



25 March 2021

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in
The Chamber, Dungannon and by virtual means Council Offices, Circular Road,
Dungannon, BT71 6DT on Thursday, 25 March 2021 at 19:00 to transact the
business noted below.

A link to join the meeting through the Council's remote meeting platform will follow.

Yours faithfully

Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive

AGENDA

OPEN BUSINESS

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Chair's Business

Matters for Decision

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 4. Council minutes of meeting held on 25 February 2021 | 5 - 32 |
| 5. Special Council minutes of meeting held on 1 March 2021 | 33 - 48 |
| 6. Planning Committee minutes of meeting held on 2 March 2021 | 49 - 68 |
| 7. Policy and Resources Committee minutes of meeting held on 4 March 2021 | 69 - 76 |
| 8. Environment Committee minutes of meeting held on 9 March 2021 | 77 - 90 |
| 9. Development Committee minutes of meeting held on 11 March 2021 | 91 - 112 |
| 10. Civic Recognition Nominations | 113 - 116 |
| 11. Response (draft) Programme for Government Outcomes Framework 2021 | 117 - 182 |

Matters for Information

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| 12 Correspondence | 183 - 192 |
|-------------------|-----------|

Notice of Motions

- 14 Councillor Corry to move -
That this council:
Expresses its concern with the continued attempts by the British Government to undermine the Good Friday Agreement;
Notes that responsibility and powers concerning housing, communities, and local government are devolved to the north of Ireland;
Views the proposed opening of a Whitehall Department office for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in Belfast as a power grab and a further attempt to undermine devolution;
Believes firmly that local democratically elected representatives in the north of Ireland are best placed to make the decisions on behalf of people here who elect them;
Urges greater progress for the further transfer of powers from Britain and not these backward steps by the British Government;
Commits to writing to the Joint First Ministers explaining our concerns with the harmful approach of the British Government and its impact on our Peace Process.

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.

Matters for Decision

15. Council confidential minutes of meeting held on 25 February 2021
16. Planning Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 2 March 2021
17. Policy and Resources Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 4 March 2021
18. Environment Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 9 March 2021
19. Development Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 11 March 2021
20. Audit Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 16 March 2021
21. Cookstown Town Centre
22. Council Insurances 2021/22
23. Document for Sealing: Ballyronan Refurbishment & Tourism Contract - Contractor – E Quinn Civils Ltd
24. Document for Sealing: Peace IV Shared Space Villages Contract - Contractor - M P Coleman Ltd

Matters for Information

Minutes of Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 25 February 2021 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by virtual means

Chair Councillor Mallaghan

Members Present Councillors Ashton*, Bell*, Black*, Brown*, Buchanan*, Burton, Clarke*, Colvin*, Corry*, Cuddy*, Cuthbertson*, Doris*, Elattar*, Forde*, Gildernew*, Glasgow*, Graham, Hughes*, Kearney*, Kerr*, N McAleer*, S McAleer*, McFlynn*, B McGuigan*, S McGuigan*, McKinney*, McLean*, McNamee*, D McPeake*, S McPeake*, Milne*, Molloy*, Monteith*, Mullen*, Oneill*, Quinn, Robinson*, Totten* and Wilson*

Officers in Attendance Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Ms Canavan**, Director of Organisational Development
Ms Campbell**, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
Mr Cassells**, Director of Environment & Property
Mr Kelso**, Director of Public Health & Infrastructure
Ms Mezza**, Head of Marketing and Communications
Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Mr Tohill**, Director of Finance
Miss Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7 pm

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan 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.

C023/21 Apologies

None.

C024/21 Declarations of Interest

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

C025/21 Chair's Business

Councillor Cuddy stated he wanted to take this opportunity to thank the late Bob Mulligan for his work as an Ulster Unionist Councillor representing the Clogher Valley

for 26 years and stated that the last 5 years of Bob's councillor career was in Mid Ulster District Council.

Councillor Cuddy stated that Bob was a great community activist, that he was an elder of Glenhoy Presbyterian Church, a member of the Loyal Orders, a member of Glengeeragh Pipe Band and was a steady voice for the Clogher Valley. Councillor Cuddy stated that Bob worked for the Department of Agriculture and the Livestock and Meat Commission for many years, that he was a gentleman and true friend and expressed sincere sympathy from the Ulster Unionist group on Mid Ulster District Council to his wife Eleanor, his sons and daughters, grandchildren and wider family circle.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated he had received a letter today from David Mulligan which expressed thanks to all from within Council who have taken the time over the past two weeks to offer support on the recent passing of Bob. The letter stated that Bob was a man who, in addition to supporting his family, gave commitment and dedication to everything he undertook in representing the Clogher Valley community for 26 years and the generous words that have been in the press have been a support during this time. The letter also thanked those that kept in contact during recent months regarding Bob's health and that those thoughts and prayers were greatly appreciated at that time.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated he wanted to pass on his own condolences to the Mulligan family and that Bob's contribution at meetings was always very worthwhile. He stated he had good memories of Bob and particularly his fondness of the Clogher Valley area and that he had spent some time at the Round Lake in Fivemiletown today to see the improvement works going on there and that he felt Bob would also have been proud to see these works coming together.

Councillor Burton stated that on behalf of the DUP she would also like to express deepest sympathies to the Mulligan family. Councillor Burton stated that when she was first elected in 2005 Bob made her feel very welcome and always treated her with the greatest respect, that he was a faithful and dedicated servant for the Clogher Valley area and that you could always depend on Bob for his support when pushing forward projects for the Clogher Valley. Councillor Burton stated that Bob had no difficulty in speaking his mind and could challenge officers in a respectful way and that his passing was a sad time for everyone.

Councillor Quinn, on behalf of the SDLP grouping, extended sympathies to Bob's wife Eleanor and his family. Councillor Quinn stated he did not know Bob as well as others knew him but that he had served with him on Committees and was struck by how dedicated he was to the Clogher Valley and its people. The Councillor stated that Bob had been elected for 26 years which was testament to what the Clogher Valley people thought of him and that he will be a big miss to the community and will be fondly remembered. The Councillor also extended sympathies to the Ulster Unionist Party as he stated it was not easy losing a party member.

Councillor McLean stated that Councillor Burton had spoken on behalf of the DUP and that he concurred with all the sentiments made tonight.

Councillor S McAleer also extended sympathies to Bob's wife and children and that when she was first elected in 2014 Bob was very supportive. Councillor McAleer stated that her predecessor Anthony McGonnell and Bob were friendly and that Anthony also had great words on Bob. Councillor McAleer stated he was a great support on cross community issues in Clogher Valley, that he was a gentleman and it was very sad that he had passed away.

Councillor Robinson stated he and Bob had the privilege of serving their neighbours together on Council. Councillor Robinson stated that in all his dealings with Bob he was always a gentleman, who believed in hard work and dedication to any role he took on. The Councillor stated that Bob was a good neighbour and friend who will be missed and for those who knew him he leaves behind a legacy not just of memories but also the fruits of his labours. Councillor Robinson extended his sympathies to Bob's wife Eleanor and his children Gail, David, Andrew and Lesley and the wider Mulligan family and that they could be assured of his prayers in the days ahead.

Councillor S McGuigan stated that on behalf of himself personally and the Sein Féin Party he wanted to extend deepest condolences to the Mulligan family. Councillor McGuigan stated he knew Bob prior to being a Councillor himself from his attendance at community events and that Bob was always plain spoken which is something he appreciated.

Councillor Monteith stated he concurred with the comments already made, that Bob was a dedicated worker on behalf of his community and that he had had plenty of good debates with him. Councillor Monteith stated that whilst Bob was a straight talker he was always respectful of other peoples opinion and extended his sympathies to the Mulligan family and everyone who knew him.

Councillor Graham stated he considered Bob a family friend, that he was someone to look up to and an example to everybody. Councillor Graham extended her sympathies to Eleanor and the rest of the Mulligan family and stated that with Bob being her predecessor on Council she felt she will never be able to fill his shoes.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that the COVID-19 death toll in Ireland had now surpassed 6,200 people and he wanted to extend condolences on behalf of the Council to every family who has suffered from this terrible health emergency. He stated he was hopeful that with the virus numbers coming down together with the roll out of the vaccine that there is some light at the end of the tunnel but that he would urge citizens across Mid Ulster and Ireland to do everything they can to adhere to health messages and help stop the spread of the virus. He also stated it was concerning to see the amount of misinformation in the public arena. The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that it was now one year since Covid had reached our shores and that the 19 March 2021 would mark one year since the first person had died from the virus here and that he would propose that Council buildings be lit up on

19 March 2021 in memory of those who have lost their lives to Covid in the last 12 months.

Councillor Quinn seconded the Chair's proposal.

Resolved That Council buildings be lit up on 19 March 2021 in memory of those who have lost their lives to Covid.

Councillor N McAleer stated he wanted to raise the issue of lack of financial support for the fishing industry on Lough Neagh despite numerous commitments from DAERA to open such a scheme. Councillor McAleer stated that schemes have been rolled out in other areas such as sea fishers and it was right that this happens but that the fishing industry on Lough Neagh seems to have been left behind. Councillor McAleer stated that people had been in contact with him on this issue and they wanted DAERA to put support in place urgently so they can plan ahead. Councillor N McAleer proposed that Council write to the DAERA Minister on this issue and to seek clarification on when a scheme will open.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan seconded Councillor N McAleer's proposal.

Resolved To write to the DAERA Minister on the issue of lack of financial support for the fishing industry on Lough Neagh and seeking clarification on when a scheme will open.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to the arson attack on the derelict building on the Old Eglish Road, Dungannon last weekend and stated that regrettably this is not the first building in the Dungannon area to be set alight and that there had been a number of other fires in derelict buildings last autumn. The Councillor stated that something needed to be done before someone is killed or seriously injured and asked if there is a role for Council in securing these type of properties where an owner cannot be identified and seek recoup of costs at a later stage.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated he was also aware of an arson attack on Georges Street in Dungannon in recent days as well.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure advised that he was aware of the issues regarding the derelict building on Old Eglish Road and that officers in Environmental Health were investigating the matter to follow up with the property owners. The Director advised there had been other issues brought to the attention of officers regarding derelict structures and there is a piece of work to be done in relation to these.

Councillor O'Neill spoke in relation to the loss of broadband connection in the Brackaville, Coalisland, Clonoe and Derrylaughan areas last week. The Councillor stated that this is happening too often in these areas and that he was inundated by calls from parents whose children had been cut off from online classes and that homework had also been affected. Councillor O'Neill stated that when BT were contacted a number of different reasons were given as to what the problem was and

he proposed that Council write to BT and other network providers to ask what happened in that area last week. The Councillor also requested that this matter be brought to the attention of Council's Broadband Working Group.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that good internet access has never been more important.

Councillor Doris seconded Councillor O'Neill's proposal.

Resolved To write to BT and other network providers in relation to loss of broadband connection in Brackaville, Coalisland, Clonoe and Derrylaughan areas last week. This matter to also be raised at next meeting of Broadband Working Group.

Councillor Ashton stated that as Chair of the Broadband Working Group she would raise the issue with officers for their attention.

Councillor Doris referred to the announcement of regional hubs to be introduced to town centres and it was disappointing that there was nowhere within Mid Ulster included on the list. The Councillor stated it was a good opportunity for the revival of town centres across Mid Ulster and asked if there was a reason why nowhere in Mid Ulster had been included.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that when he saw the list he had asked the Chief Executive if any sites had been identified within Mid Ulster and requested that a site search be undertaken to see what property was available to prepare a paper for the Department of Finance.

The Chief Executive stated that given the strategic geographical position of Mid Ulster he believed this Council area would have been an ideal location. The Chief Executive advised that officers will carry out an analysis of public space across Mid Ulster and the strongest case possible will be submitted for consideration.

Councillor Doris stated she was baffled as to why the Department for Infrastructure Minister failed to submit an application for funding for roads issues. The Councillor stated that she is contacted on a daily basis in relation to roads issues and she was sure all Councillors have to deal with similar issues. Councillor Doris proposed that Council write to the Department for Infrastructure Minister to ask why no application for funding had been made when it is really needed.

Councillor McNamee seconded Councillor Doris's proposal and stated that over the last 6 months he has never seen as many photographs etc of cars being damaged by potholes across Mid Ulster. The Councillor stated he had been contacted by a resident yesterday in relation to a pothole and that on looking at it himself he stated it was more like a sink hole. The Councillor stated that when photographs of this were forwarded to DfI Roads they came out right away to fill the hole temporarily. Councillor McNamee stated that DfI Roads advised they would conduct further investigations and had asked if there were utilities in the area and he referred to

utilities companies going into areas, digging them up and then leaving them like patchwork quilts and that this needs to be addressed.

Councillor Quinn agreed that the roads in the area are in a state but that there had been some good news recently in relation £85,000 resurfacing for Ardboe and £200,000 resurfacing for Dungannon to Coalisland Road. The Councillor stated that the Minister for Infrastructure did ask for £11million from the Finance Minister for resurfacing projects in June 2020 and was not allocated anything and that the Minister has continued to stress the need to invest in road maintenance and for additional funding to be made available in 2021/22. Councillor Quinn stated that the outcome of the budget process will then determine the level of funding available to the Department from which will be determined the roads maintenance budget. Councillor Quinn also referred to Covid and the amount of money the Minister has wanted to spend on roads has been affected and that staff have been furloughed. The Councillor stated that Council seems to be writing to the Minister for Infrastructure every month and some may say this is politically charged and that Council should also be writing to the Minister for Finance stating that he have a meeting with the Minister for Infrastructure to discuss funding allocation for that department.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that his understanding that Councillor Doris's comment was in relation to why no bid was made for funding at the last monitoring round.

