

Minutes of Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 22 April 2021 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by virtual means

Chair Councillor Mallaghan

Members Present Councillors, Bell*, Black, Brown*, Buchanan*, Burton*, Clarke*, Colvin*, Corry*, Cuddy*, Cuthbertson*, Doris*, Elattar*, Forde*, Gildernew*, Glasgow*, Graham, Hughes*, Kearney*, Kerr*, N McAleer*, S McAleer*, McFlynn*, B McGuigan*, S McGuigan*, McKinney*, McLean*, McNamee*, D McPeake*, S McPeake*, Milne*, Molloy*, Monteith*, Mullen*, Oneill*, Quinn, Robinson*, Totten* and Wilson*

Officers in Attendance Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Ms Canavan**, Director of Organisational Development
Ms Campbell**, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
Mr Kelso**, Director of Public Health & Infrastructure
Ms Mezza**, Head of Marketing and Communications
Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Mr Tohill**, Director of Finance
Mrs Forde, Member Support Officer

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7 pm

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

C074/21 Apologies

Councillor Ashton

C075/21 Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor Kerr declared an interest in item *D064/21 Economic Development Report – OBFD - MEGA (Manufacturing and Engineering Growth & Advancement) Network* in the Development Committee minutes, as he is a member of a trade union.

C076/21 Chair's Business

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan said that the number of deaths across Ireland due to COVID was now in excess of 7,000 and emphasised the importance of continuing to follow health guidance. He highlighted that close contact services were scheduled to resume and urged everyone to be cautious as if people did not act with caution we would have a new set of restrictions. He stressed the Hands-Face-Space message and highlighted that there is a risk if people start to relax on this. The Chair also made reference to the vaccination programme in that the uptake from the older cohort had been tremendous but as age groups came down it was less well covered. He also advised that interventions were being put in place such as 'walk in clinics' in food production factories to allow people to get vaccinated at work. It was further noted that 35% here and 20% in the South had received the first vaccination.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan advised that the joint First Ministers had visited Mid Ulster Sports Arena earlier in the day when the Mid Ulster ladies soccer team and children had been on site to mark the re-opening of sport. He advised his daughter had been back at the Plunketts GAA training and noted that all of this had to be protected. The Chair said that the MUSA visit had received great news footage and commended the Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation and her team for the £1m funding offer for a running track at the site but cautioned that more was to be done. The Chair made reference to a visit by Minister for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs to Davagh Walking trail to Beaghmore Stone Circles and concluded that the commencement of work was important to the construction sector concluding that the amenity would be an asset for all.

Councillor Quinn spoke of an incident at Coalisland Recycling Centre where the wildflower garden, on which a number of rare birds had been spotted, had been mistakenly cut by staff and biodiversity work had been destroyed. He said mistakes can happen but he was keen to have preventative measures in place. He proposed that Council bring forward a conservation policy to include the promotion of wildflower beds throughout the district highlighting that this would attract bees.

Councillor Quinn proposed that Council bring forward a paper to request a feasibility study by Department for Infrastructure with regard to the re-opening of the Coalisland Canal. He spoke of previous efforts of former councillor Jim Canning to open up the canal and the advocate he had been for it. He said that people had rediscovered the Canal during lock down and highlighted that such a project would tie in with the Irish Government work to open the Ulster Canal.

Councillor Quinn spoke of the bridge at Maghery and proposed that Council host a meeting with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council, Torrent DEA Members and interested parties to progress a development project at Maghery Bridge.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan highlighted that ICBAN was also carrying out work in relation to the Ulster Canal.

Councillor Doris spoke of the grass cutting incident at Coalisland Recycling Centre and stated much damage had been done and that when she had visited the site with Francie Molloy MP they had been told of a unique blue butterfly that had been

spotted on the wildflowers. She stated it was her understanding that staff were instructed not to cut the grass and asked what had been the breakdown in communication. She acknowledged that mistakes can happen but stated that Council could not ask people to protect the environment when they couldn't do it themselves.

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That Council

- (i) Bring forward a conservation policy to include the promotion of wildflower beds throughout the district;
- (ii) Investigate with a view to prevention of reoccurrences the cutting 'in season' of wildflower beds at Coalisland Recycling Centre.

