

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 7 December 2023 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown and by Virtual Means

Members Present

Councillor Corry, Chair

Councillors Bell*, Brown, F Burton*, J Burton*, Cahoon, Gildernew*, Johnston*, McFlynn*, McLean*, McLernon, S McPeake*, Molloy*, Wilson

Officers in Attendance

Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive**
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)
Mr Moffett, Assistant Director of Organisation Development, Strategy and Performance (AD: ODSP)
Mr O'Hagan, Head of IT (HoIT)
Mr Scullion, Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS)**
Mr Tohill, Strategic Director of Corporate Services & Finance (SD: CS&F)
Miss Thompson, Committee and Member Services Officer

* Denotes members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

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

PR201/23 Notice of Recording

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

PR202/23 Apologies

Councillor McAleer.

PR203/23 Declarations of Interest

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

PR204/23 Chairs Business

None.

PR205/23 Deputation – Parent Alienation

The Chair, Councillor Corry advised that the representative was unable to attend tonight’s meeting and that the presentation would be rescheduled.

Matters for Decision

PR206/23 Requests to Illuminate Council Properties

The Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E) presented previously circulated report which sought approval to illuminate and light up the Council’s three designated properties to raise awareness for the following:

- Samaritans: Winter Solstice: Longest Day: 21 December 2023
- British Porphyria Association: Rare Disease Day 29 February 2024

Proposed by Councillor Brown
Seconded by Councillor Cahoon and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to illuminate the three designated Council properties as follows –

- Samaritans: Winter Solstice: Longest Day: 21 December 2023
Colour: Green
- British Porphyria Association: Rare Disease Day 29 February 2024
Colour: Purple

PR207/23 Member Services

No issues.

Matters for Information

PR208/23 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 9 November 2023

Members noted Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee held on 9 November 2023.

PR209/23 Performance Improvement Six Month Progress Update (Q1 to Q2 – 2023/24)

Members noted previously circulated report which provided monitoring information on the review of Council's performance against the seven statutory and three corporate performance improvement indicators and standards, along with an overview of the Corporate Health Indicators for the first six months of 2023/24. The report also provided a performance progress summary against the Council's four corporate improvement objectives and their associated project plans (known as CIP plans).

Councillor Gildernew referred to NI Council averages for FOI requests responded to within 20 days and stated that there are no figures since 2016 and asked if there was a reason for this.

The Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E) advised that the figures recorded in the report are the response times to FOI requests made to Mid Ulster Council and that this Council would not have the detail of similar figures for other Councils.

Councillor Wilson asked if a report listing all FOI questions sent in to Council can be generated.

The Assistant Director of Organisation Development, Strategy and Performance (AD: ODSP) stated that there is some guidance from the ICO outlining that public authorities should keep a disclosure log of all FOI requests submitted to them and that this is maintained within the Council's CRM. The AD: ODSP stated that whilst Council's disclosure log is not published it can be provided upon request.

Councillor S McPeake stated it may be daunting to see the red status against the planning performance but felt that a lot of the reasoning behind it comes down to getting the planning portal up and running. The Councillor stated that a lot of resources went into the planning portal which is now the envy of other Councils and it was good to see average processing times were coming back on track but felt that the figures deserved some explanation tonight.

PR210/23 Mid Ulster Community Planning: Progress Update and Performance Statement 2021-2023

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on activity surrounding Mid Ulster Community Planning from October to December 2023 and including the Mid Ulster Community Planning Performance Statement 2021-2023.

Councillor Molloy stated it was good to see the ongoing activity in relation to Community Planning and felt there is some fantastic work which comes out of it. The Councillor referred to a Dungannon Place Shaping document put forward some years ago but which was never adopted due to one of the partners not signing off on it and asked officers to follow up on this.

Councillor Gildernew referred to the social prescribing service which is working well in the Northern Trust area and asked if there is any opportunity to bring this service to the Southern Trust area as well.

The Assistant Director of Organisation Development, Strategy and Performance (AD: ODSP) stated that the Place Shaping Strategy currently sits within the Communities and Place Directorate but that officers would follow up on it as part of the wider Community Planning framework. In relation to the social prescribing service the AD: ODSP stated that officers would follow up with the Southern Trust Strategic Partner and update Members.

Councillor Wilson stated that there is nothing within the Community Plan in relation to arts and culture and felt that as there is an objective to ensure that Mid Ulster is safe, encourages respect for diversity and values community spirit that arts and culture should be included within the plan.

Live broadcast ended at 7.11 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McLernon
Seconded by Councillor Brown 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 PR211/23 to PR220/23.

Matters for Decision

PR211/23 Land and Property Matters
PR212/23 Staffing Matters for Decision
PR213/23 Structure: Planning Department
PR214/23 Procurement of Valuation Services

Matters for Information

PR215/23 Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee held on 9 November 2023
PR216/23 HR Summary Update Report for the period from 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023
PR217/23 Staffing Matters for Information
PR218/23 2024/25 Rate Estimates
PR219/23 Financial Report for 7 Months ended 31 October 2023
PR220/23 Contract and DAC Registers

PR221/23 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 7.35 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.