Councillor Burton stated that this was not a political issue and a lot of Councillors around the table represent rural areas. The Councillor stated that most days she is contacted by constituents in relation to roads issues and referred to ongoing problems on the Rehaghy Road and that people in rural areas pay the same rates and have the same pressures as those living in urban areas. Councillor Burton also referred to rural industries which bring heavy goods vehicles onto rural roads and that these roads are as important and should be kept to a good standard. Councillor Burton advised she was contacted following heavy rain last week by a constituent whose home was flooded last year and was distressed that this was going to happen again by water running off from another section of the Rehaghy Road. The Councillor stated she was aware of money which was supposed to be ring fenced solely for rural infrastructure and that she had asked NILGA to investigate this. Councillor Burton stated that with the amount of cars and homes being damaged Council needed to push for immediate help for Mid Ulster.

Councillor Wilson stated that the majority of potholes in the towns were being caused by utility operators who don't return roads and footpaths to a good standard. The Councillor felt that pressure should be put on the utilities by the Minister for Infrastructure to ensure that when works are carried out that roads/footpaths are returned to their original state.

Councillor Kerr also reflected that the work carried out to roads by utilities should be of the same standard as DfI Roads and referred to situation last year were damage

was caused to cars due to inadequate reinstatement of road following work by utilities.

Councillor McLean stated that the concerns raised were genuine and not political and were being encountered on a daily basis. Councillor McLean stated that the MLAs in Mid Ulster were collectively concerned regarding the amount of money given back by the Department for Infrastructure following which no application was made for funding for the last monetary round and that Council needs to make representation on this. Councillor McLean also reflected that during Covid roads construction and maintenance was considered to be construction and was allowed to continue throughout the pandemic. The Councillor felt that there also needed to be some work done on holding utilities to account for a longer period of time as their work does not seem to last.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan said he had been advised by DfI that the normal inspection procedure was that A class roads were inspected monthly, B class roads every 2 months and other roads every 4 months. This policy had however been changed to inspections being on a 1, 3 and 6 month cycle respectively unless there is a pot hole or defect causing danger.

The Chair felt that the policy should revert back to the 1-2-4 monthly model as urgently as possible and referred to previous requests of Council to meet with the Minister for Infrastructure. The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan asked if Councillor Doris would be content to amend her proposal to include seeking a meeting with the Minister for Infrastructure to discuss infrastructure projects within the Mid Ulster area and that policy on inspection of roads be reinstated to the 1-2-4 monthly model.

Councillor Doris stated she would be content with the additions to the proposal and reflected on the comments of Councillor Quinn at the start of the conversation and stated it was not about party politics but that these issues were affecting people locally on a daily basis.

Resolved To write to the Minister for Infrastructure:

- To ask why no bid for funding was made at the last monitoring round for roads maintenance
- To seek a meeting with the Minister to discuss infrastructure projects within Mid Ulster including maintenance of roadways after works by utilities
- To ask that policy in relation to inspection of roads reverts back to the 1-2-4 monthly model

Councillor Corry thanked the Raise Your Voice team on providing two training sessions to Councillors and officers on topics regarding sexual harassment. The Councillor stated that the training was very informative and highlighted that this type of behaviour is unacceptable and should be called out. Councillor Corry thanked the Members who attended the training and stated there had been a lot of engagement and participation and also thanked the Member Support Officer who arranged the

training and other officers who attended. The Councillor stated that both men and women can experience sexual harassment however most of this behaviour is against women and that she was disgusted to learn of threats of sexual violence made to Martina Anderson in the last week which has been condemned. Councillor Corry also referred to death threats made to some female journalists in the past weeks and that she was also aware of friends and colleagues to have experienced sexual harassment. Councillor Corry urged anyone who sees or hears this type of behaviour to stand up to it and call it out wherever it happens and that she would encourage anyone who missed out on the training to contact Raise Your Voice and join in with another online session.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated he had attended the first session and had found it very useful and worthwhile.

Councillor Quinn referred to aid sent to a village on the West Bank by the Irish government which was destroyed by Israeli forces. The Councillor stated that for any humanitarian aid to be destroyed and replacement aid to be refused entry was disgusting and proposed that a letter be sent to the Irish Government asking that this matter be raised at the UN to ensure that aid is resent.

Councillor Quinn also spoke in relation to advertisement for house rental in Moygashel in which the advertisement stated that 'no foreign nationals need apply'. The Councillor stated he had been sent the advertisement by someone who had viewed it and was married to a Lithuanian national and was disgusted over reading it. Councillor Quinn stated that there was no room for discrimination in this day and age and referred to the number of foreign nationals who have worked tirelessly in the health service during the pandemic and that they should not be made to feel unwelcome, particularly in this area where there are communities living from across the world. Councillor Quinn proposed that the Good Relations team within Council pick this matter up and engage with those from a different communities to make sure they know they are welcome in Mid Ulster and that racism has to be opposed at every opportunity.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that he agreed with the sentiments of Councillor Quinn and that this Council has been good at reaching out to communities and making them feel welcome although this is more difficult with current restrictions. The Chair stated that when officers can get back on the ground they will continue to engage with communities.

Resolved To write to the Irish Government in relation to aid bound for the West Bank being destroyed and asking that this matter be raised at the UN to ensure that replacement aid can be sent.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan referred to the ongoing DEA group meetings with community representatives in relation to future planning. The Chair stated that from last night's meeting he learned that there was a lot of respect for Council officers within the community and that he found this very complimentary. He stated that the meetings were a good initiative and that there was more work to be done in this area.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan also referred to some success in terms of Council's digital accessibility and that after new web accessibility legislation came into effect last September, there has been a considerable amount of work undertaken to ensure that the Council's site improved its ranking. He advised that in a review earlier this month Council's website ranked in 1st place among all 11 Councils here and also ranked 48th out of all councils across England, Scotland and Wales. The Chair stated this was an achievement, particularly given that this Council does not have a dedicated technical web team unlike many other Councils.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated he had received some concerns regarding food banks in the Council area and proposed that a workshop be held on this issue to discuss what the role of a food bank is and how people can access a food bank etc. The Chair stated he felt he did not feel he had enough knowledge on how food banks work and he felt it would be beneficial for all Members to get a better understanding.

Councillor Graham seconded the Chair's proposal.

Resolved That a workshop be arranged in relation to food banks – their role and how people can access them etc.

Councillor Kearney referred to the loss of ERASMUS funding for students as a result of exit from EU. The Councillor stated that the ERASMUS scheme was launched in 1987 allowing students and teachers to spend some time in another EU country and during those year's some 9 million have benefitted. Last year, 649 students from Northern Ireland availed of the programme and from 2014-2018 57 schools from Northern Ireland benefitted from the Scheme, with St Patrick's College in Maghera joining with six other schools across Europe in a three year programme which was a tremendous success. Councillor Kearney stated that on realising the impact of losing such an educational feature the Irish Government has stepped in and offered to continue to fund this flagship exchange programme to Northern Ireland students whether they have an Irish passport or a British one. The Councillor stated that this is a permanent commitment at an annual cost of €2 million and highlighted that the Irish Government sees this as an investment, not a cost. Councillor Kearney stated that the UK government are currently designing a programme which will offer an outward study and will be named the Turing Scheme. Councillor Kearney proposed that a letter be written to Minister Harris thanking him for the Irish government's intervention and ongoing support particularly for the young people of Mid Ulster.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan seconded Councillor Kearney's proposal.

Resolved To write to Minister Harris in relation to the intervention and ongoing support of the Irish Government for the ERASMUS Scheme to students across Ireland and particularly Mid Ulster.

Matters for Decision

C026/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Council Meeting held on Thursday 28 January 2021

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to item *C004/21 – Council Minutes* with regard to correspondence with the Department of Finance in relation to rates relief and that there still did not seem to be a response. The Councillor stated that the issues were still there for businesses and that he had been made aware that LPS were still awaiting instruction in relation to the localised business restriction grant and whether payments will be made in March. Councillor Cuthbertson stated that the Minister seemed to have little respect for Council given that he cannot acknowledge correspondence on these pressing issues and proposed that Council write again for a third time expressing disappointment that the Minister of Finance had not responded.

Councillor Buchanan seconded Councillor Cuthbertson's proposal.

Resolved That Council write to the Minister of Finance expressing disappointment that previous correspondence has not been acknowledged and to again seek clarification in relation to rates relief for businesses.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor B McGuigan and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Council held on Thursday 28 January 2021 (C001/21 – C016/21 and C022/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

Councillor Monteith stated that whilst the grant scheme has been helpful those that have an appeal are having difficulty getting answers and would reiterate that there needs to be a line of communication within the Department for the Economy and Department of Finance for Council officers at least so that they can then go on to help people.

Councillor Monteith referred to item *C003/21 – Chair's Business* with regard to the Workhouse in Dungannon and the potential of it being involved in the Mother and Baby Investigations. The Councillor stated that with the investigation there will be an issue regarding the records for the Workhouses and that these records are under a 100 year seal, this is because those who were in the Workhouses were classed as patients under the Department of Health and therefore their records are classed as medical records and put under this seal. The Councillor stated this will be a vital issue going forward and needs to be challenged in order to fully investigate what went on in the various institutions. Councillor Monteith also thanked officers for their ongoing work in relation to the marking of the unmarked graves at the Workhouse site at South Tyrone Hospital. Councillor Monteith proposed that officers investigate the seal issue on behalf of those campaigning as this is a vital issue.

10 – Council (25.02.21)

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal.

Resolved To investigate the issue of the 100yr seal on Workhouse records as part of the Mother and Baby investigations

Councillor Elattar referred to item *C012/21 – Consultations* in regard to the Draft Mental Health Strategy and people being signposted to smaller groups for help during the pandemic and are not receiving a proper referral. The Councillor stated that the point she was making was people are being signposted to smaller groups in rural areas from bigger groups which are receiving funding for providing help to these people and that the smaller groups are not receiving funding for such referrals.

C027/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” Planning Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 2 February 2021

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to discussion on planning application LA09/2020/0695/F and stated that on the night he had proposed that a site meeting be held in relation to this application. The Councillor stated that the Chair did not deal with his proposal but asked that his proposal be included in the minutes.

Councillor S McPeake stated it was not his recollection that there had been agreement for a site meeting in relation to that application.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he had not said that a site meeting was agreed but that he had proposed that a site meeting be held and that the Chair had not dealt with his proposal.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan asked if Councillor Cuthbertson had received a seconder for his proposal.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated that the Chair moved on and went straight to the vote on the recommendation.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that unless a proposal has a seconder it cannot be moved and that it appeared in this case that the Chair of the Planning Committee made the correct decision to move to a vote to make a decision on the application.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated that the point he was raising tonight was that his proposal was not in the minutes.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan clarified that Councillor Cuthbertson wanted the minute amended to reflect that he had made a proposal for a site meeting on planning application LA09/2020/0695/F.

Proposed by Councillor Bell
Seconded by Councillor Brown and

11 – Council (25.02.21)

Resolved That the Minutes of Planning Committee held on Tuesday 2 February 2021 (P016/21 – P021/21 and P027/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, subject to the foregoing amendment, were considered and adopted.

C028/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 4 February 2021

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Quinn and

Resolved That the minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 4 February 2021 (PR025/21 – PR033/21 and PR042/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

Councillor Burton referred to item *PR030/21 – Sperrins Sculpture Trail* and proposed that officers investigate placing a sculpture at Queen Aine’s grave at the top of Knockmany which she felt would add to the area.

Councillor Graham seconded Councillor Burton’s proposal.

Resolved That officers investigate placing a sculpture at Queen Aine’s grave at Knockmany.

C029/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” Environment Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 9 February 2021

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor B McGuigan and

Resolved That the Minutes of Environment Committee held on Tuesday 9 February 2021 (E032/21 – E048/21 and E059/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

Councillor Doris referred to item *E040/21 – Bus Shelters* in relation to Stewartstown bus shelter and referred to site meeting which took place before Christmas with DfI Roads at which it was proposed that tarmac finish would take place at the site for the bus shelter. Councillor Doris stated that she has since followed the matter up with Roads Service who responded to say because there was not support for the work to be done the money had been allocated elsewhere. Councillor Doris stated this was not the feeling of the people who met on site that day and would like officers to follow up on this issue.

Councillor Kerr stated he had spoken with Roads Service on this issue and that they plan to carry out the works in the next financial year.

Councillor Quinn stated he was aware of opposition from some traders and that although monies were committed these were then diverted. Councillor Quinn stated that a lot of residents want this work done as the path is dangerous.

Councillor Doris stated that the position essentially now was that a bus shelter was going to be installed only to have to be taken out for tarmac to be laid. The Councillor stated she had been contacted by multiple residents and business owners who would like to see the work done and proposed that officers follow this matter up with Roads.

Councillor Kerr stated that Roads have no issue with the bus shelter being installed and that the tarmac works would take place at a different location.

Resolved That officers follow up on issues regarding Stewartstown Bus Shelter.

C030/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” Development Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 11 February 2021

Councillor Quinn referred to item *D022/21 – Chair’s Business* and advised he had been contacted by a number of residents living on the Lisnastraine Road, Stewartstown with regard to an ambulance callout going to a wrong address. The Councillor stated this is a long road which is rural in parts and that he was not sure where responsibility lies with this issue – whether it is that the Ambulance Service do not have up to date maps or whether it is Council not naming roads correctly. Councillor Quinn proposed that officers meet with the Ambulance Service and Councillors in relation to this matter as he felt it is only a matter of time before someone could die due to an ambulance not reaching an address in time.

Councillor McFlynn stated she agreed with Councillor Quinn’s comments and stated the situation was not acceptable as she was aware of another family to have to go out to the road junction to direct the ambulance to their home.

Councillor McFlynn referred to item *D034/21 – Master Plans/Scoping Studies* and stated she was disappointed to see Iniscarn was not included. The Councillor stated she had been made aware that Council were undertaking a piece of work at Iniscarn and she would like to be kept up to date with what is happening there as it is a valuable resource and would not want it missed out.

Councillor McFlynn referred to item *D037/21 – Outdoor Recreation Strategy* and referred to Ballyronan Marina and a group of swimmers who use this location for swimming and stated that she was of the understanding that the legacy Council did not permit swimming at Ballyronan Marina. The Councillor also spoke in relation to a pipe which goes through the forest at Ballyronan which required attention due to a

leak. The Councillor stated she had requested that this matter be investigated and asked if this had happened yet.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation stated she was not aware of the issue with the pipe at Ballyronan but would follow up on this and come back to the Councillor. In relation to Iniscarn, the Director advised that the reason why the scoping studies came forward for the other three forests is because Council does not have a Licence with the Forest Service for these and with Iniscarn it does. The Director advised that Council are working with Forest Service in relation to parking and other issues at Iniscarn and that a report will be brought forward when some progress has been made on these issues.