Councillor Doris also seconded the proposal for the Coalisland Canal and stated that to progress work at Maghera Bridge would be great.

Councillor Kerr spoke in relation to the recycling centre and expressed his concerns as Council should be encouraging biodiversity and referred to the recent presentation made to Environment Committee by the Low Country Native Irish Honeybee Association. He further highlighted that councils in England plant out grass verges with wildflowers.

Councillor Kerr seconded the proposal for Maghera Bridge and stated that works should be carried out to improve the area. He also highlighted that runners and walkers were using the Coalisland Canal walkway and more should be done to bring about improvements. Councillor Kerr stated it would be a great achievement if the Canal could be opened to boats again and if connections were made to waterways throughout Ireland it would be great for local tourism.

Councillor O'Neill said that many Councillors had received the telephone call about the cutting of the wildflowers and asked why this had happened, who had given the instruction and sought assurance that it would not happen again. He further concurred regarding proposals for the Ferry-bridge at Maghera and extended his thanks for the works carried out at cleaning up the canal walk.

Councillor S McPeake stated that ICBAN was doing a lot of work in tandem with Waterways Ireland, there was commitments from the Stormont Assembly and that there had been a meeting with regard the strategic project with the Taoiseach. He highlighted that a feasibility study around the Clones area was also needed together with further commitment from both governments. He said it would be brilliant for tourism across Ulster and that there was a meeting within the next few weeks with Waterways Ireland at which it was hoped to put 'more flesh on the bones', Coalisland would be on the agenda and it was vital that the programme was delivered by both governments.

Councillor Molloy stated that the work of ICBAN dovetailed into work in relation to a scoping study at the Blackwater River and Coalisland Canal but one stumbling block was the motorway bridge. He stated that a number of groups such as the Canoe group and the Blackwater Barge Project had approached him as to how the river could be better utilised as it had many untapped sources for recreation and tourism.

Councillor Burton advised that the Castlecaulfield Horticultural Society had planted a complete meadow of wildflowers, that across the Clogher Valley there are wildflowers and it would be worthwhile to investigate which flowers are best as some thistles planted had grown very tall and blocked motorists view.

Councillor Cuthbertson speaking on the potential meeting with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council said he had raised the possibility of improvements at Verners Bridge, Tamnamore as at present it is too narrow and if this could be added to discussions.

Resolved That Council

- (i) host a meeting with Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council, Torrent DEA Members and interested parties to progress development project at Maghery Bridge;
- (ii) Explore possibility of footbridge at Verners Bridge, Tamnamore.

Councillor Mullen stated she worked with the Blackwater Barge group and it was an uphill battle to get work done but extended good wishes to the Coalisland project.

The Chair Councillor Mallaghan spoke of the work of Pat Treanor from County Louth who was a major advocate for the Ulster Canal and said that it could happen. In terms of the wildflowers the Chair spoke of projects around Luton airport which although initially expensive paid dividends.

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That Council

- (i) bring forward a paper to request a feasibility study by Department for Infrastructure with regard to the re-opening of the Coalisland Canal
- (ii) link in other waterways such as Blackwater River
- (iii) Work with ICBAN to extend the Ulster Canal

Councillor Cuthbertson spoke of the situation in East Timorese were following a natural disaster towns and villages had been decimated and he had been speaking to many East Timorese people whose family and friends had been impacted. He highlighted that Council had already supported a local group but proposed that Council tie in with all East Timorese groups throughout the district that assistance was not just going to one group.

Councillor Molloy concurred and stated that Council had liaised with the group, TISE, who had asked for wheeled bins to help their efforts in collecting resources. He expressed his condolences to East Timorese people who were suffering.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan advised that Councillor Cuddy had submitted a notice of motion within the required timeframe in relation to Irish Language and how it is placed on Dual Language signage. He explained that he had requested that the Chief Executive and Democratic Services review the motion as from his understanding, the policy had recently been reviewed and thus such a motion could not be submitted for six-months, as if passed it would have the effect of rescinding a previous decision. The Chair concluded that his understanding had been confirmed and that Councillor Cuddy wished to speak on the process in relation to standing orders.

