Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 7 July 2022 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by Virtual Means

Members Present	Councillor Buchanan, Deputy Chair Councillors Ashton, Cuddy, Gildernew*, Kearney*, S McGuigan, S McPeake*, Molloy* and Quinn
Officers in Attendance	Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive** Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities & Place** Mrs Canavan, Strategic Director of Organisation Development, Strategy and Performance (SD: ODSP) Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health & Infrastructure** Mr Tohill, Strategic Director of Corporate Service and Finance (SD: CSF) Ms Mezza, Head of Marketing and Communications** Ms McNally, Assistant Director of Finance, Legal, Governance and Transformation** (AD: CSF) Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT Mrs Forde, Member Support Manager Ms McKinless, Planning

* Denotes members present in remote attendance
** Denotes Officers present by remote means
*** Denotes others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.01pm

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

PR132/22 Notice of Recording

This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

PR133/22 Apologies

Councillor Doris, Forde, S McAleer, McKinney and McLean

PR134/22 Declarations of Interest

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

PR135/22 Chairs Business

None

Matters for Decision

PR136/22 Request(s) to Illuminate Council Property – July 2022

The Strategic Director: ODSP presented previously circulated report which considered requests to illuminate/light up the Council's three designated properties to raise awareness of and mark;

- Sunday 4 September 2022, Relationships Week: Blue and Orange

Councillor Cuddy requested more background to requests going forward.

The Chair, Councillor Buchanan said the information was contained on the website.

The SD: ODSP advised she would advise the AD: ODSP of the request.

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Cuddy and

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

- Sunday 4 September 2022, Relationships Week: Blue and Orange

PR137/22 Member Services

None

Matters for Information

PR138/22 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 9 July 2022

Members noted Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 9 July 2022.

PR139/22 Annual Council Equality Progress Return for Equality Commission for NI

Members noted the content of the report.

Councillor Cuddy reflected on the report and said there had been much debate regarding minority communities but his party grouping at Council did not believe they were being heard, yet the Good Friday Agreement refers to everyone being valued.

He stated in the legacy council of Dungannon parties had progressed things together. He drew attention to the fact that the report was seeking more input by minority groupings and as a party the UUP in Council would like to establish a better way forward. Councillor Cuddy said his party referred to the working group as the 'bad relations working group' as decisions were voted on and being a minority they lost, so therefore deemed the group a waste of time. He said it should not be about winners and losers but all should be winners and all opinions taken on board.

Councillor Gildernew referred to Councillor Cuddy's reference about the legacy Dungannon council and concurred there was a different way of working as all had been neighbours but the new Council was a much larger organisation. He posed the question, 'What did the UUP want Council to do more than what it was already doing?'

Councillor Cuddy said that legacy Dungannon had also been nationalist controlled during his time and he had no difficulty working with his colleagues on it as when there was differences Members met in a break out room and found ways to resolve them. He highlighted that if you were in a party of 17 your vote would win. He said there was much common ground but the current ways of working are hurtful and unlike Dungannon days all did not receive a 'fair share of the cake.' He said that sometimes the views of the unionist community are ignored and he would like to find a better way to deal with issues. He said the Good Relations working group hasn't delivered for unionists and whilst he did not blame Councillor Gildernew or Sinn Féin as he respected the majority but it should not be the winner takes all. He concluded his desire was that all should play a part moving forward.

Councillor S McPeake stated that the description of the working group as the 'Bad Relations Working Group' says it all as the Good Relations Working Group at Council is there to help minorities. He referred to the Irish Language policy and stated that the Council had looked at best practice in Europe and yet the Councillor often opens debate with he has no problem with it but the statement is then followed with negativity. Councillor S McPeake concluded that if Councillor Cuddy wanted to have the discussions he should be in the forum.

Councillor Cuddy said in the past the signage was large English, medium sized Irish and small Ulster Scots which had caused no issue. He said upwards of 90% of the population used English as their first language yet signage had to be Irish first, English second and said it was always 'nationalist way or no way' and reiterating that the unionist opinion was not taken on board. He expressed a desire for the future that the four main parties sit down and look at all options. He concluded that the people he represented felt like Council was not listening to their opinions.

Councillor Molloy said the debate was verging on a party-political discussion. He added that Development Committee, of which he was a member, regularly reflected on equitable spend across the Mid Ulster community be it on culture or sporting activities. He concluded Council was doing good work and said applications had been received from all cultures citing examples of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the Decade of Centenaries all of which celebrate culture.

Councillor Ashton said that she wouldn't dwell on the debate as a lot had already been covered but emphasised that her community felt there wasn't equality, as for example the recent Jubilee event at Ranfurly House took a lot of effort for it to be organised. She stated there had been no additional funding for the Jubilee celebrations which was a major occasion, so communities had to make a choice either an event for the Jubilee or a regular community event both of which they had to run themselves. Councillor Ashton concluded that it had to be acknowledged that nationalist community celebrations appeared to be passed easily which should be reviewed.

Councillor Gildernew said that we were beyond two communities, it was one community in a small corner of Ireland and we all needed to work together. He urged unionists to return to the Good Relations Working Group.

PR140/22 Organisation Development Strategy & Performance – Service Plan 2022/23

Members noted content of the report

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

The live stream ended at 7.23 pm

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan 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 Member consider items PR141/22 to PR152/22.

Matters for Decision

PR141/22	Council Organisational Restructuring
PR142/22	Digital Transformation Strategy
PR143/22	Staffing Matters for Decision
PR144/22	Leisure Services VAT Update
PR145/22	Council Insurances
PR146/22	Contract Price Increases
PR147/22	Staffing Matters - Apprenticeship Opportunity
PR148/22	Property Update Report
PR149/22	Local Government Northern Ireland Mapping Agreement (NIMA)

Matters for Information

PR150/22	Policy and Resources Committee Confidential minutes of meeting held on 9 June 2022

PR151/22 Staffing Matters for Information
PR152/22 Planning System Update June 2022 & Demonstration

PR153/22 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.55 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.