

Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Monday 4 December 2023 in Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown and by virtual means

Members Present

Councillor Cuthbertson, Chair

Councillors J Burton, J Buchanan, Cahoon, Kelly, Groogan, Mallaghan, McAleer, McElvogue, McGuigan, McNamee, Milne*, Quinn, Robinson, Varsani

Officers in Attendance

Mrs Campbell, Strategic Director of Environment (SD: Env)

Mr Lowry, Head of Technical Services (HoTS)**

Mr McAdoo, Assistant Director of Environmental Services (AD: ES)

Mr Scullion, Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS)

Mr Kennedy, ICT

Mrs Grogan, Committee and Member 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 Cuthbertson welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor Cuthbertson 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.

E266/23 Notice of Recording

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

E267/23 Apologies

Councillor Martin.

E268/23 Declarations of Interest

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

E269/23 Chair's Business

None.

Matters for Decision

E270/23 Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) Support for 2024/25

The Assistant Director of Environment Services (AD: ES) presented previously circulated report which sought agreement in relation to continue providing funding support to Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approval be granted to continue providing financial support to Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) for delivery of the Eco Schools Programme and Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme in 2024/25 at a total cost of £23,975.

E271/23 Bus Shelters Update

The Head of Technical Services (HoTS) presented previously circulated report which provided update on current bus shelter status.

Councillor Quinn referred to the bus shelter at Lineside, Coalisland and enquired if there would be any safety checks carried out due to its size and how far back it can go as it was on a dangerous part of the road.

Councillor McElvogue referred to bus shelter at Altaglushan/Reclain Road, Galbally and advised that he had been speaking to someone today and it was hoped that a suitable site would be located tomorrow.

The HoTs in response to query in relation to Lineside, Coalisland advised that discussions had taken place with DfI Roads in relation to the safety aspect of the location. He also said that a further meeting was to take place on 13 December with DfI Officials and this issue would be raised again, with an update being reported back to committee.

The HoTS in response to implementation of bus shelter at Altaglushan/Reclain Road, Galbally advised that a site meeting was due to take place tomorrow to find a suitable location.

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Groogan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council –

- That the following applications move from stage 5 of the process -
 - Altaglushan/Reclain Road, Galbally – 8Nr passengers
 - Pomeroy Road, Donaghmore – 27Nr passengers

- Knockmany Crossroads, Augher – 12Nr passengers
- Newtownkelly, Coalisland – 15 passengers
- That the following applications are approved for installation -
 - Moydamlaght / Moneyneany Road, Draperstown
 - Lineside, Coalisland
- That the following applications be refused for installation:
 - Platters Hill/Church View, Coalisland
 - Mourne Avenue, Coalisland
 - Mourne Crescent, Coalisland

D272/23 Consultation on Energy Efficiency Requirements and Related Areas of the Building Regulations

The Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS) presented previously circulated report which sought retrospective approval on the Consultation forwarded by the Department of Finance, inviting a response on the proposed amendments to the energy efficiency requirements and related areas of the Building Regulations.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Robinson and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to grant retrospective approval for submission of same to meet the consultation response deadline.

Matters for Information

E273/23 Environment Committee minutes of meeting held on 14 November 2023

Members noted minutes of Environment Committee held on 14 November 2023.

E274/23 Environmental Services – Christmas Working Arrangements

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on working arrangements in respect of refuse/recycling collection and operation of Recycling Centres during the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

E275/23 Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management (LACMW) Report for April to June 2023

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on Council's performance in relation to recycling and landfill diversion targets as outlined in the NIEA Northern Ireland Local Authority Waste Management Statistics Report for Quarter 1 of 2023/24 from April to June 2023.

E276/23 Building Control Workload

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

E277/23 Dual Language Signage Surveys

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

E278/23 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.

Councillor Robinson referred to meeting a few months ago where applications for Dual Language signage was requested in Clogher Valley area. The member sought clarification on whether these requests were made by the resident or by a local Councillor as he was made aware of no requests being made by residents who live on the roads alluded to.