Councillor Cuddy stated that the motion submitted had not mentioned the Irish language and expressed his disappointment to the Chair in relation to his comments when in the email he had received from the Chair he had been specifically requested not to speak on the content of the motion but the process, yet before he had opportunity to speak the Chair had done it himself. He stated he had been told by an Officer, that if he had 15% Member support for the motion, he could re-submit it.

Councillor Cuddy referred back to the Chair's opening remarks in relation to Covid and stated he had difficulty with his connection but concurred with comments and said that the Minister for Health, Robin Swann had done a great job in managing the situation and his party would be encouraging citizens of Mid Ulster to keep their guard up.

Councillor Cuddy stated he had had his hand up to speak at the Special Council meeting but it had not been seen. He said that what had been required over the past two weeks was good leadership. He spoke of the actions taken by other councils to mark the passing of Prince Philip for example Derry City and Strabane District Council held a minute's silence and that Mid Ulster leaders should have sat down to find a middle ground. Councillor Cuddy emphasised that different cultures give respect in different ways and some may not understand the unionist community but they were 40% of the population in Mid Ulster and common ground should have been sought. Councillor Cuddy concluded that in the days of the former Dungannon Council, Councillors Cavanagh, Molloy, Morrow and himself had met and found common ground on many occasions.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that in the previous meeting before he called for a vote he had specifically asked if anyone had anything to say. He stated that he was sorry regarding the disappointment in how he as Chair had introduced this item but he was merely giving context to the subject prior to Councillor Cuddy raising his concerns and had not intended to be underhand. He also stated that throughout the past week not one had requested a party leaders meeting the only request had been the raising of the union flag. He concluded by saying when he had heard of the

death of Prince Philip he had telephoned the Deputy Chair and requested that she take the lead.

Councillor Monteith referred to the discussion about East Timor and said it had been raised at the development committee and advised there is a number of initiatives across the district to collect aid. He proposed that a way forward would be to talk to the groups and suggest an initiative to assist with a central fund that local people could feed into to assist with transport costs to get the aid delivered. He commended the initiatives already shown.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Cuthbertson and

Resolved That Council explore options with East Timorese groups throughout the District has how best to facilitate a central fund for transport costs

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to comments regarding the review of the dual language policy and stated that it had been discussed at Environment Committee and it was to be brought back thus the review was not complete but ongoing.

Matters for Decision

C077/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Council Meeting held on Thursday 25 March 2021

Councillor Burton requested an amendment to the minutes at C056/21 amend to read *“Councillor Burton referred to the discussion regarding roundabout enhancement and stated that with regard to the scheme at Fivemiletown she had received complaints that there were no flowers remaining by the time they reached the scheme.”*

Councillor Monteith requested an amendment to the minute at C060/21 amend to read resolve at page 16, *That Council progress a meeting with the Boundary Commission*

Councillor Monteith sought an update on (i) C056/21 Environment Committee minutes where it had been resolved that an all Member workshop be held to prepare a paper with regard to housing fitness and (ii) C060/21 Correspondence proposed meeting with the Boundary Commission.

The Chief Executive advised he did not have an update on the workshop in relation to housing fitness and that the meeting with the Boundary Commission was scheduled for Friday 14 May 2021. He further advised that he had a meeting scheduled with the NI Ambulance Service on Friday 23rd April.

Councillor Cuthbertson drew attention to C051/21 Chair’s Business – Civil Service Regional Hubs and sought an update on the meeting held on 30 March.

The Chief Executive advised he had had a meeting with the Department at which he had relayed Members concerns and had identified the proximity of Dungannon and Magherafelt to the M1 and M2. The Department had agreed to relook at public sector buildings in Dungannon and also view a section of the Council's own premises in Magherafelt. He concluded that progress had been made and he would advise Members when he received a response.