Councillor Wilson referred to the difficulty ambulance crews have in ascertaining house numbers along roads and that he had suggested previously the need for people to put their house numbers at the bottom of their lanes and that this will assist all emergency services and delivery drivers.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan requested that the council's Communications Team look at a campaign highlighting the need for visible house numbers in order to assist emergency services.

Councillor Molloy referred to item *D032/21 – Poverty Plan* and that he had stated that if Council do not deliver on addressed poverty and deprivation then Council has failed as a corporate body and was not a reflection on officers.

Councillor S McAleer agreed with the point raised by Councillor Wilson in relation to displaying house numbers.

Councillor Burton referred to item *D031/21 – Economic Development* and stated that she had spoken in relation to the lack of click and collect which was causing problems.

Councillor Burton referred to item *D022/21 – Chair's Business* and asked if there was an update in relation to the issues at Granville Industrial Estate.

The Chief Executive advised that the matter is progressing and that Members will be kept up to date on this issue.

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Quinn's proposal.

Resolved That a meeting be arranged with Ambulance Service in relation to issues navigating to addresses.

Councillor Kerr referred to item *D035/21 – Parks and Play* and asked that officers consider installing seats or picnic benches to facilitate parents at play park locations.

Councillor S McGuigan advised that himself and Colm Gildernew MLA and Michelle Gildernew MP had met with the Acting Chief Executive of NIEA last week in relation

to issues at Granville Industrial Estate. The Councillor advised that there was a commitment in relation to dealing with the businesses collectively and that notices will be delivered to each individual business at the same time. On this basis there was also a commitment to come back within a month in relation to the information NIEA have on file on the issues which will hopefully provide residents with some reassurance that environmental issues are being addressed.

Councillor Kearney referred to item *D038/21 – Lower Bann Blueway* and highlighted the significance of the Blueway Feasibility Study. The Councillor stated that the former Magherafelt District Council had developed phase 1 of the Blueway which has 89 fishing stands at Molloy's Fort and that Mid Ulster Council then developed a further 25 stands. Councillor Kearney also referred to the 25th European Coarse Angling Competition held there which generated tens of thousands of pounds to the local economy. The Councillor stated that the report sets out the intention to develop a Blueway along the Bann from Lough Neagh to Coleraine and that he was proud that this Council had taken a lead in this matter. Councillor Kearney felt that the area has much to offer in tourism potential and outdoor recreation for future staycations. Councillor Kearney invited the Chair to formally launch phase 2 of the Lower Bann Blueway in conjunction with Waterways Ireland when COVID restrictions are lifted and complimented officers on the work done to date.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated this is a significantly important piece of work and he would be happy to do something.

Councillor Monteith referred to item *D032/21 – Poverty Plan* and proposed that SMT take this document on board and set out how each service can mainstream some of the poverty work so as not to become a preserve of just Community Development, with a report coming back as to how SMT see the Plan being rolled out.

Councillor Monteith referred to item *D036/21 – Ballysaggart Lough* and referred to the recent wall and footpath collapse at this location. The Councillor stated he was aware that investigations were ongoing and proposed that a report be made available at the earliest opportunity as to what remedial action is needed as there is a lot of work to be done in this area.

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Monteith's proposals.

Resolved That a report be brought forward in relation to the roll out of the Poverty Plan through all Council departments.

Resolved That a report on remedial works needed at Ballysaggart Lough be made available at the earliest opportunity.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That the Minutes of Development Committee held on Thursday 11 February 2021 (D020/21 – D039/21 and D043/21) transacted in Open

15 – Council (25.02.21)

Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

C031/21 Requests for Civic Recognition

The Head of Democratic Services sought approval for the previously circulated report on civic recognition requests from Members, in line with the stated Council Policy, as detailed within the report at appendix A.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That approval be given to submitted requests for civic recognition as outlined in the report and be dealt with as previously resolved by April Council in that recipients receive a letter together with an award, where appropriate.

Matters for Information

C032/21 Correspondence

Members noted previously circulated report providing correspondence received for the attention of Council.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he welcomed the correspondence from the NI Veterans Commissioner and proposed that the Commissioner's contact details be added to the Support Services page of the Council website.

Councillor Black seconded Councillor Cuthbertson's proposal.

Resolved That the contact details of the NI Veterans Commissioner be added to the Support Services page of the Council website.

Councillor Kerr referred to the correspondence received from Southern Health and Social Care Trust and stated he was disappointed with the response received. The Councillor stated he appreciated COVID had put extra pressures on the health service but that red flag appointments needed to be up and running again as lives were being put at risk and that he proposed that Council use its influence with the Health Trust to ensure that red flag appointments recommence.

Councillor Monteith seconded Councillor Kerr's proposal.

Resolved That Council lobby the Southern Health Trust in relation to restarting red flag appointments and access to urgent acute care.

Councillor Corry referred to correspondence from Department for Communities in relation to the Child Poverty Task Force and proposed that Council take part in the forthcoming focus sessions in this regard.

Councillor Doris referred to correspondence from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council in relation to a Motion it has carried in relation to Universal Credit payments. Councillor Doris proposed that Council write a letter of support in relation to the extension of the £20 top up scheme on Universal Credit which is due to end in March and that there was no guarantee that it would continue.

Councillor Bell referred to the correspondence from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council in relation to a Motion carried regarding a Nearly Zero Energy Building Code. He proposed that Council write to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council expressing this Council's support for the Motion.

Councillor B McGuigan seconded Councillor Bell's proposal.

Resolved To write to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council expressing this Council's support of the Motion in relation to Nearly Zero Energy Building Code.

Councillor Monteith seconded Councillor Doris's proposal and stated that Council should be pushing to make the increased payment permanent.

Resolved To write to the Prime Minister/Chancellor of the Exchequer outlining Council's support for an extension/making permanent of the existing top up to Universal Credit.

Councillor Quinn referred to correspondence from Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council in relation to a Motion it agreed regarding animal cruelty and the need for a register for those convicted of offences. The Councillor stated that this motion was similar to the one he put forward last year but felt that it was missing some fundamental parts and should include an all-Ireland and UK Act, however, he stated it was good to note that other Councils were taking these issues on board. Councillor Quinn encouraged all parties to support an Animal Cruelty Act.

Councillor Doris seconded Councillor Corry's proposal.

Resolved That Council take part in forthcoming focus session in relation to the Child Poverty Task Force.

C033/21 Consultations Notified to Mid Ulster District Council

Members considered the previously circulated report.

C034/21 Notice of Motion

Councillor McLean stated that no one needed to be reminded as to what Covid had done to towns and the hardship and stress which will follow on from the closure of shops. Councillor McLean stated he had chosen his words carefully for the motion and wanted to give some background – that Mid Ulster is the amalgamation of three Councils and the one shoe does not fit all scenarios with Dungannon being different from Cookstown and Cookstown being different from Magherafelt. Councillor McLean stated he was aware that the former Magherafelt Council proposed free car parking for its car parks and that this was met with robustness as all day parkers then took the prime parking locations. Councillor McLean stated that the former Dungannon Council also done something similar but also had to withdraw after being bombarded by traders and what was thought to have been beneficial was actually being counter productive.

Councillor McLean moved the undernoted motion -

“That this council as soon as practically possible enters into meaningful discussions with the traders of the MUDC area, to agree and implement suitable reduced car parking charges as soon as the Covid restrictions are lifted, whereby re-engaging and encouraging footfall to our local towns and in so doing assisting to sustain our business’s, shops & restaurants etc.”

Councillor McLean stated that the reason he put the motion forward was because there is a piece of work which needs to be done and after this Council officers can come back to Council with some recommendations and at that stage Members will know what the impact is and whether to lobby departments or other agencies to offset the costs of whatever reductions are agreed to.

Councillor Brown seconded the motion and stated that as Covid numbers continue to come down town centres will hopefully start to re-open and that Council should consider measures which will support this re-opening.

Councillor Colvin stated that the Ulster Unionist Councillors have no difficulty in supporting the motion. Councillor Colvin stated that the motion being put forward at agenda item 14 was similar and if there had been a communication break down between the DUP as he felt amalgamating both motions would have presented a stronger case.

Councillor Molloy stated that whilst he agreed with the sentiments of Councillor McLean’s motion he would be proposing an amendment and the reasons for this were two fold. Firstly to broaden the scope to include both off street and on street parking and secondly to include those departments which may provide a funding stream to support the proposals. Councillor Molloy stated that the motion as it stands only seeks to reduce off street car parking charges which he is in favour of but that there has been no discussion in relation to how such costings could be featured into the rates. Councillor Molloy stated that such discussions were needed and asked Councillor McLean to accept the amendment being put forward.

18 – Council (25.02.21)

Councillor Molloy proposed the following amendment -

“That this council as soon as practically possible enters into meaningful discussions with the traders of the MUDC area along with engagement with other relevant bodies such as the Departments of Economy, Infrastructure and Finance, to agree and implement suitable reduced car parking charges and restrictions as soon as Covid restrictions are lifted, developing a multi-agency approach whereby re-engaging and encouraging footfall to our local towns and in so doing assisting to sustain our businesses, shops & restaurants etc.”

Councillor Brian McGuigan seconded Councillor Molloy’s amendment.

Councillor Wilson stated this is a bigger piece of work than just car parking and referred to the similarities between the two motions at agenda items 12 and 14 and whilst one is about car parking the other is in relation to improving town centres with high vacancy rates. Councillor Wilson paid tribute to Council staff who have worked diligently to try to get support to local businesses. He stated he had also spoken in relation to traffic wardens last month and that consideration be given to only issuing tickets for unsafe parking.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan asked if Councillor McLean was willing to accept the amendment.

Councillor McLean stated he had no issues with the amendment.

Councillor Monteith stated he did not have a difficulty with Councillor Molloy’s amendment but that his own amendment sought to implement free car parking.

Councillor Monteith proposed the following amendment -

“That this council as soon as practically possible enters into meaningful discussions with the traders of the MUDC area, to agree and implement free car parking as soon as the Covid restrictions are lifted, whereby re-engaging and encouraging footfall to our local towns and in so doing assisting to sustain our business’s, shops & restaurants etc.”

Councillor Monteith stated that this Council previously carried out a consultation in relation to car parking and referred to pilot schemes. Councillor Monteith stated that in Dungannon there was an issue with one car park in the town and no issues with the other three car parks and that the default position should have been free car parking with steps taken to deal with the issues in the one car park. The Councillor stated that there is free car parking at the Oaks Centre, Tesco, the Enterprise Centre and Newell Stores in Dungannon but yet you cannot park for free in the town centre. Councillor Monteith referred to Councillor Wilson’s comments and agreed that there is a massive piece of work to be done in relation to town centres but that he has always stated there should be free car parking as it was not fair there is free car parking in some town centres and not in others.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated he had some concern with Councillor Monteith's amendment in that car parking is of a value of £400k to Council each year and that this amendment would handcuff the ability to have negotiations in terms of arriving at the best outcome for car parking. The Chair stated that the financial outcome of Councillor Monteith's amendment is not in keeping with the budgetary considerations of Council. The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that the motion and amendment is the beginning of a process which would likely move to the Policy and Resources Committee for further consideration and asked Councillor Monteith if he would consider not moving his amendment given the fact that no financial consideration has been given to no car parking charges.

Councillor Monteith stated that whilst he respected what the Chair was saying his amendment did not mean there would be free car parking tomorrow. The Councillor stated that there needs to be an end game and there should be an aim towards free car parking and whilst car parking is an income stream for Council the traders in Dungannon and Magherafelt should not have this held against them and that there should be equality across all towns. Councillor Monteith stated that there did not necessarily need to be all day free car parking but there should be a concept of free parking. Councillor Monteith stated he did not feel that the amendment tied Council and that the amendment should be moved.

Councillor Quinn stated he did not have a difficulty with the motion and agreed with Councillor Molloy's amendment and that there is a big piece of work to be done.

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Monteith's amendment.

Councillor McFlynn stated she agreed with the sentiments of the motion and that Council should be supporting traders as best it can but that the difficulty with having no charges is that Council will still have to maintain its car parks and this will be at cost.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that he felt the amendment could tie the council's hands and limit options on free parking but that is not to say there could not be a conversation in relation to future free car parking. The Chair stated he could not support this amendment as he did not have any financial information on it to substantiate the impact to Council.

Councillor Monteith stated he had not been aware of Councillor Molloy's amendment before the meeting and that he did not feel his own amendment was contradictory to Councillor Molloy's amendment. Councillor Monteith stated that his amendment did not rule out discussions with other agencies.

Councillor Quinn stated that previously when amendments were brought it was his recollection that they were to be submitted by 6 pm and were available before for group meetings, the Councillor stated this was useful.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that the requirement for moving amendments is that it is provided in paper to the meeting and there is no timescale prior to the meeting.

Councillor Monteith's amendment was shown via Webex to the meeting and the Chair reiterated his concerns on same.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan took a vote on the amendment put forward by Councillor Monteith:

For - 2
Against - 31
Abstained - 7

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated that the amendment fell.

Members voted on the substantive motion:

For - 40
Against - 0
Abstained - 0

Councillor McLean thanked everyone and stated he appreciated the amendment put forward and that Council needed to work towards improving footfall in town centres when restrictions are lifted.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated there is a desire across the Chamber for Council to do all it can, along with others, to support traders in town centres.

C035/21 Notice of Motion

Speaking on the motion, Councillor N McAleer stated that the recent announcement that students would be able to access a £500 payment was very much a welcome step in the right direction for students and their families to help offset some of their costs in a very difficult year.

