

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 10 June 2021 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means

Members Present

Councillor McKinney, Chair

Councillors, Ashton, Buchanan*, Cuddy, Doris* (7.07 pm)
Elattar*, Forde*, Gildernew*, Kearney, S McAleer*,
S McGuigan, McLean*, S McPeake, Molloy, Quinn, Totten*

Officers in Attendance

Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Mrs Canavan, Director of Organisational Development
Ms Donnelly**, Council Solicitor
Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health & Infrastructure
Ms Mezza**, Head of Marketing and Communications
Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT
Mr Tohill, Director of Finance
Miss Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

* Denotes members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.01 pm

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

PR110/21 Apologies

None.

PR111/21 Declarations of Interest

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

PR112/21 Chair's Business

Councillor Molloy proposed that a working group be set up to look at the Blackwater Valley/Ulster Canal/Coalisland Canal and the associated blueways and greenways. The Councillor asked that this working group include members/officers from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, ICBAN and other associated bodies who may have an interest in progressing projects.

Councillor Quinn seconded Councillor Molloy's proposal.

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to set up a working group which will explore the blueways and greenways for the Blackwater Valley/Ulster Canal and Coalisland. Working group to include members/officers from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, ICBAN and other associated bodies.

Councillor Quinn referred to Joshua Griggs from Newmills who died tragically earlier in the week. Councillor Quinn stated he met recently with Joshua's father and could tell how immensely proud he was of his son. Councillor Quinn stated that Joshua was a talented athlete and was also working as a Blacksmith and that there had been incredible shock and outpouring of grief from across the local community on learning of his death. Councillor Quinn stated that Joshua's funeral service will be held at Brackaville Football Club tomorrow which was unique and shows how highly regarded both Joshua and his family are in the area.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney stated that the life of a child was very precious and the loss of the life of a child is tragic.

Councillor Cuddy referred to his previous request for LPS to make a presentation to Committee and that LPS had declined this invitation. Councillor Cuddy proposed that Council go back to LPS and seek a less formal meeting with LPS to discuss purchase/leasing of lands with Members.

The Chief Executive agreed to seek a meeting with LPS.

Councillor Doris joined the meeting at 7.07 pm.

Matters for Decision

PR113/21 Response (draft) to Consultation on DAERA Disability Action Plan 2019-2024

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which provided a draft response developed on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council in response to the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Disability Action Plan 2019-24.

Councillor Molloy referred to issues regarding footpath links to settlements particularly in rural areas and rural transport. The Councillor stated that at a recent meeting with DfI it was shown that someone can walk between Portadown and Belfast without leaving a footpath and that such links between towns and villages in this Council area are very poor. Councillor Molloy asked that reference to these comments are included in the response.

The Head of Democratic Services agreed to include the points raised within the final response to be submitted.

Councillor Cuddy stated that Councillor Molloy raised a valid point as now was the chance to make a difference and that Council should take the opportunity when it is there.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney stated he agreed with the comments made and referred to the footpath link between Tobermore and Portrush.

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve and submit draft response as set out at Appendix A to report to the Department for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA) with regard to their consultation on a Disability Action Plan 2019-24. Comments in relation to poor footpath linkages in the District and issues with rural transport as outlined above to be included within final response to be submitted.

PR114/21 Council Policy on Accessible Communications (Reviewed)

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the Council's policy on Accessible Communications.

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the revised Policy on Accessible Communications.

PR115/21 NILGA Consultation on Local Government's Vision & Development 2021-2023 - Response (draft)

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which highlighted consultation from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) on its consultation on Local Government's Vision & Development.

Councillor Kearney stated that as an office bearer of NILGA he acknowledged the work of this Council in preparing this document and that the work of this Council is held in high regard by NILGA.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the draft response as set out at Appendix B of report for submission to NILGA on its policy document - Vision & Development of Local Government 2021-2023.

PR116/21 Elected Member Development Working Group

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered the report of a meeting of the Elected Member Development Working Group held on 17 May 2021.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney thanked the Head of Democratic Services and officers for their work in receiving the Charter and congratulated those Members who have completed accredited courses recently.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the report of the Elected Member Development Steering Group meeting, and actions contained, held on Monday 17 May 2021.