Councillor Kerr also welcomed the Chief Executive's scheduled meeting with the NI Ambulance Service and stated that he hoped it would resolve issues identified in recent months.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Council held on Thursday 25 March 2021 (C049/21 – C062/21 and C073/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

C078/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in "Open Business" Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 8 April 2021

Councillor McLean stated he was extremely disappointed with the outcome of Councillor Wilson's proposal to illuminate Council designated buildings to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland. He stated that once again the Unionist section of the community had been overruled by Council.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That the minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 8 April 2021 (PR068/21 – PR077/21 and PR088/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

C079/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in "Open Business" Planning Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 12 April 2021

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to the DfI presentation which had been made at the Planning Committee and highlighted that he had raised the issues in relation to satellite villages in Dungannon such as Bush and Killyman which don't fall into school transport categories and stated that the sooner Council commissions work the better.

Councillor Cuthbertson proposed that Council commission a piece of work to link Killyman and Bush villages with paths or cycle ways to Dungannon.

Councillor Cuddy seconded the proposal and commented on the work carried out between Maghera and Tobermore. He said footpaths outlined in the proposal would provide faster and safer routes for users.

Councillor Clarke said he did not disagree with the sentiments of the proposal but there was many situations within villages with pathways not connected within the villages themselves highlighting examples such as The Loup and Dunamore. He stated such hamlets and villages should be higher on a priority list.

Councillor S McPeake concurred with sentiments and highlighted that many such issues had been raised at the meeting such as Clady to Kilrea, Gulladuff to Bellaghy and that Council should not cherry-pick. He proposed that the Planning Manager should do a wider piece of work than that originally proposed.

Councillor Colvin concurred with the proposal for a wider piece of work highlighting the work carried out by the community in Newmills in relation to the aqueduct. He stated that additional paths and walkways would help with mental health issues and highlighted that Council should work with community groups who have initiated projects for footpath provision.

In response the Planning Manager stated he would be happy to work on this within the Development Plan which highlighted at item 11 on the agenda but it would have to be in the context of the development plan. He advised that the steps were to submit the area plan, take it to inquiry and then start work on village settlement limits zonings, cycle-ways and pathways.

Resolved That Council under the auspices of the Development Plan work towards the provision of footpaths in villages and hamlets where no footpaths exist or where there are gaps in footpath provision

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That the Minutes of Planning Committee held on Monday 12 April 2021 (P050/21 – P054/21 and P062/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, subject to the foregoing amendment, were considered and adopted.

C080/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” Environment Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 13 April 2021

Councillor S McAleer requested an Amendment to minute E099/21 page 7 to read *Councillor S McAleer declared an interest in this item as Vice Chair of Tullyvar.*

Councillor Wilson drew attention to the issue he had raised at *E093/21 Chair’s Business* regarding the Cemetery at Forthill Cookstown and said that the situation was ongoing and there was instances where dogs had dug up freshly dug graves. He

said that he was aware Council was reviewing the policy but this was urgent and he suggested that artificial grass be placed on fresh graves. He said that there has been ongoing occurrences of antisocial behaviour both at the Cemetery, behind the recycling centre where youths had gathered and lit a fire and at the laneway link to St Jeans. He requested if Council could look at these issues.

Councillor Monteith drew attention to *E098/21 Street Naming and Property Numbering* and asked that it be raised with developers that in providing three options for consideration the options are not to be always simply drive, way and park. He also drew attention to *E107/21 Entertainment Licensing Applications* and highlighted that many licensed establishments were going through rigorous activity to prepare for re-opening and it was his understanding there was a considerable back log with Environmental Health and planning officers. Councillor Monteith proposed that the senior management team take a look at the situation and ensure that sufficient resources were in place to process requests from licensed premises.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That Council investigate reallocating resources to accelerate licensing premises applications in relation to re-opening post lockdown to ensure delays are kept to a minimum

Councillor Kerr also referred to the names being submitted for new developments and said that some were preposterous and townland names should be included.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan said town land names did form part of the policy but Council should revisit.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Burton declared an interest in *E097/21 Ageing Well – Age Friendly Framework*

Proposed by Councillor B McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor S McAleer and

Resolved That the Minutes of Environment Committee held on Tuesday 13 April 2021 (E091/21 – E109/21 and E122/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

C081/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” Development Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 15 April 2021

Councillor McNamee highlighted the indicative Sport NI Award towards an athletic track and 3G pitch at Mid Ulster Sports Arena and welcomed the initiative.

