

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 7 November 2024 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown and by Virtual Means

Members Present

Councillor McLean, Chair

Councillor Brown, J Burton*, Cahoon, Corry, Gildernew, McAleer, McConnell, McLernon*, Molloy*, Totten*, Wilson

Officers in Attendance

Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive**
Mrs Canavan, Strategic Director of Organisational Development, Strategy & Performance (SD: ODSP)
Ms Dyson, Head of Human Resources (HoHR)**
Mr Moffett, Assistant Director of Organisational Development, Strategy & Performance (AD: ODSP)
Mr McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services and Engagement (HoSS&E)
Ms McNally, Assistant Director of Corporate Services & Finance (AD: CS&F)
Mr O'Hagan, Head of IT (HoIT)
Mr Scullion, Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS)**
Miss Thompson, Committee and Member Services Officer

Others in Attendance

Deputation - NILGA

Ms Douglas Regional Development Manager, NILGA
Dr Bovaird Governance International

* 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.

In the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair it was agreed that Councillor McLean take the Chair for the meeting.

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

PR190/24 Notice of Recording

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

PR191/24 Apologies

Councillors F Burton, Johnston, S McPeake and Quinn.

PR192/24 Declarations of Interest

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

PR193/24 Chairs Business

None.

PR194/24 Deputation - NILGA

The Chair welcomed Ms Douglas from NILGA and Dr Bovaird from Governance International to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation (Appendix 1).

Ms Douglas thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak on the NILGA Leadership Development Programme for Elected Members. Ms Douglas and Dr Bovaird set out the objectives and content of the Leadership Programme and the participation required from Councillors.

The Chair, Councillor McLean asked Councillor Gildernew to speak of her experience of having attended the Leadership Development Programme.

Councillor Gildernew thanked Ms Douglas and Dr Bovaird for the presentation and stated that she found the Leadership Development Programme to be very practical and doable. The Councillor stated that the Programme made her think about her role as a Councillor and her capabilities and how those fit together and that it also looked at how the work load can be shared amongst colleagues depending on each others capabilities. Councillor Gildernew stated that the Programme was a mix of in person and online sessions so was easy to work around other commitments. The Councillor stated that her one concern prior to attending the Programme was that it took two years training budget but now she has completed it she would say it is worth every penny and would encourage other Members to take up the opportunity when the Programme is offered again.

Councillor Corry stated she was a member of the Elected Member Development Group and that the Programme had been mentioned at a meeting the previous evening and that all Members are encouraged to attend courses to develop their skills. The Councillor stated she had attended the NILGA Planning course which she found very useful.

The Chair, Councillor McLean thanked Ms Douglas and Dr Bovaird for taking the time to make the presentation and he trusted Members would take the opportunity of training in the future.

Ms Douglas and Dr Bovaird withdrew from the meeting at 7.23 pm.

Matters for Decision

PR195/24 Request(s) to Illuminate Council Property

Members considered previously circulated report which sought approval to illuminate and light up the Council's three designated properties to raise awareness for the following:

- Purple Tuesday (Purple Tuesday is a global social movement improving the disabled customer experience): Purple Tuesday Celebration Day: 12 November 2024: Colour Purple
- VOYPIC - Voice of Young People in Care: Care Day: 21 February 2025: Colour: Multi or Yellow

The HoSS&E advised of additional request which had been received since the report was published namely:

- NIPANC – World Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Day: 21 November 2024
Colour: Purple

Proposed by Councillor Cahoon
Seconded by Councillor Gildernew and

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

- Purple Tuesday (Purple Tuesday is a global social movement improving the disabled customer experience): Purple Tuesday Celebration Day: 12 November 2024: Colour Purple
- VOYPIC - Voice of Young People in Care: Care Day: 21 February 2025: Colour: Multi or Yellow
- NIPANC – World Pancreatic Cancer Day: 21 November 2024 Colour: Purple

PR196/24 Member Services

No issues.

Matters for Information

PR197/24 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 3 October 2024

Members noted Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee held on 3 October 2024.