PR117/21 Requests to Illuminate Council Property: June 2021

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report which considered requests received to illuminate/light up the Council's three designated properties to raise awareness of and mark;

- 75th Anniversary of Northern Chest Heart & Stroke - 14th June 2021
- Motor Neurone Disease Association Global Awareness Day - 21st June 2021
- International Day of the Disabled Person - 3rd December 2021

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Ashton and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to light up designated Council properties to mark –

- 75th Anniversary of Northern Ireland Chest, Heart & Stroke – 14 June 2021 (colour red)
- Motor Neurone Disease Association Global Awareness Day – 21 June 2021 (colour blue)
- International Day of the Disabled Person – 3 December 2021 (colour purple)

PR118/21 Member Services

No issues.

PR119/21 Community Development

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure presented previously circulated report which sought approval to proceed with the Town Shared Space Awnings capital works.

Councillor Cuddy thanked officers for the work done to progress these works and that it will be good to see the area identified in Dungannon becoming more user friendly. Councillor Cuddy proposed the report recommendation.

Councillor Quinn seconded Councillor Cuddy's proposal and referred to the area in Coalisland and that it will be good to see this being improved.

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the commencement of the towns shared spaces project.

Matters for Information

PR120/21 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 6 May 2021

Members noted Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 6 May 2021.

PR121/21 Annual Progress Return on Rural Needs 2020/2021

Members noted previously circulated report which set out Mid Ulster District Council's Annual Progress Report to Department for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs (DAERA) for the period 2020-21.

PR122/21 Somme Association: 2021-2022 Membership Subscription

Members considered previously circulated report which outlined correspondence received from the Somme Association on annual membership contributions payable for period 2021-2022.

Proposed by Councillor Ashton
Seconded by Councillor Buchanan and

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to make payment of £1,200 to the Somme Association for 2021-2022 annual subscription.

PR123/21 Marketing & Communications Service Improvement Plan 2021-2022

Members noted previously circulated report which detailed the Marketing & Communications Service Improvement Plan for 2021-2022.

Councillor S McPeake stated he welcomed the plan and that going forward the use of social media will be hugely important. The Councillor commended the team for their work and in particular mentioned the monthly videos which he felt are very informative and highlight stories that could otherwise become lost. Councillor S McPeake proposed the report recommendation.

Councillor Kearney concurred with Councillor McPeake's comments and acknowledged the quick responses made to customer queries. Councillor Kearney seconded Councillor S McPeake's proposal.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney thanked the marketing and communications team for the work that they do.

Resolved That it be recommended to the Chief Executive that he operate his Delegated Authority Resolve under Section 3.3 of the Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers to approve the Marketing and Communications Plan 2021-2022.

Live broadcast ended at 7.26 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy 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 Member consider items PR124/21 to PR132/21.

Matters for Decision

- PR124/21 Staff Matters for Decision
- PR125/21 ICT Update Report June 2021
- PR126/21 Members Allowances Update
- PR127/21 Rate Support Grant Update
- PR128/21 Economic Development Update – NIBSUP2'Go For It' Programme
- PR129/21 Estate and Asset Management

Matters for Information

- PR130/21 Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 6 May 2021
- PR131/21 Staff Matters for Information

PR132/21 Contracts and DAC

PR133/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.24 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, [Dungannon/Magherafelt] and virtually.

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

Just some housekeeping before we commence. Can I remind you:-

- If you have joined the meeting remotely please keep your audio on mute unless invited to speak and then turn it off when finished speaking
- Keep your video on at all times, unless you have bandwidth or internet connection issues, where you are advised to try turning your video off
- If you wish to speak please raise your hand in the meeting or on screen and keep raised until observed by an Officer or myself
- Should we need to take a vote this evening I will ask each member to confirm whether they are for or against the proposal or abstaining
- When invited to speak please introduce yourself by name to the meeting
- For any member attending remotely, if you declare an interest in an item, please turn off your video and keep your audio on mute for the duration of the item
- If referring to a specific report please reference the report, page or slide being referred to
- Lastly, I 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 first item on the agenda - apologies and then roll call of all other Members in attendance.