Councillor Doris highlighted the success of the public realm scheme in Coalisland and how the Men's Shed had planted flowers along the Annagher Road and requested that Council look at planting flowers in Coalisland.

Councillor Kerr highlighted the lack of maintenance at Northern Ireland Electricity substations identifying in particular the one at Altmore where it was surrounded by moss and overgrown weeds. He stated that he was aware that NIE were only responsible for the inside area but the matter needed to be addressed.

Councillor Cuthbertson drew attention to *D68/21 Decade of Anniversaries Commemorations 2021-2022 Updated Action Plan* he said it was disappointing that the already small budget had been squeezed yet again and referred to the workshop where there had been a lack of tolerance for example 'no trees planted as part of the scheme in Mid Ulster'. Councillor Cuthbertson said that Council discusses diversity but cannot plant a tree to commemorate Northern Ireland centenary. He further highlighted that a proposed concert had also been dropped off the report and the budget did not add up. He said that this again highlights disrespect for the unionist population adding that there was no mention of events for the centenary on the Council website and there was no mention of available grants. He highlighted that at the District Electoral Area meetings held, Officers were not aware of anything and stated that such decisions should be voted on in the Chamber and not determined by Council Officers.

Councillor O'Neill concurred with Councillor Kerr regarding the NIE substation site but advised that the one at Altmore had now been cleaned.

The Chief Executive in response to comments made by Councillor Cuthbertson said that officers do not develop the programme it is discussed and decided upon through committee and the role of the officer is to follow instruction.

Councillor Quinn concurred with Councillor Doris with regard to the public realm scheme in Coalisland and the work of the Men's Shed.

Councillor Kerr said that the pavements in Coalisland were superb but the roads required resurfacing.

Councillor Monteith referred to the proposal with regard to NIE Substations and stated that this should be opened up throughout the district as many areas end up maintaining the surrounding grounds themselves because they are neglected by NIE.

Councillor Kerr concurred.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

Resolved Council request a meeting with NIE with regard to maintenance of Substations and their surrounding areas throughout the district.

Councillor Monteith requested an amendment to the minute *D068/21 Decade of Anniversaries Commemorations 2021-2022 Updated Action Plan* to read; “Councillor Monteith advised that he had no difficulty in supporting grants.”

Councillor Monteith referred to the recent confirmation from the SHSCT in relation to the garden of reflection in remembrance of those who died in the workhouse which was at the South Tyrone hospital site. He commended the work done by Donaghmore Historical Society and Council officers and said that the proposed garden would do credit to those buried on the site.

He stated that along with fellow Councillors they had lobbied for this for many years and proposed that Council write again to the SHSCT seeking assurance that the site will be accessible to the public at all times.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that he had been concerned at initial responses but much now had been achieved.

Councillor Molloy welcomed the commitment from the SHSCT but concurred that it would be good to seek clarity of the exact location of the graves and once established it be made known.

Councillor Monteith concurred.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That Council write to the Southern Trust seeking assurance that the site planned to mark the graves of those who perished in the Workhouse will be accessible to the public and that the exact location of the graves are established and made known.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan made reference to the presentation to the Development Committee by Fionnuala O’Boyle regarding the Mother and Baby Home Enquiry. He stated that anyone who had not heard the presentation should listen to her experience.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That the Minutes of Development Committee held on Thursday 15 April 2021 (D059/21 – D073/21 and D077/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

C082/21 Civic Recognition Nomination

The Head of Democratic Services sought approval for the previously circulated report on civic recognition requests from Members, in line with the stated Council Policy, and as detailed within the report at appendix A.

Councillor Wilson referred to the request for Northern Ireland Ladies Football team and asked that his name be added to supporting councillors and that the names highlighted at D67/21 undernoted be included for civic recognition.

Extract of D067/21 “Jackie Burns from Cookstown, Simone Magill originally from Magherafelt but now playing for Everton, Samantha Kelly from Castledawson. He also wanted to pay tribute to the backroom team including Kenny and Dean Shiels as well as Dwayne Nelson from Castledawson and Gary Boyd from Dungannon and felt that this was the complete list of all those in the Mid Ulster area and said that it was important to recognise the success of everyone from this area.