Councillor N McAleer stated he had been contacted by several students and parents of students from the Mid Ulster area who are studying in places such as Liverpool, London and Dublin and as it stands, those students are excluded from the proposed Covid Disruption payment. The Councillor stated that last week in the Assembly John O'Dowd asked the Economy Minister Diane Dodds to explain what the barriers are that are stopping her extending the payment to students in Britain and the South and he is still waiting on an answer or explanation on this.

Councillor N McAleer stated there are also a large number of part time students studying in the north, as well as those studying in our Further Regional Colleges in Magherafelt, Dungannon or Cookstown who will be excluded.

In light of this, Councillor N McAleer moved the undernoted motion -

“That this Council welcomes the recent announcement of a £500 Covid Disruption payment for students studying full-time Higher Education courses; notes the exclusion of full-time students studying Further Education courses and students studying Higher Education courses in the south of Ireland or in Britain is unfair; acknowledges the difficulty of part time students facing financial hardship also needs to be addressed; and calls on the Minister for the Economy to address the inequalities and ensure that all students who are currently excluded from the Covid Disruption Payment receive the £500 payment.”

Councillor Doris seconded the motion.

Councillor McLean stated he did not have a problem with the sentiments of the motion though had made some queries and that his understanding is that the Minister has to work within legal constraints and therefore enquired how making payment to the individuals mentioned could be done. Councillor McLean stated time was of the essence and to do all that is contained within the motion would disenfranchise the speedy payment of £500. Councillor McLean reiterated that whilst the DUP grouping did not disagree with sentiments of the motion it would be abstaining as a party on this motion.

Councillor McNamee stated there should be no barriers to students from the north of Ireland who are studying in the south of Ireland or the UK from receiving the Covid disruption payment of £500. The Councillor stated that the Economy Minister should make a bid for the finance and find a solution as to how the payment can be made for students that are currently left behind.

Councillor Kearney stated that the SDLP grouping will be supporting this motion as it had, along with other parties, been active on these issues.

Councillor Wilson stated that the issue of legal constraints needed to be looked at however he would welcome the motion. Councillor Wilson proposed an amendment to the motion to include, “.... *Notes the exclusion of fulltime students studying Further Education Courses and those at Bible Colleges.....*”

Councillor N McAleer stated he had no issue with the amendment and accepted same.

Councillor Cuddy seconded Councillor Wilson’s amendment.

Councillor Kerr stated he had no issue with the motion and advised that he had been contacted by students who were affected by the pandemic last year. The Councillor spoke in relation to one student who had graduated in 2020 and had lost 12 weeks of teaching and resource time and got no financial support. The Councillor stated that all students past and present needed to be eligible for this payment.

Councillor Kerr also advised he had been contacted by a local medical student who outlined that those applying for medicine in the north of Ireland as a second degree are not eligible for financial support. This means that throughout the duration of their course the student is responsible for fees and has to work full or part time in order to pay for food, rent etc and this is on top of working unpaid shifts on wards. Councillor Kerr referred to the current pressures on the NHS and stated that he felt these pressures were solvable if studying medicine was available to all. The Councillor referred to medical students in England who can avail of non-means tested funding whilst similar students from the north have to pay all fees up front. Councillor Kerr stated he wanted to bring these issues to the attention of Council, that he was aware that a campaign will be launched by medical students from the north of Ireland in the future and that he asked that Council support this.

Councillor Monteith stated he would support the motion and felt it is the least Council should be doing. The Councillor stated that Council have committed to look at the wider issue of student poverty and highlighted that students were forgotten about at the start of the pandemic. Councillor Monteith stated there also needed to be a conversation regarding access to third level education as there has been a systematic erosion of support for students making it harder and harder for those from less well off backgrounds to go to university and that this needed to stop.

Councillor Colvin declared an interest as a Member of Southern Commissioning Group.

Councillor Colvin stated he agreed with the comments of Councillors Kerr and Monteith but that it was expanding the motion out beyond what the initial intent was. The Councillor stated that students do need help and that there is a shortage of medical staff due to underfunding over the years and there should be discussion on this. Councillor Colvin stated he was supportive of the motion and the amendment to include a wider range of students.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan stated there would be an opportunity for a wider discussion when Council received presentation from student representatives at the next Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor McLean stated the DUP were not against the motion in principle and if abstentions were recorded against the party members then the motion could proceed as carried. Councillor McLean highlighted that this disruption payment is one of the most generous schemes in the UK.

On ascertaining that all DUP grouping members wished to abstain from voting on the motion the Chair, Councillor Mallaghan declared the motion carried.

For - 31
Abstain - 9

Councillor N McAleer thanked everyone for their contributions and supporting the motion.

C036/21 Notice of Motion

Councillor Cuthbertson stated his motion was separate to the previous motion brought tonight in relation to town centres, that the earlier motion put financial pressures on Council whereas this motion does not to the same extent.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he believed his motion was straight forward and required little introduction as everyone knows the crisis situation town centres are facing and that time after time valuable retail units are lost to residential accommodation.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated there are numerous vacant units in Dungannon and he was sure that all towns in Mid Ulster are the same. The Councillor stated that all must be done to help landlords find new tenants but equally as important assist them in preserving valuable retail spaces in our town centres for future businesses.

Councillor Cuthbertson moved the undernoted motion –

“That Mid Ulster District Council acknowledges the grave situation our Town Centres are enduring, resulting in many small retail units having lost and others facing losing tenants in the coming months. That Council writes to the Minister of Finance in relation to vacant rates on retail premises in Town Centres, urging him to provide further assistance on top of the current 50% vacant rates for the next financial year, in order to help stop the trend of converting small retail units into domestic accommodation. This will help preserve retail space for future businesses.”

Councillor Buchanan seconded the motion.

Councillor Glasgow stated that communication in relation to issues regarding town centres was key, that discussion was required within Council for the previous motion at agenda item 12 and that communication was required with the Minister of Finance for this motion. Councillor Glasgow stated the UUP would be supporting the motion.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan asked if anyone was against the motion.

On there being no dissent to the motion, the Chair Councillor Mallaghan declared the motion passed.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he was glad his motion had received support.

C037/21 Notice of Motion

Councillor Quinn stated that his motion was in two parts but that its sole purpose is to rally around local press. The Councillor stated that over the past week there have been death threats issued against two leading journalists, Patricia Devlin and Alison Morris and those making the threats are doing so because these two journalists are

investigating the murky world of drugs and paramilitaries and are close to exposing those worlds. Councillor Quinn stated that a free press is fundamental to a free society and that it is essential that politicians demonstrate their solidarity with journalists especially when those journalists are exposing the evils of society. The Councillor stated that those threatening may think that because Alison and Patricia are female they will be scared which will deter them from what they are doing however he felt it will have the opposite effect and that the death threats go to prove how important their work is.

Councillor Quinn stated that the COVID crisis has led to a collapse in advertising revenue for news media in both print and online and that social distancing has also hampered the ability of newspapers to maintain print sales. This crisis has come on top of the two decades of structural challenges for newspapers with print sales falling and digital giants increasingly monopolising advertising revenue online. Councillor Quinn stated that in Mid Ulster two major publications have ceased trading while others through the pandemic are barely hanging on, the Councillor referred to the importance of local media to Members and the benefits that it brings, that local and regional newspapers are not only sources of information but also a meeting point for people and places, that these publications help to bind communities together, mitigate against isolation and are close to an essential service. Councillor Quinn stated that the pandemic has also highlighted the importance of local and regional media in providing accurate and professionally sourced information and whatever the scepticism about some aspects of the national or international media people have a high levels of trust for local and regional media and that they understand that these papers exist to serve and give a voice to communities.

Councillor Quinn stated that with many local titles already furloughing staff and making them redundant there is a high risk that a significant chunk of our news media could be wiped out and have grave implications not only for owners and staff but also local communities. The Councillor stated that in order to protect local media and allow it to thrive in the future the NUJ have come up with significant proposals to protect media which will require commitment from the UK government, NI Executive and from all stakeholders in the media industry. Councillor Quinn stated that he also believed this Council should recognise public interest journalism and that it should be supported and protected. Councillor Quinn extended support for the proposal to increase government investment in public interest news, through arms length funding mechanisms with the condition that no funding is given to any company making redundancies, paying dividends or resisting trade union recognition. Tax breaks for new subscriptions and support for new media start ups should also be introduced by government alongside a wide scale literacy campaign to tackle fake news. Support should also be extended to the public service broadcasting in Northern Ireland and the principle of independent oversight free from government interference. Councillor Quinn stated that the global health crisis has shown the vital role of quality journalism within the spectrum of essential public services. Councillor Quinn asked Council to endorse the News Recovery Plan as it set out a number of practical measures which will help secure a sustainable future for Northern Ireland's local news media.

Councillor Quinn moved the undernoted motion –

25 – Council (25.02.21)

“This council condemns the recent threats made against local Journalists and recognises the importance of trustworthy, relevant, impartial news as an important bulwark of democracy, particularly during a health crisis. This council notes with alarm the unprecedented strain placed on the News industry following the lockdown period, with wide scale cuts and redundancies proposed across the sector. This council supports the NUJ’s News Recovery Plan aims at tackling the existing fault-lines in the sector with a series of measures intended to reconfigure the news industry and ensure it is firmly rooted in the public good. That we support the proposal to increase government investment in public interest news; through arms-length funding mechanisms, with the condition that no public funding is given to any company making redundancies, paying out dividends or resisting trade union recognition. Other measures include:

- *Tax breaks for news subscriptions*
- *Support for new media start-ups*
- *A wide scale media literacy campaign to tackle disinformation and fake news*

We also extend our support to public service broadcasting in UK/Ireland and the principle of independent oversight, free from government interference.”

Councillor Kearney seconded the motion.

Councillor Kearney stated that the media is a vital means of communication which everyone depends on and reflected on the journalists lives lost over the years namely the murder of Veronica Guerin, Martin O’Hagan and Lyra McKee. The Councillor also stated that in the past few weeks we have been reminded that five BBC staff were blown up 50 years ago while carrying out repairs to a transmitter. Councillor Kearney stated that tonight’s motion and discussion was timely given the current threat level and the many other issues as outlined.

Councillor McNamee stated he would condemn the threats to journalists in particular Patricia Devlin who previously worked for the Mid Ulster Mail.

The Chair, Councillor Mallaghan also added his support to the motion and stated that journalism was a difficult job which takes guts and determination. The Chair advised that he had spoken to Ms Devlin and offered her support on behalf of his party.

On seeking clarification that there was unanimous support for the motion the Chair, Councillor Mallaghan declared the motion carried.

Councillor Quinn thanked Members for their support and highlighted that the media is there to hold us to account.

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.

The live broadcast concluded at 9.24 pm

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That items C038/21 to C047/21 be taken as confidential business.

Matters for Decision

- (i) Council Confidential minutes of meeting held on 28 January 2021
- (ii) Planning Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 2 February 2021
- (iii) Policy and Resources Confidential minutes of meeting held on 4 February 2021
- (iv) Environment Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 9 February 2021
- (v) Development Committee confidential minutes of meeting held on 11 February 2021
- (vi) Document for Sealing: Lease Agreement relating to lands at Ballydermot Road, Bellaghy, Magherafelt
- (vii) Document for Sealing: Lease Agreement relating to lands situated at Blackrock Road, Beaghmore, Cookstown, in connection with the Davagh Solar Walk (1)
- (viii) Document for Sealing: Lease Agreement relating to lands situated at Blackrock Road, Beaghmore, Cookstown, in connection with the Davagh Solar Walk (2)
- (ix) Document for Sealing: Conveyance and Transfer Deed in relation to lands situated at Loughbeg Wood at Longpoint between DAERA and Mid Ulster District Council in connection with the OpenGround Project
- (x) Any Other Business

C048/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 9.35 pm

Chair _____

Date _____

**Minutes of Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Monday 1 March 2021
in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by virtual means**

Members Present: Councillor Mallaghan (Chair)

Councillors Ashton, Black*, Brown*, Buchanan*, Burton*, Clarke*, Colvin*, Corey*, Cuddy*, Cuthbertson*, Doris*, Elattar*, Forde*, Gildernew*, Glasgow*, Graham, Hughes*, Kearney* Kerr*, N McAleer*, S McAleer*, McFlynn*, B McGuigan*, S McGuigan*, McKinney*, McLean*, McNamee*, D McPeake*, S McPeake*, Milne*, Molloy*, Monteith*, Oneill*, Quinn, Robinson*, Totten* and Wilson*

Officers in Attendance: Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Ms Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
Ms Canavan, Director of Organisational Development
Mr Cassells, Director of Environment and Property
Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure
Ms Mezza, Head of Communications
Mr Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Mr JJ Tohill, Director of Finance
Ms Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

SC001/21 Apologies

Councillor Mullen.

SC002/21 Declarations of Interest

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

SC003/21 Chair's Business

Councillor Mallaghan advised that normally at this meeting of striking the rate no other business was constructed, but there has been one item raised today in the press which was of particular significant, particularly to those people who live in Dungannon or the surrounding areas who use the Bank of Ireland branch which has now been listed for closure resulting in a huge disappointment to its customers. He felt that this had come at a time when there had been the anticipation of seeking a way forward in revitalising our town centres and going to do banking was one of those particular reasons where there was an opportunity to make a stop at other shops, go for a cup of coffee or go for lunch which was now a very regrettable situation particularly for Dungannon and although Mid Ulster were very fortunate this didn't affect any of our other towns, none the less it was still a very hard hit for Dungannon.

He advised that within his own party, Pearse Doherty was taking the lead today on an All Ireland point of view as this just didn't affect Mid Ulster, but right across the whole island of Ireland and he would be doing all in their power to get these closures reversed.

He stated that Bank of Ireland was heavily subsidised by the taxpayer in the past and was scandalous for them to turn around and do this to the taxpayer in its own right and brought into the scene the whole scenario around the public relationship with their local banks as customers were of the view it was a public service. He stated that this was the capitalist nature of bank shareholders and its profit focus and nothing to do with service as everything has moved to online packages. He said that it was sad to see the multi-national banks like Santander, Nationwide or those types of banks which were becoming the most common name on our local high streets rather than our local banks.

