

Minutes of Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 20 April 2023 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by virtual means

Chair	Councillor Corry
Members Present	Councillors Ashton, Bell*, Brown, Buchanan, Burton, Clarke*, Colvin, Cuthbertson, Doris*, Forde, Gildernew*, Glasgow, Graham, Kearney*, Mallaghan, Martin*, N McAleer*, S McAleer*, McFlynn*, B McGuigan*, S McGuigan*, McKinney, McLean, McNamee*, D McPeake*, S McPeake*, Milne*, Molloy, Monteith, Mullen, Oneill*, Quinn, Robinson and Wilson
Officers in Attendance	Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive Ms Canavan, Strategic Director of Organisational Development Strategy and Performance (SD: ODSP) Mr McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E) Mr Moffett, Assistant Director of Organisational Development, Strategy & Performance (AD: ODSP) Mr Tohill, Strategic Director of Corporate Service and Finance (SD: CS&F) Ms Keys, Marketing and Communications Manager Ms McKeown, Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes** Mr McKeown, ICT Mrs Forde, Committee and Member Services Manager

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

The Chair, Councillor Corry 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.

C088/23 Notice of Recording

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

C089/23 Apologies

Councillor Black, Cuddy, Kerr and Totten

C090/23 Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor McLean declared an interest in Mid Ulster Business Awards.

Councillor S McAleer declared an interest in that a family member was a trainee in Council.

C091/23 Chair's Business

The Chair, Councillor Corry advised that she had been delighted to welcome the new Age Friendly Alliance Mid Ulster to the Council Chamber in Dungannon for its first ever meeting. She said Council was supportive of the initiative and our combined efforts of Age Friendly Alliance and Council would make Mid Ulster a place where you can grow older without any barriers to living a healthy and fulfilling life and feel you are a valued member of society.

The Chair, Councillor Corry advised that the final civic awards of the current Council term had taken place in the Burnavon again shining a light on the districts talent stating the achievements had been varied and many interesting conversations were had once the formalities were over. The Chair said that meeting residents and hearing about their individual and team achievements was one of the highlights of her term as chair.

The Chair, Councillor Corry said that the Five-Year Pitches Strategy had been launched and this demonstrates Council's commitment to grassroots sport and long-term ambitions for the district, both of which will ultimately play a role in improving the social, economic, physical and mental health and well-being of Mid Ulster and all who live in it. As well as laying out the Council's plans for pitch maintenance and development over the five-year period, she advised that the Strategy considers how the Council can work in partnership with clubs and other stakeholder organisations, effectively supporting the delivery of community-based opportunities for participation in sport and physical recreation. The Chair said everyone knew how vital the grassroots support for any sport is, so it was important that it played a key part of the strategy and all would look forward to results in the coming years.

Councillor Mallaghan reflecting on the final council meeting of the current term thanked officers, staff and fellow members for their co-operation and hard work throughout the term, especially given the challenges brought about by the pandemic and cost of living crisis. He extended a special thanks to fellow party members Councillors Oneill, Doris, Gildernew and Elattar and colleagues Councillors Ashton and Cuddy and wished them all the best in their retirement.

Councillor Mallaghan reflected on the 25 years since the Good Friday Agreement stating that all would have seen the news coverage when 'the great and the good' such as Bill & Hillary Clinton, Bertie Ahern and Tony Blair had descended on Belfast to mark the anniversary. He said that Mid Ulster Council to date had no plans to mark the event but it was something that should be considered going forward. He also spoke of the brief visit of President Biden to the North and the successful impact his visit had been on the twenty six counties. He said that whatever had gone wrong

in the diplomatic world between London and the USA Biden's visit whilst good could have been so much better. Councillor Mallaghan pondered as to how good it would have been if President Biden had spent more time in the North and perhaps incorporated a visit to Seamus Heaney HomePlace.

Councillor Mallaghan spoke of Joe Kennedy III and his appointment as the United States of America envoy to the North. He said it was likely he would spend much time in Belfast looking at projects but given especially that there was £6billion investment hanging in the balance Mid Ulster should extend an invitation to the district in order that he might see for himself the expertise that exists given that the area is renowned for its engineering and machinery construction and exporting throughout the world.

The Chair, Councillor Corry said much had been achieved in Mid Ulster and it would be good for Joe Kennedy to see this for himself.

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Chair, Councillor Corry and

Resolved That Council extend an invitation to Joe Kennedy United States Special Envoy to Northern Ireland to Mid Ulster District to view the districts attributes to include Engineering facilities.

Councillor McLean sought an update on the inhouse grants process and said there was much concern with regards to funding being expressed by community groups. He said he would not rehearse the issues of the Good Friday Agreement as each has their own opinion but he said some good had come of it but much more needed to be done. He concurred with the proposal for an invitation to be extended to Joe Kennedy stating that any help with inward investment was welcome.