PR198/24 Corporate Performance Improvement Plan Update (Q1 to Q2 – 2024/25)

Members noted previously circulated report which provided review of Council's performance against its seven statutory performance indicators/standards and two

Council benchmark performance measures (Sickness Absence and Prompt Payments - benchmarked across all eleven NI Councils) for the first six months of 2024/25. The report also provides a performance progress summary against the Council's four corporate improvement objectives and their associated project plans (known as CIP plans). The indicators/standards, benchmark measures, and the four improvement projects are contained within Council's Performance Improvement Plan (PIP plan) for 2024/25.

PR199/24 Apprenticeship Arrangements 2024: Update

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on activity undertaken on the recruitment of apprentices to a number of services and directorates across Council and support for same.

Councillor Corry stated it is good to be able to encourage people to complete apprenticeships through Council and she hoped to see the apprenticeship programme continue and grow in future years.

The Chair, Councillor McLean agreed that it is good to see the Council leading by example in offering apprenticeships.

Live broadcast ended at 7.26 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McConnell
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 PR200/24 to PR209/24.

Matters for Decision

PR200/24 Land and Property Matters
PR201/24 Award of Contract: Customer Platform for Council
PR202/24 Staffing Matters for Decision

Matters for Information

PR203/24 Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee held on 3 October 2024
PR204/24 Treasury Management Update – September 2024
PR205/24 Financial report for 6 months ended 30 September 2024
PR206/24 Contracts and DAC Registers
PR207/24 Rates Estimates Update – 2025/26
PR208/24 Managing Employee Attendance
PR209/24 Staff Matters for Information

P210/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 7.47 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, [Cookstown/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.

NILGA Leadership Development Programme for Elected Members



Fiona Douglas
NILGA / Regional
Development Manager



Tony Bovaird
Governance International

NILGA – who we are and what we do



- Representative body for Local Government
- Led by Councils, supported by Parties
- National network UK (+ EU, Commonwealth & Ireland)
- Effective Regional Representation
- Effective Regional Co-ordination
- Effective Regional Learning & Development
- Effective Communication
- Benefitting Every Member of Every Council



Objectives of the Leadership Programme



- To develop and improve councillors' strategic knowledge, leadership skills and decision-making capabilities.
- To enhance councillors' corporate role and 'personal brand'.
- To equip councillors to act as effective community champions and change agents on behalf of your local areas.