Councillor Monteith stated that the Chair had reflected on a lot of what he wished to say about a very significant blow to Dungannon town centre today that a lot of people were talking about. He said that there was a physiological impact as the people of Dungannon were reeling at the minute from the uncertainty moving forward. When restrictions are lifted a lot of people won't know what they were going to be returning to within our towns as we will probably see a change in the way of life in the last 12 months for everyone in relation to how they go about their daily business and how it's going to be facilitated. He said that it was going to take a lot of money and imagination to make town centres vibrant again. It was galling to reflect upon the substantial public and borrowed money used 12 to 13 years ago to bail out these banks, which many people questioned at the time. Now this was the end result which shows what the banks actually think of the public. He had a lot of sympathy for workers in the banks who now face a lot of uncertainty. Although the banks are saying that there would be no forced redundancies, ultimately there will be concerns around job security. He felt that banking organisations have now put their two fingers up at the public, despite the fact the public had previously bailed them out; this is a despicable act especially during these unprecedented times. There was widespread concern that this will not be the only bank to do this type of thing. He said that he would encourage the Economic Development department within the Council to liaise with Traders and DRP as there needed to be a formal method of interaction between the Council, Councillors and traders as soon as possible. The Council has a responsibility to listen to, and be an advocate for the traders who needed a lot of imagination and substantial money to bring any type of life or vitality to town centres when this was all over.

Councillor Quinn concurred with the previous speakers and said that, although he lived outside Dungannon, like many others he was going to be badly affected by this announcement today. He was fortunate in that he does a lot of his banking online but he recognised that this closure would greatly disadvantage the elderly who were immobile and untrusting of internet transaction mechanisms. Many people would also miss the face to face engagement with the person in the bank who they know, trust and was local. He felt that this was going to create a massive hole in Dungannon as a town as most towns were built around the banks. It may be a struggle to bring traders and vitality back to the town centres, which was already hard enough. He advised that when First Trust pulled out of Coalisland, this left a

massive void in the town and difficulty trying to get another tenant for the property vacated. Thankfully the property was filled, but still the absence of the bank left a massive gaping hole for years to come. He agreed with previous comments regarding the public bailing out these banks 12 to 13 years ago and how people were now being left high and dry once again. Unfortunately, the scenario was that banks want to increase their profit, as they don't want to pay the rent, building maintenance and staff costs. This was all about them and not about the public service, which they should be providing. Although he agreed with comments about getting the Economic Development department on board to liaise with traders etc., he felt that it may be more beneficial to write to the Bank of Ireland to see what their plans are and what their reasons were for closing these branches. He said that the Mid Ulster District was fortunate to have only one bank closure as there were other areas which have seen two or three bank closures. This was especially true down South where people have been hit particularly bad by bank closures. He felt that this was something which the Council had to take on head on and suggested meeting with representatives from the Bank of Ireland to find out why they came to this decision and if there was any chance of reversing the decision. The Economic Development department should also investigate working with Traders to help them move forward.

Councillor Kerr said he wished to reflect on previous comments made as the bank's action was purely capitalism and the banks do not care about the public. He concurred with Councillor Quinn's comment regarding Coalisland losing Halifax and First Trust and also noted that Stewartstown had lost Ulster Bank. As a Halifax customer, the nearest branch to him was in Portadown which was ridiculous. He agreed with Councillor Monteith's comment about staff redundancies and felt that this was a very worrying time for them. He concurred with Councillor Quinn's suggestion about the Council writing to the Bank of Ireland to try and encourage them to reverse the bank's decision.

Councillor Ashton said that it was a major blow to Dungannon town centre and would be happy to second Councillor Quinn's proposal of writing to the Managing Director of the Bank of Ireland. She had in the past, as a Member of the Council, met with banks when they had made these sort of decisions and would have to say that the outcome of those discussions had not been very successful. However, she certainly thought that it was worthwhile for the Council to let them know that this Council was not happy that one of the major banks in the town was going to be leaving. She said that and the Council needs to ensure that they agree that there will continue to be proper banking facilities left in the town. She said that, if the decision was related to a premises issue, the Council could signpost them to other adequate sites within the town centre.

Councillor Cuthbertson said that he was very disappointed to hear the news today of the proposed closure of the bank, which was just another hammer blow to Dungannon. Dungannon had lost a number of businesses through lockdown this past year and he stated that this was going to leave a huge void in the town centre. He indicated that he would be fully supportive of what the Council could do in relation to organising a meeting with or writing to the Bank of Ireland and that the decision should be actioned as soon as possible.

The Chair advised that the Council was also a customer of Bank of Ireland with a large turnover in terms of money going through the accounts and that, in addition to writing as a local authority representing its district, the Council should be writing from the perspective of being a customer of Bank of Ireland. He added that Councillors Quinn and Ashton were correct in their proposal and also suggested that the Council write to the Taoiseach as the Irish Government hold a 14% stake in the Bank of Ireland. The Southern government was obviously quite a prominent stakeholder of the bank and it should be doing what's right on behalf of the local people as well.

Proposed by Councillor Quinn
Seconded by Councillor Ashton and

Resolved To:

1. Write to the representatives of the Bank of Ireland to find out why they came to this decision and to establish if there was any chance of reversing it ;
2. Allow its Economic Development department to work with the Traders to try to progress the economic recovery of the Dungannon town;
3. Write to the Taoiseach as the Irish Government is a prominent shareholder in the Bank of Ireland to request that the Government show support for the people of Dunagannon

Councillor Cuddy concurred with all previous comments but stated that the Bank of Ireland building held very significant character for the town centre. He suggested that it would be important for the Council not to let the building get dilapidated and should work to identify an early use for it if the bank closes. He felt that the bank closure had been on the cards for some time, even before Covid occurred, and suggested that the bank only used the pandemic as an excuse to advance their plans. He suggested that it would be beneficial for the Council to brainstorm the issue and agreed that it was important for the Economic Development department to get involved with the Traders to try and identify ways of revitalising the town centre as soon as possible.

Matters for Decision

The Chair advised that the Director of Finance would go through each individual paper with comments and decisions being taken thereafter.

SC004/21 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

The Director of Finance drew attention to the previously circulated report regarding the 2020/2021 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and sought approval that the policy as detailed for year 2021/22 be retained for the incoming year.

SC005/21 Rate Estimates for 2021-2022

SC006/21 Approval of Rates Estimates for 2021/22

- (i) Authorisation of the expenditure included in the Estimates**
- (ii) Fixing for the Financial Year beginning 1 April 2021 the amount to be raised by means of rates and striking the domestic and non-domestic rate for 2021/22**

SC007/21 Robustness of Rate Estimates 2021/22

SC008/21 Adequacy of Council's Reserves for 2021/22

The Director of Finance, on behalf of the Chief Executive, explained to the Members that the two reports "Robustness of Rate Estimates 2021/22" and "Adequacy of Council's reserves for 2021/22" were central to the Council's consideration of what Rate it should strike for 2021/22. Although both reports were included on the agenda as items for information, the Members needed to carefully consider their contents as they deliberated what Rate the Council should strike. The reports are expressly referenced in statute and therefore were essential reading.

The Director of Finance presented all three of his previously circulated reports, which collectively dealt with the officers' recommendations in relation to the 2021/22 Rate Estimates.

The Director outlined the Council's process for considering the 2021/22 Rate Estimates and explained the actions that SOLACE and ALGFO were engaged in with both the Departments for Communities and Finance to try to find a pragmatic solution to the financial problems arising as a result of the pandemic.

Having explained the detail of the financial considerations underpinning the officers' recommendation that the Council agree a budget for 2021/22 that would allow the Council to strike a Rate, which would reflect a 1.59% increase from the previous year. The Director concluded by reminding the members that a 1.59% increase in the district Rate would result in domestic and non-domestic ratepayers experiencing a 0.68% and 0.73% increase in Rate bills due to the fact that the regional Rate was being held at the 2020/21 level.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance for the paper, which included important detail, and for all the officers' work over the past number of months during which there had been many meeting to discuss the Rate estimates, especially with the members of the P&R committee who had put so much work into this issue. He said that the Directors and Heads of Service had undertaken an exceptional amount of work by trawling through all their budget lines to identify savings. He acknowledged that savings should be made where possible, but noted that members should be wary of putting the Council under financial pressure over the next 12 months by simply cutting budgets. He advised that 2020/21 had been a very turbulent year and that it was very difficult to see a lot of its facilities and services closed, like the Arts & Culture Centres, Leisure Centres etc. Closure had not just meant the loss of revenue. It was difficult to actually see the doors closed because of the wonderful service provided by all the staff and people who work in Council facilities and many

people are missing the opportunity to go out and do the things that they were used doing. He said that the response by the Council to the Covid pandemic has been exceptional, particularly the amount of work which has happened and staff redeploying themselves into different areas of work in order to keep delivering the high level of service that the people of Mid Ulster expect.

The Chair advised that the Rate Support Grant (RSG) would be a very important part of the discussions taking place tonight and the uncertainty pertaining to its future availability is always a concern. He noted the additional RSG that the Council had received late in 2020/21, which as a one off payment for this year with no guarantee of a similar or any amount in future years, could not be relied upon as a solution to the Council's recurrent financial pressures. The Mid Ulster district area is a fantastic place to live and currently has the second lowest domestic district rate of all the 11 councils. This is a fact that the Council should be very proud of. The Chair noted that the ability of the Council to have such a low domestic district Rate came from the leadership within the Council Chamber that is shown by a very modest Council. He commended the Development departmental team on their commitment to investing in projects which levered extra money into our Council areas and said that the Council was not afraid to put its money towards securing funding from government departments or elsewhere, particularly the EU PEACE Programmes. He noted that the Council was committed to a very comprehensive Capital Programme, which would be taken forward over the next five years. This Programme would really make a huge impact on the local economy, initially in relation to construction jobs, which were so important to the Mid Ulster district. He said that he was encouraged to see that the Council's ambitions would still be achieved and welcomed the fact that the proposed budget that was presented at the meeting did not recommend any reduction in the Council's aspirations.

He stated that, reflecting on all the things said by the Director Finance, on behalf of himself and his party, he would propose that the Council accept the Officer recommendation of agreeing a budget which would see the increase in district Rate being limited to a 1.59% increase.

Councillor Quinn thanked the Director of Finance on all the work in which he done preparing the figures over these last few months. He referred to the Rate Support Grant not being guaranteed for next year and asked the Director to confirm his understanding that if the Council used the additional RSG received in 2020/21 to lower the 2021/22 Rate, ratepayer would effectively have to find a way to fund the subvented costs when striking the 2022/23 Rate in addition to funding the 2022/23 financial pressures.

The Director of Finance agreed that the Rate Support Grant was not guaranteed for any year and could only be relied upon when it's in the Council's bank account. He advised that it was his understanding that the Council would benefit from RSG in 2021/22 but that Department of Communities officials had told him that the additional funding received in 2020/21 would definitely not be made available in 2022/22. Consequently, he said that it was important for members to appreciate that the extra £517k RSG recently received would not be replicated next year or indeed any future years. The Director advised that when he reported on the robustness of the estimates earlier in the meeting, he was attempting to explain that what the Council

is attempting to do when trying to strike a Rate is to fund its recurrent expenditure. Rate income must be recurrent because it funds recurrent expenditure. Therefore, if the Council seeks to rely on the additional RSG received in 2020/21 as a recurrent source of income that can be used to defray recurrent expenditure included within the 2021/22 Rate estimates, it would be breaking a fundamental accounting principle which he would recommend against. In reply to the query about the consequence of applying the additional funds received in 2020/22 to defray recurrent expenditure in 2021/22, the Director advised that the ratepayers would indeed have to fund the defrayed expenditure when it sought to strike its 2021/22 district Rate.

Councillor Graham thanked the Director of Finance for providing a very robust report, but said that this was a very challenging year and that just as the Council had looked after its staff who she wished to commend for all their efforts during this pandemic, by not making them redundant, now was the time to look after ratepayers. She advised that the Ulster Unionist Party proposal would be for a 0% increase as any increase would put a further financial pressure on people within the district. Such an increase also ignores the reality of the hardships in homes and in businesses. The Council wants to see local businesses recover from Covid and to see its town centres flourish, but it also wants its residents to know that their Council was working for their best interests at all times. She reiterated her party's proposal for a 0% increase.

The Chair asked, as a point of information, Councillor Graham what proposal she had to fund the savings necessary to deliver a zero per cent increase.

Councillor Graham replied to advise that the savings should be funded by the Council applying a balance, i.e. from the Council's reserves.

Councillor Ashton wished to firstly commend the Director of Finance on once again the effort that he and his team had went in preparing this year's budget and said that it would be remiss of her not to acknowledge the progress that had been made towards delivering an affordable Rate since the Council initially started these discussions late last year. She said that, although every members knows that every year she champions low rates, it was particularly important for her to do so this year. The Council's residents and businesses have went through one of their toughest years yet due to the Covid Pandemic and although a 1.59% increase was a very low rate increase, she proposed that the 2021/22 rate be frozen at the 2020/2021 level. This would require the Council to identify additional savings of just over 688K. She said that the Council was in good financial position to absorb this cost for one year. In addition, the Council has recently received an additional amount for Rates Support Grant in 2020/21 that has not been reflected in the 2020/21 budget. The Council also received a substantial amount following its win in Court regarding previous RSG allocations that could be used to offset the one off £688k saving. This is now the time to utilise these funds. Individuals last year and this year have seen their pay reduced, businesses don't know from one month to the next whether or not they are going to be allowed to open. In fact this Council through no fault of its own has had to reduce its services to our ratepayers whether through a reduction in the opening hours of recycling centres, or closure of leisure centres and culture centres. The domestic ratepayers have in fact seen a reduction in the services they have been able to avail of this year despite having to pay their Rates for 2020/21.

She asked members this year, for the year that was in it, to seriously consider her proposal for this year at 0%.