Councillor McLean extended best wishes to those Councillors 'hanging up the towel' and thanked them for their contribution to Council. He said that whilst much was put forward, many heated debates had taken place which highlighted the strength in the Chamber that people could debate and move on. He said his party had relied much on Councillor Ashton especially in rates setting process and stated they may still call on her services in the future!

Councillor Quinn reflected on the anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement and said it would be a shame not to mark the anniversary given how it had changed the prospects of many lives. He too concurred that an invitation be extended to Joe Kennedy to visit the district.

Councillor Quinn paid tribute to Councillors Oneill and Doris whom he served alongside in Torrent area and wished them well in the future. He also paid tribute to Councillors Ashton, Cuddy and others stating they would be missed in the Chamber.

Councillor Glasgow concurred with much said about the Good Friday Agreement and said that all must realise that peace is the only way forward. He said debate was essential and those that try to lead back to dark days should receive a clear message.

Councillor Glasgow extended best wishes to all those Councillors leaving the chamber stating that he had appreciated their friendship and how life would be dull without healthy debate. On behalf of the Ulster Unionist Party Councillor Glasgow thanked staff specifically Eileen, Martina and Leanne. He also thanked Adrian and Jennifer for the smooth nomination process and said he hoped to return in the future.

Councillor Ashton speaking on leaving Council said, "Thank you Madam Chair and thank you to those Councillors for their kind comments tonight and those that have messaged me over the last couple of weeks. I want to firstly thank the people of Dungannon who have trusted me with this seat for 12 years. The support I have received over the years has been second to none and I sincerely thank them for welcoming me into their homes and communities.

Throughout my political career I have held many roles in the Council and indeed the party, from Chair of this Council, chairs of Committees as part of the Group leader forum and even had a go at being a Special adviser which I think I'll just put down as a life experience. I want to thank the DUP for the opportunities that they provided me at such a young age and wish them well in the forthcoming elections.

As all Elected Members know, it is not just us that gave up our time. I want to thank my husband Rob for putting up with me running the roads every night of the week and weekends. He tells me that he is looking forward to the 19th May but something tells me he will be ringing Paul McLean by the end of the month looking to send me back. Over the years I have tried my best to represent the whole community and show leadership in this Council, whether that be from delivering sports facilities in Dungannon for all, hosting a business delegation from Hong Kong for our business community or indeed preparing for the Coronation Celebrations now in a few weeks. I believe this Council can play its part in building better relations in the district if there is the political will to do so. May I also wish all the Councillors that are retiring all the best as they take a well-earned rest. Finally but certainly not least I want to say thank you to the staff of both Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough and Mid Ulster District Council for all your help and support over the years. I have no doubt that although I won't be in elected office I will still be on hounding you all to see what is the next big project we can bring to this area. My message to all of you seeking re-election or indeed those that are sitting at home going forward for the first time, respect each other, show leadership in this Council and continue to drive it forward as one of the top performing Councils in Northern Ireland."

Councillor Doris said she had not prepared a speech but did want to extend thanks to Council staff and officers who had been there for her in so many different ways. To the Sinn Féin team she said there had been much debate and laughter over the years but emphasized that she would still be around. To the Chamber she said that everyone was more alike than different and together the Councillors had delivered for Mid Ulster and marveled at the wealth of community across the district especially prevalent during the pandemic. She thanked her family, the public for believing in her and concluded by stating her journey at council had been a great experience.

Councillor Gildernew concurred with all previous remarks and extended special thanks to Eileen Forde who since the days of Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough

Council had guided and supported members. He thanked his wife Geraldine and family for their support over the twenty two years and said he was sorry to be departing but was glad to be embracing another phase of life. Councillor Gildernew extended special thanks to those across the benches who throughout the years had been ladies and gentlemen stating whilst they did not always agree in politics they had a lot in common. He concluded stating he still would look forward to continuing debate with Walter!

The Chair, Councillor Corry also paid tribute to all who were leaving council said it had been a pleasure working with each one and extended thanks to them for their contribution to Council and urged them to enjoy life going forward. She extended best wishes to everyone going forward for election.

The Chief Executive reiterated best wishes to departing Members and said it had been a great journey and he together with fellow officers valued the support of Members both in the Chamber publicly and privately as they jointly delivered for the district. He said a wealth of experience and knowledge was departing the Chamber but concluded in wishing each departing Member good luck in the next phase of life.

In response to Councillor McLean's comments about funding from in house grants process the Chief Executive advised that authority had been delegated to him to release funding during the pre-election period. He said the officer team were working diligently to complete assessments and it was hoped to issue letters of offer in the near future.