Councillor Burton concurred and asked that her name also be included and highlighted that those on the team from Mid Ulster are ambassadors for the area.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan advised he had been at MUSA earlier in the day and there had been much talk of their success.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor Oneill and

Resolved That approval be given to submitted requests for civic recognition as outlined in the report and be dealt with as previously resolved by April 2020 Council in that recipients receive a letter together with an award, where appropriate.

C083/21 Council and Committee Meeting Governance Arrangements

The Chief Executive presented previously circulated report which provided update on the committee and council meeting governance arrangements in the context of *the Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020* in place to allow for remote meetings, remote attendance by members and members of the public where applicable and to consider the current standing of the Regulations.

The Chief Executive highlighted that the current regulations expire on 7 May 2021 and although the Department for Communities hopes to have regulations in place for the Council annual meeting, in the interim Mid Ulster Council needs to address how it carries out its business between 7th May and 31 May. He highlighted that the Planning Committee and Policy and Resources Committee will not be impacted but the others would be, Environment, Development and Council meetings. He said that subject to further direction being provided it he proposed to continue with hybrid meetings and to facilitate good governance that decisions made be implemented under authority afforded to him under the Council's Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers. The Chief Executive concluded that should new Regulations not be in place by early June Council must then consider perhaps deferring the planning committee, subject to COVID-19 restrictions easements.

Proposed by Councillor Brown
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That Council to continue with meetings in the current format. Any decisions made at council and committees meetings from 7th May 2021 until the Department for Communities have new Regulations on Remote Meetings in place be implemented by the Chief Executive under 3.3 of the Council's *Scheme of Delegation for Senior Officers* on Emergencies and Cases of urgency

C084/21 Submission of the draft Plan Strategy to the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) to Cause an Independent Examination

The Planning Manager presented previously circulated report which sought agreement to submit the Local Development Plan Strategy to the Department so that those people making representations on the strategy are provided opportunity to represent their views at a Public Examination (IE).

Councillor Quinn left the meeting at 8.15 pm returning at 8.18 pm

The Planning Manager made reference to the effort made by Members to develop the plan, the many workshops to consider options, the consultations on what the plan would contain and the endless hours spent in planning committee. He stated that together they had worked to create a plan with added emphasis on creating new opportunities to get housing in the countryside, the Lough Neagh Fishermen contribution, the work with town councillors regarding the development of town centres, additional industrial grounds in Dungannon and the need for more social housing. The Planning Manager advised he was amazed at how few concerns had been raised in relation to the plan and that approximately 200 representations had been made many of which were supportive and the majority of people through their silence were deemed content. He highlighted that there had been a further consultation and Members had worked through them all. He sought approval for the recommendation which would empower him to complete the linking documents and submit the plan to the department which would incorporate the desire for cycle trails, settlements and planned housing development.

Councillor S McPeake thanked the Planning Manager for outlining the key points and made reference to the many hours and detailed work through important subject areas which had taken place. He stated it was an important milestone in development of a progressive and vibrant plan for the district.

Proposed by Councillor S McPeake
Seconded by Councillor and Mallaghan and

Resolved That Council submit the draft Plan Strategy to Dfi subject to the aforementioned reports at 3.11 and 3.12 of the report being completed.

Following the submission of the Draft Plan Strategy and accompanying documents to the Department, the Planning Manager, in accordance with Regulation 21 of The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 will:

- Make available for inspection at its principal offices, the Draft Plan Strategy and all accompanying documents specified in regulation 20(2) and any documents relevant to the preparation of the DPS and,
- Notify the consultation bodies of the fact that the Draft Plan Strategy and the accompanying documents are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected and,
- Notify any person who has made (and not withdrawn) a representation in accordance with regulation 16(2) or 18(2) of those matters;
- Give notice in the Belfast Gazette and by local advertisement of the fact that the Draft Plan Strategy has been submitted to the Department; and
- Publish the notice mentioned on its website.

Matters for Information

C085/21 Correspondence

Members noted previously circulated report providing correspondence received for the attention of Council.