The Director of Finance thanked members for their kind words in relation to the officers' efforts to present proposals to secure an affordable Rate. He agreed that it was a difficult year for everyone and he welcomed the engagement with the members over recent months to facilitate the preparation of the officers' proposal of a 1.59% Rate increase. He referred to Councillor Graham's comment in that staff were fortunate to work for this Council as they were protected but felt that members needed to be aware that, in preparing the 2021/22 Rate estimates, the officers had to make assumptions in relation to future costs. He stated that the Rate estimates presented did not make any provision for staff pay rises in 2021/22 apart from a modest amount that the Chancellor had suggested might be appropriate for lowly paid staff. Members needed to be aware that the Council has no control over whether pay rises will occur or not as these matters are negotiated in England by the NJC. He requested that members be mindful of this as, if the NJC agreed a pay rise, the Council would have to pay an undoubtedly significant amount in respect of pay awards regardless of whether it had budgeted to do so. In referring to the suggestion that Rates should be frozen with a 0% increase from the previous year, he said that it such a decision was like kicking a can down the road as the unfunded costs would have to be funded as part of the next year's Rate estimates.

The Director of Finance agreed with Councillor Ashton's comments in relation to the Council's cash reserves, but went on to explain that, the additional Rate Support Grant, which was successfully obtained through court action, was no different to the additional Rate Support Grant that was secured this year, as it would not be received again in the future. The funds were available to Council and an important part of the reason why the Council had adequately funded its Capital programme. These additional previously unbudgeted amounts also enabled the Council to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities and to manage unanticipated issues that will materialise in the future. Referring to Councillor Cuddy's remarks about the importance of ensuring that the Bank of Ireland building doesn't fall into disrepair, although he could not know what this would mean for Council financially, but if it resulted in the Council utilising any of its money, such expenditure was not included within the Rate estimates. He said that the officers had recommended that the Rate is increased by 1.59% from its 2020/21 level to enable the Council to respond to various uncertain situations and circumstances during 2021/22. In summary, he urged members to be wary of attempting to on striking a 0% increase as previous councils that had done this in the past often had done it to their detriment. However, he said that the Rate to be struck was a decision for members.

The Chair referred to the Director of Finance's last comment, and said that he remembered when this Council had come together, it didn't have the luxury of having cash reserves to use. The Council's cash reserves had taken years to build up, and would play a significant role in funding the Council's Capital programme over the next five years. He felt that a decision to strike a Rate with a 0% increase will tie the Council's hands and stymie its inability to move forward. He said that more and more expected from the Council now, much more than in the past. Discussions had taken place last week about using Council resources to revitalise our high streets, lowering car parking charges which itself would have a direct impact on the Council's

budget with the possibility of a reduction to free car parking likely to result in £400k loss to Council. Discussions ensued five weeks ago regarding the district's walking paths as the population were making more use of the outdoors due to the pandemic and the current budget doesn't take into consideration funding the salting or gritting. He felt that members needed to be careful and felt that a 0% increase would not be progressive, would be retrospective and cause damage to the Council's finances moving forward.

Councillor Cuddy also supported Councillor Graham's proposal and commended the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and his team on all the work which was carried out. The work was even handed right across the board and any questions which needed clarified were addressed. He concurred with comments made by the Chair regarding the unprecedented times within the last 12 months, but this Council was in the fortunate position to have been supported during the pandemic by the Government as money came straight away. This Council had a healthy balance sheet. The Council's Leisure Centres and Arts Centres may have had to close but this didn't mean there was a huge amount of money lost as it costs the Council up to £1 million to run each of these facilities. Whilst it may be a disadvantage to some, there has been a lot of savings also.

He commended the Director of Finance on his sterling job and his success on getting money back and Mid Ulster Council were fortunate to be in such good shape financially. He give credit to the Sinn Fein minister for saying that councils should not increase rates. There was an onus on members to look after the here and now going forward and felt that staff had been looked after financially in the past. However, now was the time to look after the ratepayers as this Council was in a good financial position.

Councillor McKinney advised that a 1.59% saving equated to approximately £702k. He stated that each year the Council put away 1.2% of its Rate into savings for Capital projects, which had been possible for a number of years as Mid Ulster was an efficient Council. He felt that by proposing a 0% increase due to the pandemic and the year it was, it wasn't an issue for this Council due to its financial strength. He referred to specific amounts included within the Rate estimates like provision for additional National Insurance and the additional RSG funding from Stormont at £517k. When those two figures were added together, this more than covered the savings needed to eliminate the Rate increase. He said what was being proposed was to take money out of the reserves for the time being. This was an opportunity for the Council to lead and not to follow. He also said that this was now the perfect time to look after our ratepayers as each Councillor was elected by the ratepayer and this was the one and only time during this unprecedented year to give something back to them. He concluded by saying that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity and was happy to be part of the party which brought this proposal forward.

Councillor Monteith commended the Director of Finance on always making himself available to members on any concerns they may have and always providing an excellent explanation. He advised that everyone has come through an extraordinary year and this means extraordinary budgets. He stated that he had sat on the legacy Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council where year on year there were 0% increases, which effectively became a cut. Although he was very reluctant to go for

a 0% increase, his conscience would not allow him to proceed to vote for a 1.59% increase and he would not be supporting it. For this Council to receive a windfall which no-one knew was coming of £517k of Rate Support Grant and for not at least to consider attributing all or part of it for easing the rate burden on ratepayers was a retrograde decision as all government funding comes through tax or rates. He felt that, for an organisation which received a huge intervention through the public purse during the pandemic it would be unjustifiable for it to call for a rate increase and felt that extraordinary years call for extraordinary decisions. He would not be voting for a 1.59% increase and would be minded this time to support the 0% increase. He concluded by saying the physiologically and morally the Council had to be on the side of the ratepayer and symbolically there was a need to say that there would be no increase to put a burden on them and would be more supportive of the £51k7 being taken off at this stage.

The Director of Finance thanked members for their kind sentiments in relation to the officers' efforts. However, he wished to come back to some issues raised by members, but didn't want to be seen blocking political debate and decision making. In relation to Councillor McKinney's comment about Council being the lead, he stated that, in his opinion, the Council was certainly a leader and not a follower, because it had challenged Department for Communities and HMRC. The Council had been proven correct to do so as it led to some financial windfalls which were significant to the Council. The Council has already decided to use a significant proportion of these windfalls to fund the Capital programme which delivers significant elements within both the community and corporate plan with no or very minimal cost to the ratepayer. He therefore stated that reducing the pressure on the current ratepayer would put additional pressure on the ratepayers of tomorrow who would be paying off the debt that would otherwise would not have to be taken if cash reserves are used to fund revenue expenditure instead of being applied to the Capital programme.

The Director of Finance also referred to Councillor McKinney's comments around the budgeted increases in National Insurance costs which were estimated in the amount of approximately £280k. The officers anticipate that this cost will materialise when the Government has to eventually raise taxes across the board to fund Covid related borrowings. He said that he didn't dispute the fact that the projected expenditure associated with potential National Insurance increases could be taken out of the Rate estimates. However, knowing now how much discussion was being directed towards the application of the previous financial windfalls towards funding recurrent revenue expenditure, if he was preparing the Rate estimates again, he would reflect very strongly on the fact that Officers were anticipating that there would be no pay rise for the staff in 2021/22. This pressure, if materialised, could result in approximately half a million pounds (£0.5m) of pay rises, which were completely outside the Council's control. His dilemma now is compounded by the fact that he knows that nearly every other council's Rate estimates have factored this pressure into their 2021/22 Rate estimates. He said that, if he was asked tonight by members to reflect on Councillor McKinney's comments and, bearing in mind that the report noted that the Officers had volunteered to work towards making additional recurrent savings of £200k in 2021/22, he would find it very difficult to support the member's comments. He emphasised again to members that the Rate estimates proposed by the officers were robust as they recommended a 1.59% increase. However, he

could not be sure that Council could reduce the rate increase to 0% and still be able to conclude that the estimates would be robust. He felt that a 0% increase wouldn't cripple the Council, but he suggested that members should reflect carefully as the robustness of the estimates report was a statutory report which the Council had to consider when striking the Rate.

The Director advised that, the Council's success in challenging public bodies like DfC and HMRC, is clouding the fact that it was actually beginning to peak in its accumulation of cash reserves, and for the first time was spending more delivering capital projects than was provide for within the annual funding of the capital budget. He advised that if the Council wasn't continually going back to central government and successfully challenging their decisions etc., members would see the cash reserves slipping away. He stated that the Council cannot plan on continuing to go to the "litigation well" as opportunities were now drying up.

The Director also advised that, if the Council strikes a Rate showing a zero per cent increase on the previous year and is unable to realise sufficient recurrent savings in 2021/22, it was foreseeable that the 2022/23 Rate could have to rise by up to 5.9% without even having regard to funding new 2022/23 financial pressures.

The Chair said as a point of information for members that the recent VAT case which was won by the Council was currently under appeal and it would be prudent for the Council not to anticipate those amounts at this stage.

Councillor Cuthbertson advised that this was an exceptional tough year for householders and businesses which had struggled and said that there had been great intervention by the Northern Ireland Executive and Westminster in providing additional funding, but felt that it was unfair to some businesses on the high street missing out on the rate holiday as they really have struggled in paying their rates. He said that furlough scheme was guaranteed to 30 April and there was every indication that this could be extended to the summer and while the Leisure Centres could potentially open on the 1 April, he would be very surprised that there would be any staff, particularly staff which were shielding or vulnerable returning to work on the 1 April never mind the 30 April and felt that there were savings there.

He said that this Council had recently spoken a lot about eradicating child poverty and fuel poverty, with this Council taking great praise in advertising £40 fuel vouchers to eligible families on free school meals, but felt that members needed to be aware of families in the district which potentially had missed out on this fuel assistance by a few pounds or pennies a week and suggested rather than giving those families facing fuel poverty, we were actually adding an extra tax on them this year to make them suffer more. He felt that there was an onus on the Council to be mindful of this and do what we say that we were going to do by trying to eradicate child poverty and this was the year the Council had their Rate Support Grant and felt it would be foolish not to support our ratepayers who haven't received anything this year.

Councillor Gildernew thanked the Director of Finance in preparing such a substantial report and referred to previous speaker's comment about the bad year regarding child and fuel poverty etc. and said that the proposed domestic Rate increase

equated to 68p per month. He asked if the people of Mid Ulster wished for this Council to carry on as it was or freeze Rates and go back to where they were 10 years ago. He said that in his mind the question would answer itself.

Councillor Quinn said that he had been listening very closely to members comments and contributions and especially to Councillor Cuddy's comment around the Council being in a good financial position, but felt it didn't provide an opportunity for Council to get a flesh wound if it could be avoided. He referred to comment around Officers not coming begging to meetings stated that this could be argued as he had in the past approached Officers for some ideas he may have had and a whilst they agree it was a good idea, they advise that there was no money for it in the budget and may be something that could be looked at down the line. He said that, although there was a perception that there was ample funding available, there was always the opportunity to generate more. He further said that he wouldn't be comfortable with the 1.59% increase proposed, especially in the light of Councillor Monteith's comments regarding the policy within Dungannon of having a 0% increase year on year. This policy had come back to bite the Council and when Mid Ulster Council came into existence and Rates had to be raised, this effected Dungannon ratepayers a lot more than those from the other two legacy councils. He referred to the provision for additional National Insurance costs, and asked if it was removed from the Rate estimates, where the Rate could be brought down to.

The Director of Finance advised that additional National Insurance costs of £281,557k as detailed in attachment had been included in the Rate estimates. If this was removed, this would bring the Rate increase down to 1.4% equating to a 40p increase per month to ratepayer instead of 68p. He reminded members of the anticipated pay award not being included as this was like a tax on Council because, if awarded, it would have to be paid regardless of whether there was budget provision for it.

Councillor Ashton referred to Capital spend and reserves and said that it was her understanding that there was £1.5 million built into the Rate base and a further £1 million for funding the Council's contribution to the growth deal, which she wouldn't be anticipating reducing even if the Council accepted the 0% proposal. She said that it would be remiss of her not to refer to previous comment by Councillor McKinney regarding budget holders and advised that she had been involved heavily in meetings with the Director of Finance on the Rates and all parties around this table tonight had commented on the great job and the scrutiny which had been done by the Finance team. She said that the reason 1.59% increase was proposed was because of the scrutiny and putting back to budget holders from where it was started and she had sat in P&R meetings where Property Services had come quite regularly looking money for doing repair work to provide building maintenance and she had previously proposed that the Environment & Property budget be rectified to stop them coming each year requesting money. She said that she doesn't support the comments indicating that there was loads of money laying within the budget holders as this had been robustly scrutinised by the Director of Finance and Chief Executive.

Councillor McNamee commended the Director of Finance on his impressive report and said that from the formation of this Council, it had been investing in the community through leisure, community groups, culture and arts, masterplans and the

growth deal. He said that 1.59% increase allowed the Council to invest in all our communities and was constantly listening each month to members complaining that they needed certain things within their areas and this wouldn't be feasible with a 0% increase in the budget. He agreed that this was a very tough year but 1.59% increase proposed from expert advice should be progressed as it was well acceptable and not a heavy burden to the ratepayer.

The Chair agreed with Councillor McNamee's sentiments and said that there would be no funding available to put back into the community if 0% increase was agreed tonight.

Councillor S McPeake commended the Director of Finance on his very detailed report as always. He agreed with Councillor Ashton's comment regarding the rates projections being robustly investigated and felt that the Director's recommendation of a 1.59% increase was a very modest figure as he remembered years previously in Magherafelt rates being a 5 to 6% increase as there wasn't ample funding for Capital projects. He said now was a time for the Council to deliver adequate walkways and promote good health & wellbeing, this would criminal on the Council's part to not have funding at hand to provide this and no-one could predict the money which may be needed going forward and to tie our hands at this stage would be the wrong thing to do. He supported the 1.59% figure as it was a modest increase.

Councillor Kerr thanked the Director of Finance for compiling such a comprehensive report and said that he had listened intently to both sides of the argument and felt that he morally couldn't support the 1.59% increase as it was an exceptional year and there should be an opportunity to maximise the costs and would support 0% increase.

