

Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Monday 4 July 2022 in Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by virtual means

Members Present Councillor S McGuigan

Councillors Buchanan, Burton, Brown, Cuthbertson, Glasgow*, Kearney, N McAleer, B McGuigan*, McNamee*, Milne*, Oneill*, Totten*, Wilson

Officers in Attendance

Mrs Campbell, Strategic Director of Environment
Mr Lowry, Head of Technical Services**
Mr McAdoo, Assistant Director of Environmental Services**
Mr Scullion, Assistant Director of Property Services**
Mr McKeown, ICT Support
Mrs Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

* Denotes members and members of the public 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 S McGuigan welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor S McGuigan 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.

E168/22 Notice of Recording

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

E169/22 Apologies

Councillors Graham and S McAleer.

E169/22 Declarations of Interest

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

E170/22 Chair's Business

The Chair wished to reflect that within the past month, the Council had lost one of its valued Technical Services employees. He advised that this was a young man with a young family and wished to pass on his sympathy on behalf of this committee to his family.

Councillor Brown said he wished to echo the Chair's sentiments and pass on his sympathy to the young man's immediate family at this very sad time.

Matters for Decision

E171/22 Cemetery Improvement Works

The AD: Environmental Services presented previously circulated report which sought approval to undertake cemetery capital improvement works.

Councillor Cuthbertson thanked the AD: Environmental Services for bringing this report forward but wished to raise a number of issues which he had sought representation on this last few years; namely trees, uneven graves, water logged graves, grass not growing on graves and the much publicised matter of antisocial behaviour at Cottagequinn cemetery where cars enter the graveyard at the dark of night performing donuts and rallying about. He felt the report covers everything well and although it was something we do not like doing in removing trees, Coolhill has left the Council with no option but to remove them as they are faced onto industrial site side and has left where a person can see through the trees and heavy at one side which runs the risk of falling over on top of particular graves.

He said that it would be beneficial if the AD: Environmental Services could elaborate on what kind of fencing would be erected at the site. He said that he was mindful that the Council do not turn it into an industrial site, unfortunately over the years the Planners had permitted industrial units to be built right up close and beside the graveyard and cemetery which was unfortunate but we are where we are and important to tone down the industrial settings around it.

He also raised the fact that he had been approached about a pair of nesting herons in a few of the trees and nesting times and asked that consideration be taken on board to protect them going forward. He said that the grass was not growing on the graves and was a very sore point and extremely distressing for family members and suggested proceeding with an immediate effect with the implementation of roll-out turf to even out the hollows in the grave. He stated that consideration needs to be given to the family and assurances that no damage will be done to their loved ones graves whilst work was being completed.

He welcomed CCTV cameras greatly in relation to Cottagequinn and agreed that other locations were different and did not lend themselves to CCTV, but other Councillors may have a difference of an opinion on that, but felt that Cottagequinn was an area which seems to have an element of antisocial behaviour at night time in relation to cars and would be important to get this stopped.

The AD: Environmental Services advised that he would certainly take on board concerns raised in regards to the nesting herons.

He reply member's query regarding the fence, he advised that the proposed fence at Cottagequinn was anticipated to be a 7th high wooden panelled fence.

Councillor Burton said that it was very important to maintain the trees at these locations as the last thing we need was for someone to get injured going to visit a loved one's grave. She advised that she had been strongly campaigning about trees on the side of roads and there was an onus on the Council to make sure where we have trees that they are properly maintained.

Councillor Wilson paid tribute to all the staff who were involved in all the work in Cookstown Cemetery. He referred to a few issues which were still arising at Forthill in Cookstown and said that there were some trees in the graveyard with the roots growing through the graves and appreciated that although they were there for quite some time, enquired if there was any possibility of investigating them for removal as they were also cutting up the pathway.

He also referred to the ongoing concern regarding dog-fouling at the cemetery where people let their dogs off the lead. He said that he had received a complaint last week from a member of the public who had been up visiting a loved one which had recently deceased and a dog had fouled beside the grave in which they were visiting. He said that he was aware that it was very difficult to control this and said that all the Council can do was publicise the importance for dog owners to keep their dogs on the lead and to lift the foul.

He advised that when a grave was dug and filled in and did appreciate that it takes time to settle, but during bad weather a number of graves have become waterlogged at Forthill and had raised it previously if the Council could acquire artificial grass in the short-term to take away the bad look especially after a funeral.