Councillor Quinn made reference to the response emailed to Members earlier in the evening received from the Irish government and highlighted that whilst the detail of what they are doing is welcome the destruction of aid relief for Gaza had not been mentioned. He also advised that the press was highlighting the roll out of the vaccine in Israel but the dark secret was that the Palestinians have been denied access to the vaccine by the Israeli government and it was his hope that the Irish Government would push for change.

Councillor Kerr concurred with Councillor Quinn's comments and said like Ireland, Palestine had faced occupation and was a shame on the international community the holocaust the Israeli government was carrying out in deliberately blocking access to vaccines. He said that they also deny access to water and electricity and he would support initiatives to bring this to an end.

Councillor Kerr also welcomed the letter in relation to Lough Neagh fishermen and said that he hoped Council would continue to lobby on their behalf

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to the correspondence from the Minister of Finance in relation to vacant property rates but noted that he still had not responded to three previous letters submitted by council.

Councillor Elattar drew attention to correspondence from Monaghan County Council in relation to the motion calling on the World Health Organisation to ensure an equitable distribution of Coronavirus vaccines to poorer countries and proposed that Council support the motion.

Proposed by Councillor Elattar
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

Resolved That Council supports the Motion carried by Monaghan County Council in relation to

- (i) the equitable global distribution of all vaccines, treatments and therapies developed to combat the coronavirus scourge;
- (ii) encourages all citizens to sign the EU hosted petition on www.nprofitonpandemic.eu

Councillor Monteith concurred solidarity with Councillor Kerr's remarks regarding Palestine. He also referred to homes and communities wiped out in East Timor and stated that it was almost obscene how many countries were boasting about the roll out of vaccines when so many poor countries did not have access to it.

Councillor Doris sought an update on the letter issued to DfI regarding the upkeep of roads.

In response, the Head of Democratic Services advised a response had been issued by email just prior to the Council meeting.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan advised that the Minister had suggested a meeting and Council could use this to highlight other issues raised.

Councillor Corry drew attention to correspondence from Mid & East Antrim Borough Council detailing a motion passed in relation to Holiday Hunger and requested that council support the motion and write to the Minister of Education on the matter. Councillor Corry highlighted that the number of children receiving food parcels was totally horrendous and it was heart breaking that holiday hunger led to education under achievement. She further highlighted that a party colleague was working on a private Members Bill to legislate for a long term commitment that children get meals to build their nutrition and are protected from going hungry.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Kearney and

Resolved Council support the motion and write to the Education Minister in support of implementing free school meals during summer holidays for those entitled to ensure no child goes hungry and is given the best start on life and help raise our young people and make happy teenagers.

Councillor Glasgow welcomed the reply from the Department for Infrastructure and stated that the reality was there is an under investment in rural roads that a pot hole now needed to be beyond 50mm at the time of inspection to be repaired and it was apparent that the department was willing just to pay out the compensation rather than deal with the cause. He emphasised that funding is required and the policies need to be looked at urgently as for many years permanent secretaries hid behind the excuse there was no Minister but now there was and action was needed in relation to rural roads. Councillor Glasgow concluded that that the current policy needed to be 'thrown out the window' and a policy implemented that would deliver.

Councillor N McAleer raised the issue about the inspection periods and proposed that Council write back to the Minister asking if this had been considered. In relation to the Lough Shore fishermen he stated that Conor Murphy Minister of Finance had signed off on the monies and it would be interesting to see how long it took Minister Poots to deliver.

Councillor Molloy welcomed the correspondence from DfI and said that all councillors would want an input into any forthcoming meeting should it be by way of a pre meeting.

Councillor Colvin made the observation that 130 countries in the world were yet to receive a single vaccine yet again Israel is selected to take a kick at, he said if anyone had been to Auschwitz they would see what the Jews had suffered and highlighted that they were not occupying the land but if anyone read the prophecies they would know that God gave them the land and it would increase.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan referred to Councillor Colvin's comments and said with what the Jews had experienced you would think it would change their attitudes towards the Palestinians yet as their neighbours they treat them horrendously.