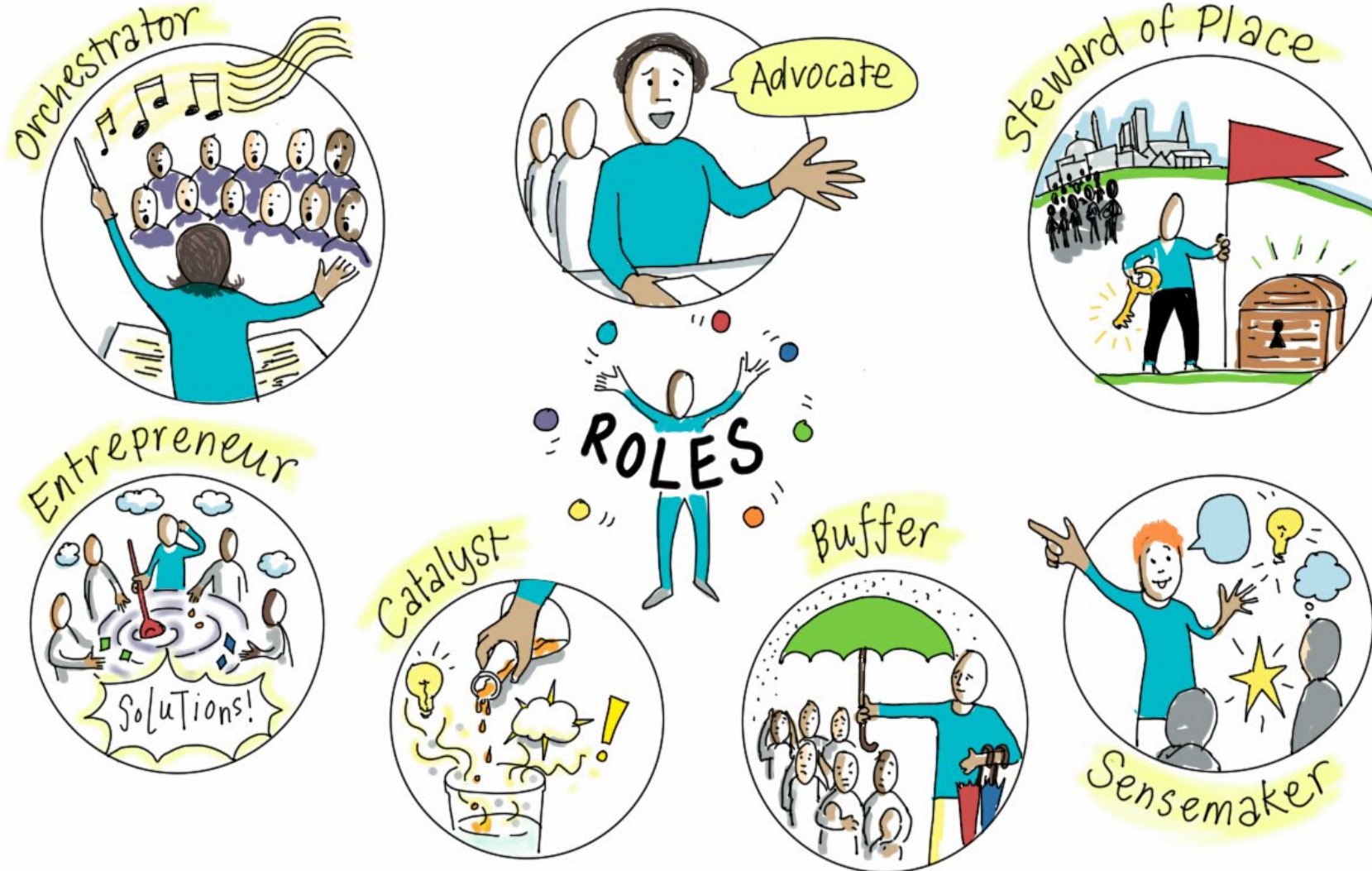
Content of the modules



1. Introduction and Roles of the Councillor
2. Leadership of Your Local Area - Understanding your Place and its People
3. Leadership of Your Local Community - Understanding Your People and Assets
4. Leadership with Partners: We're All in This Together?
5. Leadership of Place – The Council's Strategic Leadership Role
6. Leading the Improvement of Outcomes
7. Leading Improvement of Efficiency and Service Delivery
8. Developing Your Future Leadership Role



The 21st Century Councillor



What does it involve?



- TIME inputs, of course
 - 8 x 3 hour modules over 8 - 9 months
 - ... also some reading each week (maybe an hour per week)
- EFFORT
 - Two practical assignments – a presentation and learning journal
- IMAGINATION
 - reflection, chats with colleagues, trying out ideas in your daily work as a councillor (maybe another hour per week)

The Political Skills Framework



During the eight modules, we will be exploring the following knowledge and skill sets – and you will have a chance to identify your own strengths and ‘learning opportunities’ in relation to each of these:

- Local leadership (All Modules)
- Political understanding (Modules 1 , 2 and 5)
- Partnership working (Modules 3 ,4 and 5)
- Effective communication for influence (Module 3 and 7)
- Scrutiny and challenge (Module 2 and 6)
- Regulating and monitoring (Module 6)
- Effective use of digital technologies and social media (Module 7)
- Personal resilience (Module 8)

Local Leadership



Positive

- ✓ Engages with their community, canvasses opinion and looks for new ways of representing people
- ✓ Keeps up-to-date with local concerns by drawing information from diverse sources, including hard to reach groups
- ✓ Encourages trust & respect - approachable, empathising & finding new ways to engage with others
- ✓ Creates partnerships with different sections and groups in the community and ensures their involvement in decision-making
- ✓ Mediates fairly and constructively between people and groups with conflicting needs
- ✓ Works with others to develop and champion a shared local vision

Negative

- ✗ Doesn't engage with their community, waits to be approached and is difficult to contact
- ✗ Maintains a low public profile, not easily recognised in their community
- ✗ Treats groups or people unequally, fails to build integration or cohesion
- ✗ Has a poor understanding of local concerns and how these might be addressed
- ✗ Concentrates on council processes rather than people
- ✗ Is unrealistic about what they can achieve and fails to deliver on promises

(from **Political Skills Framework: A Councillor's Toolkit** (LGA, 2013))

Local Leadership – self-reflection



How do I see myself as a local elected member?

