support in commemorating Srebrenica Memorial Day to help raise awareness and reject hatred and extremism, and build more cohesive communities. If you are organising a memorial activity then please don't forget to let us know so that we can record and publicise your contributions by emailing us at: events@srebrenica.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Waqar Azmi OBE,
Chair of Remembering Srebrenica



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You are receiving this email to make you aware of Srebrenica Memorial Week 2024.

Our mailing address is:

639-641 Stratford Road
Birmingham
B11 4AE

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER



CLlr Dominic Molloy
 Chair of Mid Ulster District Council

Celene.ONeill@midulstercouncil.org

Rathgael House
 43 Balloo Road
 Rathgill
 BANGOR
 BT19 7PR

private.office@education-ni.gov.uk

17 June 2024

CORR-1483-2024

Dear Dominic,

Thank you for your letter of 30 April 2024 in relation to the pre-school childcare provision for children with special education needs/disability (SEND) and additional needs.

You raise several issues within your letter which I wish to respond to.

Early Years and Childcare Accessibility and Costs

The development of an Executive Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Strategy remains one of my top priorities. In response to the financial strain many families are experiencing with the costs of their childcare, I have agreed a package of measures with my Executive colleagues which will be introduced this financial year. These are designed to stabilise and support expansion of the early learning and childcare sector, over time, offer all children 22.5 hours per week pre-school provision, reduce the costs of childcare for working parents and build the evidence base necessary to inform development of the longer-term strategy. They include a range of initiatives specifically targeted at supporting children with special educational and additional needs.

The operational detail of these is currently being developed with support from a cross-departmental Task and Finish Group and stakeholders. Updates will be provided as the work progresses. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQs) section on the DE website is being developed and should be available within the next few weeks.

Statutory Duty

The statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of childcare for children with disabilities/additional needs, rests with the Department of Health (DoH). DoH officials have provided the following detail regarding this:

Under Article 18 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 ('the Order'), Health and Social Care Trusts have a duty to provide a range and level of personal social care services to children who are considered to be children "in need" and their families. A child is considered to be "in need" if:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for them of services by a Trust;
- their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for them of such services; or
- they are disabled.

"Families" of children in need means any person who has parental responsibility for the child and any other person with whom the child has been living.

It is expected that an assessment of need will be undertaken in an open way and involve those caring for the child, the child and any other significant individuals. Families with a child in need, regardless of whether the need results from family difficulties or the child's circumstances, have the right to receive sympathetic support and sensitive intervention in their family's life. Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts are required to ensure that a range of services is available to meet the extent and nature of need identified within their respective areas.

Childcare provision is an example of the type of supportive services which are offered under Article 18, along with advice on such matters as local facilities, welfare support, housing or education, domiciliary support in the form of family aides, befriending schemes, play facilities and specialist services such as counselling, parent-craft training, family centres, respite care and provision of accommodation for longer periods. The Order also makes provision for support from Trusts to include the offer of cash in exceptional circumstances.

Under Article 20 of the Order, HSC Trusts are required to publish information about the services they provide themselves and, where appropriate, those provided by other organisations. All five HSC Trusts are also required under the Order to maintain a register of childcare providers in their respective areas and inspect those providers at least once every 12 months. Details of registered providers can be accessed through the www.FamilySupportNI.gov.uk website.

The 2012 Minimum Standards for Childminding and Day Care for Children Under Age 12 were developed by DoH to promote the delivery of a consistent level of service quality and safety, to facilitate a consistent regional approach to registration and inspection and also to support the legal requirements set out in The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and associated Guidance and Regulations (Volume 2). Standard 9 stipulates that the inclusion, welfare, and development of children who have additional needs should actively be promoted, based on appropriate assessment.

Notification of school placements for children with special educational needs (SEN)

60% (n.41K) of children on the SEN register do not have a statement of SEN and apply for a school placement through the general admissions process and will

therefore receive notification of their school placement at key transition years at the same time as their peers with no SEN.

40% (n. 27K) of children with SEN have a statement of SEN. These children follow a different process for confirming their school placement whereby their school placement is named in their final statement of SEN. This process is highly individualised and the placement is based on the assessed needs of the child, in consultation with schools and parents. There are no opening and closing dates or set dates for notification of placement as with the schools admissions process, meaning that comparison with the general admission process is inaccurate and inappropriate.

The education system has struggled to keep pace with the increasing demand for specialist education placements in recent years which has led to some delays in the confirmation of school placements for children, particularly for primary one and pre-school places. There is a significant programme of work ongoing by the Education Authority (EA), supported by my Department, to ensure sufficient and timely school placements for all children with SEN which meets their needs, whilst at the same time implementing system change and ensuring appropriate future planning in line with the projected need for specialist education places.

I hope you find this information useful.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Givan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Paul Givan MLA
Minister of Education