Councillor Colvin commended the excellent work of the Director of Finance but said that he had to agree with the other members in supporting a 0% increase as this was a very different situation this year. He felt that people were under enough pressure and if there was a signal sent out to the ratepayers than the Council empathised with them during these unprecedented times and proposed a 0% increase that this would be very important gesture by the Council. He said that he didn't see the amount of 68p but the word increase speaks volumes and in reality the future was uncertain but this gesture would go down well with the ratepayers when they need support the most.

Councillor Cuddy stated that it was important for the Council to look at more outdoor leisure going forward as Covid had set the precedent for the sign of the future.

Councillor Elattar thanked the Director of Finance and his team for working tirelessly to get to the proposed rate of 1.59%. She said that this was a very hard year for every resident within Mid Ulster but we had to look forward to our Capital projects and there had been a suggestion by a member to take the money from leisure but this would be unwise as this funding was needed more than ever for forests as these were paramount for people's good mental health. She said although 68p per month could be an additional cost to some people, but it could also be very beneficial to the community as a whole to enhance areas where there was need. In referring to staff being protected advised that our staff often go above the call of duty and work very

hard for the members and residents of Mid Ulster and wouldn't like to think that members were vilifying them and putting this responsibility upon their shoulders.

Councillor Milne also commended the Director of Finance for producing an excellent report and felt that the meeting tonight could be seen as a bit of stargazing and political party playing. He said there was an onus on the Council to look to the future and what may emerge like the issue of Brexit which was misread by some members here tonight and asked the Director of Finance where this Council would be if it was another year like this one and possibly another year after that.

Councillor Doris advised that Councillor Milne had already raised the issue around Brexit and concurred with Councillor Elattar's comments around staff. She referred to Councillor Cuddy's comment earlier regarding the change of life after this pandemic as no-one could be certain to what life would be like going forward especially around leisure and didn't feel it was morally right for the sake of a saving of 68p per month to add further pressure to people, families and leisure staff.

Councillor S McGuigan thanked the Director of Finance for his comprehensive report and felt it was good to have a challenging meeting from his perspective so figures can add up. He concurred with Councillor Monteith's comments regarding 0% increase in Dungannon and what this resulted in the past. He felt that each year when members sit down and make their projections on what was needed for the future there was always the anticipation to be prudent each year and money from rates being put into a pot for eventualities like this year so as not to hit the ratepayer with a large increase the following year. He said that he was satisfied with the proposed rate increase of 1.59% and would have concerns if cutting back that proposal to a 0% increase as this may have dire consequences going forward.

Councillor Quinn thanked everyone again for their input but raised concerns about staff's pay award and said that he didn't wish to put this issue at risk and if members could go for a 1.4% increase could this go forward without putting something else at risk.

The Director of Finance advised that the Council was as financially sound as any other Council in the North and had been cautious in its spending. He said that, if members proposed a 1.4% increase this could potentially be deliverable, but he would have to reiterate his concern about decreasing the Rate further as it wasn't, in his opinion, appropriate, due to the real risk of a staff pay award. He said that University of Ulster Jordanstown (UUJ) had predicted £1.4 million loss in non-domestic Rate income for the Council in 2021/22 due to the effects of the pandemic, and when this was added into the financial mix, it would certainly further suggest that reducing the increase to % would be a bold move.

The Chair enquired from Councillor Quinn (SDLP Party Leader) what his party's thoughts were if the recommendation went to a vote.

Councillor Quinn said that although he wouldn't be a fan of the 1.59% increase, he felt that his party could not agree to the 0% recommendation.

Councillor Clarke said that he had listened to the debate tonight and was involved in the discussions and listening to the Director of Finance, it was clear that if Mid Ulster Council wished to take the lead and deliver on its commitments, it was incumbent for members to make the proper decision on proceeding forward and would support the recommendation of 1.59% increase.

Councillor Molloy welcomed the debate and found it a good open discussion and with the terrible news emerging today about the closure of the Bank of Ireland in Dungannon and the past closure of First Trust in Coalisland, this was another major blow to residents of the borough. He referred to footprint in Dungannon town centre decreasing and doesn't know what the future holds and felt that the Council needed to be in a position to be a lot stronger to support these businesses with grants and other financial assistance and in terms of Capital projects and outdoor recreation. He said that he was proud to be a member this Council as it does sterling work across the district and cannot expect officers to perform miracles with one hand tied behind their back and would be supporting the 1.59% increase this year.

Councillor McLean said he purposely left his comments to the end and felt that Councillor Ashton had explained very clearly the sentiments of the DUP stance and took exception to the comment regarding to political party playing as his party had spent a lot of time rigorously going through the figures. He commended Councillor Ashton on clearly setting out her agenda and how it was going to be achieved and felt that there was nothing further to be said and suggested moving on to the voting stage.

The Chief Executive said that on behalf of staff he wanted to thank members for their political opinion on their direction, guidance and discussions with the Director of Finance and himself. He advised that it was wonderful to see everyone sharing the same enthusiasm and determination on working to the best of their abilities for the good of the Council. He also thanked the SMT on their commitment on working tirelessly to get where we were currently and reminded members of services across the Council which SMT had done a sterling job on. Moving forward would be uncertain and no indication on what our services would be like, but there would be an onus on Officers to try and mitigate things going forward. He said that he had every confidence in the recommendation proposed by the Director of Finance.

He stated that in terms of the services the budget which was presented to members tonight allows Officers and members to continue the services in the manner in which they were carried out over the current year and previously.

This potential rate increase of 1.59% would allow the Council to:

Support hundreds SME's over the next 12 months moving forward; Grow multiple existing businesses to help them grow, develop and generate employment and expand their businesses; Address the high level of increased unemployment particularly in the sectors which Mid Ulster was strong in; Support hundreds of community groups, voluntary groups, church groups and support groups; Deliver an extremely ambitious Capital programme in the excess of £61 million over the next 3 years which was the communities programme, programme of Mid Ulster which addressed the wellbeing, sports, young, elderly, visitors alike and was the legacy of

our children and grandchildren; Continue that investment and continue to enforce it and minimise our borrowings and if money was not being spent on repayments, then these would be invested into decent projects and services on the ground.

He advised members as first year as Chief Executive of Mid Ulster District Council, he commended the budget and as Chief Executive he was confident that the Council's reserves were adequate. The 1.59% increase was based on robust estimates and he therefore recommended the 1.59% increase in Rate to the Council.

The Chair put the proposed recommendation of 0% rate increase to the meeting.

For - 17
Against - 16
Abstained - 5

Resolved That, although the Council notes the officers' recommendations, it would instruct the officers to:

1. Reduce the expenditure recommended to be included in the 2021/22 Rate estimates by applying a balance in the amount of £690,000 to result in the amount of £43,363,323 to be raised by Rates;
2. Similarly adjust the income and expenditure budgets for 2021/22 on the understanding that the Chief Executive shall be authorised to vire funds between budget lines during 2021/22 as he considers necessary to deliver the Council's services and aspirations in so far as practicable;
3. Strike domestic and non-domestic Rates for 2021/22 in the amount of 0.3373 and 23.4749 respectively each reflecting a 0% increase from the Rates struck in 2020/21.

SC009/20 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 8.50 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Minutes of Meeting of Planning Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Tuesday 2 March 2021 in Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt and by virtual means

Members Present

Councillor S McPeake, Chair

Councillors Bell*, Black*, Brown*, Clarke*, Colvin*, Cuthbertson, Gildernew*, Glasgow, Kearney*, Mallaghan*, McFlynn*, McKinney, D McPeake, Quinn*, Robinson*

Officers in Attendance

Dr Boomer, Planning Manager
Mr Bowman, Head of Development Management**
Ms Donnelly, Council Solicitor
Ms Doyle, Senior Planning Officer**
Mr Marrion, Senior Planning Officer**
Ms McAllister, Senior Planning Officer**
Ms McCullagh, Senior Planning Officer**
Miss Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

* Denotes members and members of the public present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.01 pm

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake 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 Committee in the Chamber and by virtual means, by referring to Annex A to this minute.

The Chair also referred to addendum which had been circulated earlier in the day and asked if those joining remotely had seen this document and had time to read it.

Members joining remotely confirmed that they had seen the addendum and had time to read it.

P028/21 Apologies

None.

P029/21 Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor Robinson declared an interest in agenda item 4.18 – LA09/2020/1200/F – Retention of additional office space (amended description) at 15a Grange Road, Ballygawley for Exi-Tile Ltd.

P030/21 Chair's Business

The Planning Manager advised that Mid Ulster District Council was again a finalist in the National Town Planning Awards, this time for its contribution to national heritage for the conservation and creation of the OM Dark Skies Observatory and Park and the protection of surrounding peatlands. The Planning Manager stated that Mid Ulster has been nationally recognised three times in the last five years for its excellence in town planning and recognised more times than all the other Councils in Northern Ireland put together. The Planning Manager highlighted that Mid Ulster District Council was still the only Council in Northern Ireland to win the award.

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake stated this was good news and that hopefully Council would be successful in the awards.

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake referred to the below applications which were on the agenda for determination and sought approval to have the following applications deferred from tonight's meeting schedule for an office meeting –

Agenda Item 4.4 – LA09/2019/0955/F – Retention of existing agricultural shed at 90m S of 91 Ballynagarve Road, Magherafelt for Mr Edmond Ferguson.

Agenda Item 4.11 – LA09/2020/1044/O – Replacement dwelling at 64 Glassdrummond Road, Aughnacloy for Mr John McBride.

Agenda Item 4.12 – LA09/2020/1045/O – Replacement dwelling at 66 Glassdrummond Road, Aughnacloy for Mr John McBride.

Agenda Item 4.13 – LA09/2020/1080/F – New vehicular access at approx. 200m E of 33 Oldtown Road, Bellaghy for Mrs Emma McCoy.

Agenda Item 4.20 – LA09/2020/1337/O – Dwelling and garage at 10m W of 45 Drumenny Road, Ballinderry for Gavin McGeehan.

Agenda Item 4.22 – LA09/2020/1387/O – Dwelling and domestic garage at site 40m E of 26 Washingbay Road, Coalisland for Mr Declan McClure.

Agenda Item 4.23 – LA09/2020/1394/O – Dwelling on infill site between 112 and 118 Ardboe Road, Moortown, Cookstown for Mr Ruari Donnelly and Ms Aimee O'Neill.

Agenda Item 4.24 – LA09/2020/1480/O – Dwelling and garage on a farm adjacent to 24 Draperstown Road, Annagh and Moneysterling, Desertmartin for Paschal Wilson.

Agenda Item 4.29 – LA09/2020/1660/O – Dwelling and garage at site adjacent to 135 Ballynease Road, Portglenone for Jim McAuley.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor D McPeake and

Resolved That the planning applications listed above for deferral be deferred for an office meeting.

Councillor Mallaghan proposed that agenda item 4.26 – LA09/2020/1548/F – Dwelling and garage at 40m NE of 59 Ferry Road, Coalisland for Patrick McNeice be deferred for an office meeting. The Councillor stated that the applicant felt he had made some errors in his approach to submitting the application and would like the opportunity to renegotiate with planning officers.

Councillor D McPeake seconded Councillor Mallaghan's proposal.

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1548/F be deferred for an office meeting.

Matters for Decision

P031/21 Planning Applications for Determination

The Chair drew Members attention to the undernoted planning applications for determination.

LA09/2017/0787/F	Refurbishment of existing 3 storey house including demolition of rear return and new 3 storey extension to rear at 33 Killyman Street, Moy, Dungannon for M & C McCallion
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LA09/2017/0788/LBC	Refurbishment of existing 3 storey house including demolition of rear return and new 3 storey extension to rear at 33 Killyman Street, Moy, Dungannon for M & C McCallion
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Councillor Gildernew stated that there only appeared to be design issues in relation to these applications and asked if there was any merit in deferring the applications to try to reach a resolution.

The Planning Manager advised that officers have been working on these applications since 2017 and that no one seemed to be willing to address the issues.

Mr Marrion (SPO) presented reports on planning applications LA09/2017/0787/F and LA09/2017/0788/LBC advising that they were recommended for refusal.

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake suggested deferring the applications for one month to allow the applicant to come forward and make representation on issues.

The Planning Manager stated he had some sympathy for those who take on a listed building and that the applicant is facing a difficult situation in that if the applications

are refused Council would have no alternative but to take enforcement action. The Planning Manager also highlighted that it is illegal to start work on a listed building without having the right consents. The Planning Manager suggested holding the applications for one month in order to arrange a meeting between the applicant, Historic Buildings and planning officers to see if a compromise can be achieved. The Planning Manager stated that if the applicant is not willing to work with officers then the application can go forward as a refusal and the applicant then has the option of a planning appeal.

Resolved That planning applications LA09/2017/0787/F and LA09/2017/0788/LBC be deferred for an office meeting

LA09/2019/0730/O Housing development at land immediately NE of St Patrick's Primary School, Pomeroy Road, Donaghmore for Torrent Valley Initiative Ltd

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2019/0730/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
Seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2019/0730/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2019/0955/F Retention of existing agricultural shed at 90m S of 91 Ballynagarve Road Magherafelt, for Mr Edmond Ferguson

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2020/0121/F Factory building, car parking and all associated site works at lands 85m NE of 100 Coleraine Road, Maghera, for Specialist Joinery Group

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/0121/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor Kearney and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/0121/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/0362/F **4 storage containers to be used as a 2 storey sports cafe and a museum; maintain existing vehicular access and provide ancillary parking and landscaping at lands at the junction of Carrydarragh Road & Turnaface Road; to the immediate E & NE of No.21 Turnaface Road, Moneymore for ARK Kingdom Ministry**

Ms McCullagh (SPO) presented a report on planning application LA09/2020/0362/F advising that it was recommended for refusal.

Councillor Colvin stated that given the officers report he would propose the recommendation to refuse the application.

Councillor Brown seconded Councillor Colvin's proposal.

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/0362/F be refused on grounds stated in the officer's report.