What do you think are your particular strengths?

(e.g. what do you bring to the role of councillor that you think is particularly good?)

Prompts...

How is my role changing and what is driving that change
What sections of my community have I engaged with and canvassed opinion?
How have I looked for new ways of representing people?
How up-to-date am I on local concerns? Would others see me as approachable? Who have I built partnerships with? When did I last act as a mediator?
How do I champion others' needs?

Can you illustrate these strengths by writing down examples of things you think you have done well over the past year?

What aspects of your local leadership could be strengthened? **Is there someone you know who already has these strengths?**

The learning approach ...



- This programme has been designed to help councillors to develop their confidence,
 - ... using the module sessions, the course learning materials, personal reflection and discussions with colleagues,
 - ... to enhance their personal leadership for the benefit of local people
 - ... and local government more generally.
- We believe that councillors' learning on this Programme is particularly effective because:
 - It's interactive
 - It's councillor-led – we keep feeding in participants' suggestions ('co-design')
 - It makes much use of councillors' own experience– while also giving relatively new councillors support in developing their skills and knowledge
 - We keep in touch with participants throughout, e.g. through 'catch-up' sessions
 - The assignments give councillors a chance to hone their presentation skills – PPT, bringing in their learning from the programme, using visuals as well as text
 - and it's FUN!

Accreditation



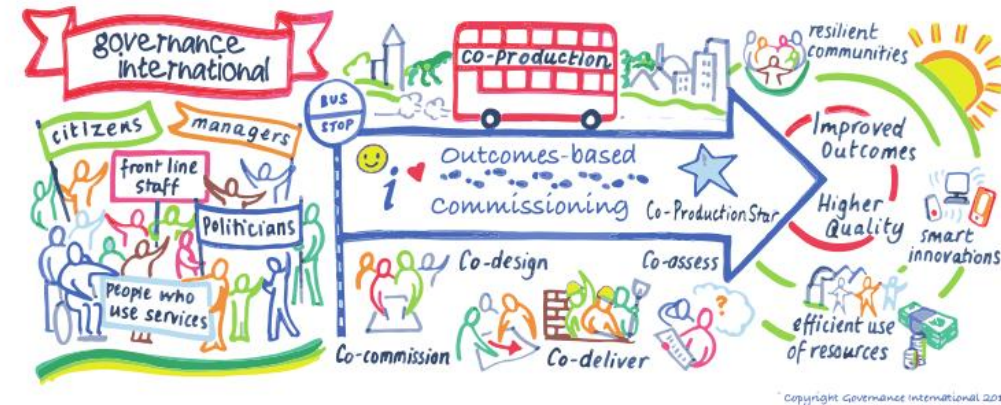
- Accreditation is optional but we believe that it will be of value in the future career of each councillor
- Accreditation comes from the CPD Standards Office, a high reputation accreditation organisation in the field of Continuous Professional Development
- The accreditation consists of either 24 hours or 36 hours of CPD credit, reflecting whether or not the participant has undertaken the assignments in the programme.



And (the other) who are we ...?



- A non-profit organisation working with public organisations and communities internationally to improve citizen outcomes since 2002
- Training, facilitation and tools based on the Co-Production Star toolkit in the UK since 2012
- Provides 70+ international co-production case studies, now featured on the OECD Observatory Public Sector Innovation website.
- Provider of evidence-based research and projects on local governance (UK Cabinet Office, Joint Improvement Team Scotland, Welsh Government, many local councils and nonprofit organisations in UK and internationally).
- Co-ordinator of the Midlands Co-Production Network with more than 150 members



Contacts



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