The AD: Environmental Services said that he would be content to look at all the issues raised by members.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor Burton and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the completion of the works as outlined at a total estimated cost of £177k exc. VAT (including 10% contingency) subject to a procurement process; funded from the Council Capital Programme for 2022/23.

E172/22 Street Naming and Property Numbering

The AD: Property Services presented previously circulated report which advised of requests for naming of new streets within residential Housing Developments within Mid Ulster District Council. The Building Control Department has received a request for the naming of a street within a proposed residential development as follows:

Councillor Cuthbertson in referring to site of Thomas Street recalled being present at a site meeting out of a planning committee in relation to this and it was his thinking that the entrance was off Thomas Street rather than Castle Lane itself as he

recollected this being one of the concerns from objectors in relation to extra traffic on Castle Lane. He said that he thought this was off Thomas Street unless the plans had changed since the site meeting.

The Chair advised that this request was from the Developer and the options were in front of committee tonight for decision.

- Development 1 – Site off Thomas Street, Dungannon

The options submitted are as noted below:

1. *Castle Lane Mews*
2. *Castle Lane Close*

Proposed by Councillor Brown
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to go with the preferred option of Castle Lane Mews.

- Development 2 – Site off Oaks Road, Dungannon

The options submitted are as noted below:

1. *Oaks Avenue*
2. *Oaks Drive*
3. *Bloomfield Avenue*

Proposed by Councillor Brown
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to go with the preferred option of Oaks Avenue.

- Development 3 – Site off Killyfaddy Road, Magherafelt

The options submitted are as noted below:

1. *Hillside Manor*
2. *Hillside Way*
3. *Hillside Drive*

Proposed by Councillor Totten
Seconded by Councillor Brown and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to go with the preferred option of Hillside Drive.

E173/22 Chewing Gum Task Force Grant Scheme

The AD: Environmental Services presented previously circulated report to update members on a successful application to the Chewing Gum Grant Scheme. Approval was sought for the acceptance of the £19,990 funding offered from the scheme.

Councillor Cuthbertson thanked the AD: Environment Services for his report and said that this was a no brainer as no-one would be refusing to accept a £20k investment. He referred to the time of the new public realm scheme in Dungannon and within a few weeks the footpaths were polluted with chewing gum and said that it was good to see this machine being introduced to Mid Ulster.

Councillor Wilson said that he was delighted to see this being introduced to Mid Ulster.

Councillor McNamee said that he welcomed the introduction of the machine but wondered if WISE had penalised anyone for discarding chewing gum as they were very proactive in penalising people for discarding cigarette butts and even less for dog fouling. He said that he could not recollect anyone being penalised for discarding gum but would be raising the issue at the forthcoming Development Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to note the contents of the report and approve the acceptance of the £19,990 funding offered from the Chewing Gum Task Force Grant Scheme.

Matters for Information

E174/22 Environment Committee minutes of meeting held on 14 June 2022

Members noted minutes of Environment Committee held on 14 June 2022.

E175/22 Mid Ulster Big Spring Clean 2022

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on the Mid Ulster Big Spring Clean Campaign 2022.

The Chair commended the groups and officers on their assistance in relation to the Big Spring Clean.

E176/22 Eco Schools Green Flag Awards 2022

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on the Eco Schools Green Flag Awards Ceremony for Mid Ulster.

Councillor B McGuigan said that he had attended the event on the day at the Hill of The O'Neill, not as a Councillor but as a member of the local Board of Governors from local schools who had received the Green Flag for the first time. He said that it was a really good event and great to see that there were 23 schools across Mid Ulster who were involved, either receiving Green Flags or official awards. He said that there was another award "Our Ambassador - Green Flag Awards" with 3 of our schools receiving that award as they obviously had been involved over a number of years with the Green Flag with continuous good work. Two of the other schools

within his parish received the Green Flags for the first time, resulting in five from that area. He commended each school on their tremendous effort as he did not realise the amount of work these schools had done and was great to see.

Councillor Kearney said that as a former teacher, the other statistic which was very relevant was that every school within Mid Ulster was involved in the Eco School scheme and goes to show the work involved and stated that every school was a good school.

E177/22 Ulster in Bloom

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on the Ulster in Bloom 2022 competition entries.

Councillor Burton commended Council staff on the work which they put in when the list is looked at with the towns and villages going forward. She said that sadly Castlecaulfield was not going forward due to illness within the team and wished them a speedy recovery. She said that it was important for Council to ensure that help and assistance was provided to help those towns and villages as it was widely known when judges were due to arrive. In the past there was a generosity amongst other towns and villages to share flowers and felt that this should be fed back to the groups on how support was greatly welcome from other villages and towns and whilst it was a competition, new groups have popped up which have been helped and encouraged by some of the other areas which are taking part in the competition.