The Chair, Councillor Cuthbertson said that he had seen the same situation arise a number of times and had raised concern highlighting the drain on budget and staff resources when money was so tight.

The Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS) advised that Dual Language Requests and Surveys all fit in with the Policy in which Council had adopted. Requests come into Building Control team, and they verify the addresses against the local Electoral Register to confirm that those requesting the signage reside on that road or street.

Councillor Robinson felt that this was a waste on Council resources and efforts. The member said that he found it strange as the three requests were very similar and asked how identification can really be confirmed as it could be a matter of someone anonymously requesting these and not the residents.

Councillor Varsani said that there was a policy in place, and it was quite clear that requests had to be sent in by residents and verified against the Electoral Register. The member found it strange that a local Councillor would submit a request for signage as this has to be submitted and signed by the resident of that road or street. The member advised that this was Council Policy, unless there is a request brought forward to change the current policy. She said that at every opportunity the Irish Language was being raised which was now getting repetitive, we have a policy in place and if Councillors wished to work together to amend it, then this could be considered. The member agreed that everyone was very concerned about money and resources at present but if money was to be saved then this can be done by not attacking the signs and having them replaced.

The Chair said that he would agree with Councillor Varsani's suggestion about reviewing the current Dual Language Policy. The member referred to the Planning Directorate and advised that if a complaint against a neighbouring property is

forwarded to enforcement to investigate, the Enforcement team then liaises with the complainant either by telephone or by writing to confirm identity. The Chair said that verification by electoral register only confirms the residency of the address and people who live there.

The Chair proposed that the current Dual Language Policy is reviewed to give new members an opportunity to put forward their input.

Councillor McNamee proposed that Council keep the current Dual Language Policy as it works well. The member stated requests are made by residents from within their own area looking to have their road or townland recognised in dual language. The member said that it seemed to be that there was an assumption being made that something malicious or fraudulent was being done to have the signage implemented, but in his opinion, the current Policy was working well and was good to see the outcome.

Councillor Robinson concurred with Councillor Varsani's comment about dual language continuously being raised, especially within his area where requests have been made when residents have voted against it. He sought clarification on whether someone is using local residents' identities to get signage passed as he found it very strange.

The Strategic Director of Environment (SD: Env) reminded members that the Minority Language Working Group make the procedures around Policy and any changes would be within their remit to take forward proposals. The SD: Env advised that Officers carry out the verifications as per agreed Dual Language Policy.

The Chair said that it was his recollection that this was a separate matter and was not brought through Minority Languages Working Group but through the Environment Committee.

Councillor Quinn said that he was aware of ongoing discussions regarding Dual Language signage requests but hearing that Councillors were being accused of fraud, which was a serious allegation, felt there was a need to be careful as he was very uncomfortable with the language being used.

The Chair advised that he wasn't accusing anyone of fraud as such, but this was raised when the request came through for signage on identical templates for the three particular roads. It was his recollection that the three roads were Annaloughan, Lisnamaghery and possibly Aughadarragh which he could not be sure about but was confident that it was within the Clogher Valley area.

It was -

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor Robinson

That a review of current Dual Language Policy be carried out to allow new members an opportunity to put forward their views.

It was -

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor McGuigan

To retain the Dual Language Policy as it currently stands.

The Chair put the two proposals to the vote:

Councillor Cuthbertson's proposal to Review the current Dual Language Policy was put to the vote:

For	5
Against	10

The Chair advised that his proposal had fallen and Councillor McNamee's proposal was carried to retain the current Dual Language Policy.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to retain the Dual Language Policy as it currently stands.

E279/23 Entertainment Licensing Applications

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

Live broadcast ended at 7.28 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Kelly 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 E280/23 to E284/23.

Matters for Decision

E280/23 Workwear and PPE Public Framework

Matters for Information

E281/23 Environment Committee Confidential Minutes of meeting held on 14 November 2023

E282/23 Capital Framework – ICT Contracts Update

E283/23 Capital Framework – IST Contracts Update

E284/23 Capital Projects – Scoping Contracts Update

E285/23 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 7.42 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