Councillor Burton referred to correspondence from DfI and drew attention to the Raghey Road at which the verge had collapsed and there was a number of potholes. She highlighted that if two lorries meet there is insufficient room to pass and it was very dangerous. Councillor Burton advised that DfI had fixed the potholes but did not deal with the problems at the verge which led down a drop into a field. She concurred with Councillor Glasgow's comments about compensation but said that work and investment was needed on rural roads as they were like dereliction sites. Councillor Burton seconded the suggestion that clarification in relation to the time frame of inspecting rural roads be sought. Councillor Burton also stated that use of rural roads was on the increase with people visiting forests during the pandemic.

Councillor Kerr commented on Councillor Colvin's intolerance towards comments about Palestine. He stated that he had visited Auschwitz and what happened was a crime against humanity. He also stated that the United Nations recognised that Israel was occupying lands at Syria and Palestine and he felt Councillor Colvin's remarks were wrong.

Councillor S McAleer highlighted that Members had a meeting invitation regarding issues at Granville and Eskragh Road next week.

Councillor Gildernew concurred with comments about the Raghey Road and stated that he had been lobbying DfI Roads continuously in relation to it. He said it was only a matter of time until the road subsided as holes were appearing in the middle of the road, there was a stream running under the road and the matter needed to be addressed as a matter of urgency. He referred to works at Black Lough and highlighted that the situation had been bad enough but it had been at a car park not a main road.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan proposed that Council liaise with the Minister's office with regard to widening the conversation regarding infrastructure issues in the district. Councillor Burton seconded the proposal

Resolved That Council liaise with the Minister's office on

- (i) widening the conversation regarding infrastructure issues in the district. To seek confirmation if consideration has been given to shortening inspection times of rural roads. An all member pre meeting be held to consolidate issues to be brought forward.
- (ii) Request DfI to inspect and expedite required works at Raghey Road, Dungannon;

Councillor Quinn responded to Councillor Colvin's remarks and stated he knew he was a man of faith but an old document does not give Israel the right to expand illegally and take land they are not entitled to. He stated he was not against Israel but he was against decisions taken by their government.

C086/21 Consultations Notified to Mid Ulster District Council

Members considered previously circulated report on consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council for comment.

Councillor Kerr requested that Council submit a response to DAERA Disability Action Plan 2019-2024 as a comprehensive strategy was needed.

Resolved That Council submit response to Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Disability Action Plan 2019-2024.

Councillor S McPeake drew attention to SEUPB PEACE PLUS Programme Public Consultation and highlighted that the bureaucracy of the last programme was dreadful and many groups returned money as what was being requested was unrealistic. He said that ICBAN had also done a detailed response and suggested that if officers could view this and work in tandem with it and bring a response to the appropriate committee.

The Chief Executive advised that officers were working on the response.

The Head of Democratic Services highlighted that the consultation closed on 12 May and Council would seek an extension but if this was not granted it may be apt to delegate authority to the Development Committee to agree the response.

Proposed by Chair, Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Councillor S McPeake and

Resolved That Council submit a response to SEUPB PEACE PLUS Programme Public Consultation. Council to seek an extension to response date and if not granted that Delegated authority be given to the Development Committee to submit the response.

Councillor Monteith concurred and stated that the PEACE projects were monsters to administer and you would need a degree to understand how to apply. He felt that unless a community group had the money to employ a consultant they need not apply. He said that the SEUPB needed to use plain English. He said statutory agencies could make their way through it as could professional community sector but ordinary voluntary sector was completely ruled out. Councillor Monteith concluded that the role Council had in helping the local voluntary sector was excellent.

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.

The live broadcast concluded at 8.52 pm

Proposed by Councillor Brown
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That items C087/21 to C092/21 be taken as confidential business.

Matters for Decision

- (i) Council confidential minutes of meeting held on 25 March 2021;
- (ii) Policy and Resources Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 8 April 2021;
- (iii) Planning Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 12 April 2021;
- (iv) Environment Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 13 April 2021;
- (v) Development Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 15 April 2021;
- (vi) Document for Sealing: Supplemental Deed to lease of lands at Blackrock Road, Beaghmore, Cookstown, in connection with the Davagh Solar Walk.

C093/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 9pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A - Introductory Remarks from Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to our meeting of Mid Ulster District Council in the Chamber, Dungannon whether you have joined us remotely or in the Chamber.

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 a roll call of members in attendance.