Matters for Decision

C092/23 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in "Open Business" at the Council Meeting held on 23 March 2023

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Council held on Thursday 23 March 2023 (C063/23 – C079/23 and C087/23) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

C093/23 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in "Open Business" at the Environment Committee Meeting held on 3 April 2023

Proposed by Councillor Brown
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Environment Committee held on Monday 3 April (E090/23 – E104/23 and E114/23) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

C094/23 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in "Open Business" at the Planning Committee Meeting held on 4 April 2023

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Councillor McKinney and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 4 April 2023 (P035/23 – P040/23 and P046/23) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

C095/23 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Development Committee Meeting held on 5 April 2023

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

Councillor Burton drew attention to item D069/23 Granville Industrial Estate (Dungannon) and said the money was most welcome. She requested that the penultimate paragraph be amended to read “....She said it was imperative that Council liaise with the Farmers Mart as often the overspill of traffic impacts the housing estate to the left hand side of the industrial area and there was issues of noise and odour. She concluded that the pathways around the development of homes was not up to scratch and opportunities could not be missed to improve the footpaths in the housing estate at Granville and indeed across many villages where footpaths were in bad condition.”

Resolved That the Minutes of the Development Committee held on Wednesday 5 April 2023 (D061/23 – D072/23 and D075/23) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, subject to the foregoin were considered and adopted.

C096/23 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 6 April 2023

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee held on Thursday 6 April 2023 (PR067/23 – PR081/23 and PR088/23) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated were considered and adopted.

C097/23 Conferences, Seminars and Training

The HoSS&E sought approval for the previously circulated report on conferences, seminars and training as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report.

Proposed by Councillor McKinley
Seconded by Councillor Mallaghan and

Resolved That approval be given to submitted requests for conferences, seminars and training as outlined at Appendix 1 to the report.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in Killymoon Golf club

C098/23 Delegated Authority to Chief Executive on Matters – Period of Local Election 2023

The HoSS&E presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the Chief Executive to be given delegated authority to make a series of decisions during the period of the 2023 local election.

The HoSS&E in addition to matters listed in appendix A also sought approval for delegated authority to be granted to the Chief Executive to approve additional items listed at the meeting to include Molesworth Street, Shared Space project and an appropriate budget for the appointment of an Implementation Partner for the Digital Transformation Strategy for a two year period is £200k, to be funded from reserves as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee in July 2022.

Councillor S McPeake spoke of matter he had brought to Policy & Resources Committee regarding flexibilities around inhouse grants that the Chief Executive would have authority to move funds appropriately. He highlighted that European Social Funding had also been discussed and whilst it would be good if Council could assist it would not be possible to fill the gaps the withdrawal of ESF would create.

In response the Chief Executive advised that the movement of monies in relation to Council's internal grants was covered in the appendix to the report.

Proposed by Councillor McLean
Seconded by Councillor McKinney and

Resolved That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority on

- (i) the matters listed in Appendix A of the report commencing from 21 April 2023; and
- (ii) additional items listed at the meeting to include Molesworth Street, Shared Space project and an appropriate budget for the appointment of an Implementation Partner for the Digital Transformation Strategy for a two year period is £200k, to be funded from reserves as recommended by the Policy and Resources Committee in July 2022.

Matters for Information

C099/23 Consultations

Members noted consultations received for attention of Council.

Councillor Molloy drew attention to the Education Authority re Plan of Arrangements for Special Educational Provision (Targeted Consultation), closing date: 26 May 2023. He proposed that Council prepare a response to incorporate comments made at a recent workshop by local autism groups who highlighted lack of provision in schools particularly the lack of identification of the needs of children with autism and the lack of identification of children under pressure.

The Chair, Councillor Corry seconded the proposal. It was noted that delegated authority would be required for the Chief Executive to approve the response.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Chair, Councillor Corry and

Resolved That Delegated Authority be granted to the Chief Executive to approve Council's response to Education Authority re Plan of Arrangements for Special Educational Provision (Targeted Consultation). Closing Date: 26 May 2023

Councillor Mallaghan drew attention to NI Policing Board: Community Policing Survey and said that Council should respond and that the PCSP should send notification to Community Groups to encourage them to respond also. Closing Date: 30 June 2023

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Chair, Councillor Corry and

Resolved That Council respond to NI Policing Board: Community Policing Survey; and that the PCSP send notification to Community Groups to encourage them to respond also. Closing Date: 30 June 2023

C100/23 Correspondence

Members noted update on correspondence received for attention of Council.

Councillor Mallaghan drew attention to correspondence received from Tiny Life and proposed that Council invite them to make a presentation in relation to neonatal maternity provision.

Proposed by Councillor Mallaghan
Seconded by Councillor Robinson and

Resolved That Tiny Life be invited to make a presentation to relevant committee in relation to neonatal leave.

The live broadcast concluded at 7.35 pm.

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.

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Colvin and

Resolved That items C101/23 to C107/23 be taken as confidential business.

Matters for Decision

- (i) Audit Committee minutes of meeting held on 21 March 2023
- (ii) Council Confidential minutes of meeting held on 23 March 2023
- (iii) Environment Confidential minutes of meeting held on 3 April 2023
- (iv) Planning Confidential minutes of meeting held on 4 April 2023
- (v) Development Confidential minutes of meeting held on 5 April 2023
- (vi) Policy & Resources Confidential minutes of meeting held on 6 April 2023
- (vii) Mid Ulster Business Awards 2023

C108/23 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 7.43 pm.

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.