She referred to Caledon where work had been done by the Housing Executive where they had flagged up a garden as hogweed and said it was important that this was investigated as it would be unfair for them to lose points regarding this.

E178/22 Maintenance of Roundabouts

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on the current arrangements for the maintenance of roundabouts.

Councillor Cuthbertson wanted to voice his disappointment again regarding Tamnamore not being included on the list. He stated that Tamnamore was the gateway into Mid Ulster travelling from the East to the West and was the first junction into Mid Ulster and yet the grass areas around Tamnamore was growing wild and disappointed that it wasn't on the list.

In relation to grass cutting, he became aware of the Housing Executive's contractor no longer cutting steep banks due to insurance and health and safety purposes. He said that they have now purchased a robotic mower and something this Council should investigate funding towards if they haven't done so already.

He referred to an issue which had been raised with him last week regarding historic graveyards, with a person showing visitors around Clogher Cathedral and reported that the grass did not seem to be cut for a long time. He enquired if Council were still maintaining those 6 or 7 graveyards as he was aware of discussions regarding this over the past number of years. He said that it was his understanding that this

service was still in place and would be grateful if this particular one was checked out to see if it had been overlooked.

The AD: Environmental Services advised this graveyard would be investigated and confirmed that Council were still maintaining old historical graveyards.

In relation to query regarding the steep banks, the AD: Environmental Services advised that the member was correct in the fact that most of the work was contracted out but confirmed that this could be potentially looked at in the future.

Councillor Burton said that she was aware of ongoing work in Tourism in relation to the Cathedral and the Fourth Chapel in that area, with a lot of bus trips visiting these places of interest in the summer, especially as it was one of the oldest graveyards within our district. She said that there was an onus on Council to make sure that it was safe for the public to go through.

She referred to roundabouts and was aware of people ending up in the middle of the new Ballygawley roundabout and asked how Council could ensure that some work was being done there or at least flagged to DfI as there was a particular part of the year where it was messy with weeds which was unsightly for the whole gateway into the Clogher Valley. She advised that it was the Clogher Valley Show in the 3rd week of July which attracted a huge crowd, with a lot of people passing through Ballygawley roundabout and felt it was important to have it as presentable as we possibly can to welcome visitors to the area.

Councillor Burton advised that she had been contacted by a resident from Castle Place in Castlecaulfield regarding the grass not being maintained at the back of her property and asked if this could be flagged up to see if this can be investigated as weeds and grass had grown out of control.

The AD: Environmental Services in reply to concern regarding Castle Place advised that this would need to be investigated as it could potentially be a Housing Executive site.

In relation to Clogher, he stated that he would make sure that the village was looking its best as possible to attract people to the show.

Councillor Burton asked how Council could proceed with Ballygawley roundabout as there was a need for a process to be put in place as she was constantly told that it was a dangerous location. She said that when it was originally being constructed that there must have been some plan on how they were going to maintain it and if they hadn't, then they should have had and wondering how it could be maintained and kept looking its best as possibly can.

The SD: Environment advised that Officers would liaise with DfI Roads to see what their plans are and what can possibly done to elevate this problem.

Councillor Wilson referred to Castledawson Roundabout and enquired if the report would be brought back to committee before any agreement was made.

The AD: Environment advised that a report would be brought back on the discussions as there was significant indications that Council would be taking on the maintenance responsibilities at this site.

E179/22 Building Control Workload

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

E180/22 Dual Language Signage Surveys

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

E181/22 Dual Language Signage Requests

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

E182/22 Entertainment Licensing Applications

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

Live broadcast ended at 7.35 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Buchanan
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 E183/22 to E190/22.

Matters for Decision

- E183/22 Contracts regarding Sweeping and Inert Wastes – Temporary Surcharges
- E184/22 Procurement Framework – Fire Extinguishing Installation and Equipment
- E185/22 Parking Provision Request at Union Street, Magherafelt Off Street Car Park

Matters for Information

- E186/22 Environment Confidential Minutes of Meeting held on 14 June 2022
- E187/22 Multi Council MSRF Project Update
- E188/22 Capital Framework – ICT Contracts Update
- E189/22 Capital Framework – IST Contracts Update
- E190/22 Capital Projects – Scoping Contracts Update

Councillor Cuthbertson left the meeting at 7.35 pm.

E191/22 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 8.05 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.