LA09/2020/0395/F **Change of Use from Barn (Old Piggery) to 2 residential units and associated ground works at site adjacent to Aughrim House, Creagh, Toomebridge for Shane Doherty**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/0395/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor D McPeake
Seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/0395/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/0632/F **Residential development of 11 detached units; creation of new accesses on Tobermore Road and Fern Drive, private amenity space and landscaping at lands 40m N of 11 Desertmartin Road, Magherafelt, for Mullaghboy Construction Ltd**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/0632/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/0632/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

**LA09/2020/0791/F Split level dwelling with integral domestic garage at
40m N of 9b Crocknamohil Road, Draperstown for
Enda McGrath and Aimee Kelly**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application
LA09/2020/0791/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/0791/F be approved subject to
conditions as per the officer's report.

**LA09/2020/0795/O Dwelling and domestic garage at land between 37
and 43 Tulnavern Road, Ballygawley for Noel Stinson**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application
LA09/2020/0795/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor Gildernew and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/0795/O be approved subject to
conditions as per the officer's report.

**LA09/2020/1044/O Replacement dwelling at 64 Glassdrummond Road,
Aughnacloy for Mr John Mc Kenna**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

**LA09/2020/1045/O Replacement dwelling at 66 Glassdrummond Road,
Aughnacloy for Mr John Mc Kenna**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

**LA09/2020/1080/F New vehicular access at approx. 200m E of 33
Oldtown Road, Bellaghy for Mrs Emma McCoy**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

**LA09/2020/1084/F Detached material & tool storage building for
adjacent retail outlet at 31 Dungannon Road
Coalisland, for Mr Cathal Campbell**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application
LA09/2020/1084/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1084/F be approved subject to
conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/1100/F **Covered area and partial reroofing with increase of ridge height for internal storage and 1 additional external storage bin at 4 Ballygillen Road, Coagh, for Thomas Hutchinson & Sons Ltd**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/1100/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Bell
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1100/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/1142/RM **Two storey dwelling and domestic garage at 110m NE of 56 Sandholes Road, Cookstown for Claire McCarron and Adam McCulla**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/1142/RM which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Bell
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1142/RM be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/1151/O **Dwelling and garage at 200m SW of 107 Lisaclare Road (on the Aughagranna Road) Stewartstown, for James Canavan**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/1151/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor McFlynn
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1151/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/1200/F **Retention of additional office space (amended description) at 15a Grange Road Ballygawley for Exi-Tile Ltd**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/1200/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Mr Marrion (SPO) drew attention to the addendum which advised that condition 2 of approval is amended to state that 'visibility splays to be provided within 8 weeks of the date of decision.'

Councillor Cuthbertson asked whether there was a need for visibility splays as the application site is within the 30mph limit of Ballygawley.

The Planning Manager stated that whether an application is within a town or not does not alter the need for visibility splays, he advised it may reduce the distance but would not negate the need.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor Kearney and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1200/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report and amended condition as per addendum.

LA09/2020/1257/F Farm building at 16 Brantry Road, Dungannon, for Declan Rafferty

Application withdrawn.

LA09/2020/1337/O Dwelling and garage at 10m W of 45 Drumenny Road, Ballinderry for Gavin Mc Geehan

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2020/1359/F Retention of existing general purpose farm shed at land approximately 70m S of 26 Tullyaran Road Dungannon for Ryan Burnside

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/1359/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Colvin
Seconded by Councillor Gildernew and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1359/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/1387/O Dwelling and domestic garage at Site 40m E of 26 Washingbay Road, Coalisland for Mr Declan McClure

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2020/1394/O Dwelling on infill site between 112 & 118 Ardboe Road, Moortown, Cookstown, for Mr Rauri Donnelly & Ms Aimee O'Neill

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2020/1480/O Dwelling & garage on a farm adjacent to 24 Draperstown Road, Annagh & Moneystertling, Desertmartin, for Paschal Wilson

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

**LA09/2020/1509/O Dwelling at lands E of 37 Cookstown Road
Dungannon for Raymond McCann**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/1509/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1509/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

**LA09/2020/1548/F Dwelling and garage.at 40m NE of 59 Ferry Road,
Coalisland, for Patrick McNeice**

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

**LA09/2020/1601/F Dwelling at approx 60m SW of 110 Mullaghboy Road,
Ballymacpeake Upper, Bellaghy, for Mr Darren Milne**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/1601/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor D McPeake
Seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1601/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

**LA09/2020/1658/F Two storey side and rear extension at 2
Dromdallagan, Straw, Draperstown for Seamus &
Caitlin Bradley**

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/1658/F which had a recommendation for approval.

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake highlighted the addendum and late objection received in relation to this application.

Ms McCullagh (SPO) stated that an objection had been received previously in relation to the application and most concerns were dealt with in the case officer report. It was advised that an additional concern had now been raised in relation to ownership and that land had not been transferred from the developer to the applicant. The planning officer advised that this has been checked with the agent and that the applicant is content that they own the land in question therefore officers are content that this is a civil matter, that there are no outstanding issues and that policy has been met.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor D McPeake and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/1658/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/1660/O Dwelling and garage at site adjacent to 135 Ballynease Road, Portglenone, for Jim McAuley

Agreed that application be deferred for an office meeting earlier in meeting.

LA09/2021/0004/O Hotel development between Glenshane Filling Station at 31 Glenshane Road and 10 Fallagloon Road, Maghera for James Molloy Glenshane Services Ltd

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2021/0004/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor Kearney and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2021/0004/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2019/0838/F Hobby/Storage shed, portacabin, raised flower beds, polytunnels and car parking associated with Coalisland mens shed club. (Amended landscaping and drainage information provided) at lands 90m S of 177a Annagher Road Coalisland (DMAC Engineering Factory) for Lilac Cancer Support Ltd

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2019/0838/F which had a recommendation for approval.

The Head of Development Management highlighted the addendum circulated which set out additional conditions required by NIEA/Water Management Unit in relation to the updated response dated 19 February 2021 -

- 1 There shall be no external lighting on the site until a lighting plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The approved plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The Plan shall include the following:
 - a) Specifications of lighting to be used across the site, including model of luminaires, location and height.
 - b) All measures to mitigate for the impacts of artificial lighting on bats and other wildlife, eg timing of lighting, use of low level lighting, screens, hoods, cowls etc.
 - c) A horizontal illuminance contour plan (isolux drawing) showing predicted light spillage across the site with boundary woodland, hedgerows and scrub to have light spill of less than 1 lux.

Reason: To minimise the impact of the proposal on bats and other wildlife.

(It was advised that this condition replaces condition 7 within the officer report.)

- 2 Prior the commencement of any development hereby approved, a full and unified drainage plan shall be submitted to the Council and agreed in writing with Water Management Unit. All the drainage elements (proposed and existing) which are to be used as part of the development should be shown, the pathways of all drainage channels should be shown in unbroken form, and all surface water and foul drainage as well as the siting of any existing and proposed septic tanks / treatment plants, soakaways, interceptors, sumps and silt traps with their associated drainage channels, with the direction of flow clearly labelled. The destination of all drainage should be clearly stated and identified. This plan should also identify the material surfaces of the site.

Reason: In the interest of ensuring the development will not have an adverse impact on the surface water environment.

The Head of Development Management also highlighted that Drawing No. 02/E is to be superceded to remove any reference to the adjacent car park application still under consideration.

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake asked if the applicant was aware of the additional conditions.

The Head of Development Management advised that the applicant was aware of the additional conditions and that plans have been submitted.

Councillor Gildernew proposed the officer recommendation to approve the application.

Councillor Quinn stated that when the application was brought to Committee last month it was being recommended for refusal due to environmental health concerns and he asked how this had been resolved. The Councillor referred to the car park which he thought was excessive and that objectors are convinced that there is an ulterior motive to this. Councillor Quinn asked what will happen after five years if the Mens Shed decide they don't want the shed anymore and if the site could then be taken over by another party. Councillor Quinn referred to the application being discussed at the Development Committee.

The Planning Manager advised that there were three applications in the mix for DMAC Engineering – the application brought to committee last month related to chimneys being sited on the engineering works and that there was conflict with Environmental Health in relation to this. The Planning Manager stated he hoped that all parties would work together on these issues. The Planning Manager stated that the second application related to a lorry yard and that this should not be prejudiced with the application before Members tonight. The Planning Manager stated that the point raised in relation to what happens after 5 years was relevant and asked if conditions require the removal of the temporary structures.

The Head of Development Management advised that the second condition of approval states that –

“Upon the expiry of 5 years from the date of permission the site shall be cleared of all buildings and structures and suitably restored in accordance with a plan to be submitted and agreed by the Council within 6 months before the use ceases on the site.”

Councillor Bell seconded Councillor Gildernew’s proposal.

Councillor McKinney asked in what way this application had been discussed at the Development Committee as it was not protocol to discuss a live application at another committee.

Councillor Quinn stated the matter was raised under Chair’s Business at the Development Committee, that there had not been much in depth discussion on the application and that he did not feel there had been any attempt to prejudice the application.

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake stated that he felt that anyone can mention an application and it was not improper to do so and that he was not aware of any other in depth discussions taking place or any prejudice being made.

Councillor Glasgow stated he would also have some concerns regarding planning Members who also sit on the Development Committee discussing an application and that they could run the risk of challenge. The Councillor stated that those Members of Planning who also sit on the Development should perhaps declare an interest in this application.

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake stated Members were aware of protocol and Code of Conduct and if anyone felt they had taken part in discussions relating to this application it was up to the individual to raise this.

Councillor Clarke stated he did not recall the matter being discussed at the Development Committee but would declare an interest in this application.

Councillor Black stated he also sat on the Development Committee and could not recall any discussion that would prejudice this application but would declare an interest none the less.

Councillor Kearney also declared an interest in the application.

The Planning Manager stated he did not feel that any Member had moved to prejudice the outcome of this application. He stated that he was aware of a campaign by the agent/applicant when the application first came up as a refusal and that he did not feel this had been helpful as it had taken a lot longer to resolve the planning issues.

The Planning Manager stated that the lesson from this situation is that when someone gets too involved in trying to achieve an outcome it does not help and actually delays the process and makes things more difficult. The Planning Manager stated he did not believe any Members were involved in this way with this application.

Resolved That planning application LA09/2019/0838/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report and additional conditions as per addendum.

LA09/2019/1466/O Infill dwelling and garage, approx 102m E of 260 Ballygawley Road, Dungannon for Mr Kevin McCaul

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2019/1466/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2019/1466/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2019/1638/F Infill sites for 2 dwellings and garages adjacent to 7 Coalpit Road, Dungannon, for Mr Shaun Kelly

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2019/1638/F which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
Seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2019/1638/F be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

LA09/2020/0399/O Dwelling and domestic garage at 60m NW of 58 Annaghquin Road, Rock, for Patrick McGuire

Members considered previously circulated report on planning application LA09/2020/0399/O which had a recommendation for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Colvin and

Resolved That planning application LA09/2020/0399/O be approved subject to conditions as per the officer's report.

P032/21 Receive Report on Call for Evidence on Legislation

The Planning Manager presented previously circulated report which considered the review of the Implementation of the Planning Act (NI) 2011.

In addition to the report the Planning Manager suggested that comment be included on when a legal start is deemed to be made on an application and felt that, similar to English legislation, if an access to an application has been made then the application should be kept live.

The Planning Manager stated that Covid has proved that technology can be used a lot more and there was a movement towards the electronic age for publications, placing

advertisements etc and that he felt the whole system should be updated. He did not feel however that pre application notification advertisement and consultation process should be that prescriptive as to have the exact wording.

The Planning Manager stated he also felt that there was no need for pre determination hearings as this Council gives everyone the chance to have their say either at the Planning Committee or at an office meeting.

The Chair, Councillor S McPeake referred to call ins and the delays in determining applications as a result.

The Planning Manager stated it would be fair to suggest time limits for call ins.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he agreed with the comments in relation to fees as he felt some fees needed to be significantly higher especially in relation to a CLUD.

Proposed by Councillor Glasgow
Seconded by Councillor D McPeake and

Resolved That Council responds to the Review of the Implementation of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 by making the suggestions contained within the report and including commentary in relation to legal starts, pre determination hearings, the wording of advertisements, call ins and fees.

Matters for Information

P033/21 Minutes of Planning Committee held on 2 February 2021

Members noted minutes of Planning Committee held on 2 February 2021.

P034/21 Receive Appeal Decisions

Members noted previously circulated report which advised on the outcome of appeals against the Council decisions to –

- 1) Refuse planning permission for Retention of a 20ft x 8 ft container to house vending machines at 42 Main Road Moygashel for Mr Bryan Turkington,
- 2) Issue an enforcement notice against the unauthorised siting of a metal container used for retailing at Lands/premises 30m East of 41 Main Street, Moygashel, Dungannon BT71 7QU

P035/21 Receive Report on A5 Cycle Path

Members noted previously circulated report which advised of a Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR) for the A5 Western Transport Corridor (A5WTC).

Live broadcast ended at 8.00 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Glasgow
Seconded by Councillor D McPeake 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 P036/21 to P048/21.

Matters for Decision

- P036/21 Receive Urban Capacity Study Report
- P037/21 Receive response to criticisms of Landscape Character Assessment Review
- P038/21 Receive report on Covid 19 – Implications for the LDP
- P039/21 Receive report on the implications of the draft Marine Plan on the DPS
- P040/21 Receive Retail and Leisure Capacity Study Report
- P041/21 Receive report on letter from DfI – Mid Ulster draft Transport Study
- P042/21 Receive EIA Forest Service Consultation Reports - ERA 20-21-77 Glenlark – Proposed Forest Road Works
- P043/21 Receive EIA Forest Service Consultation Reports - ERA 20-21-78 Kileenan – Deforestation
- P044/21 Receive EIA Forest Service Consultation Reports - ERA 20-21-83 Aughnacloy - Afforestation

Matters for Information

- P045/21 Confidential Minutes of Planning Committee held on 2 February 2021
- P046/21 Enforcement Live Case List
- P047/21 Enforcement Cases Opened
- P048/21 Enforcement Cases Closed

P049/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7 pm and concluded at 9.01 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A – Introductory Remarks from the Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to the meeting of Mid Ulster District Council's Planning Committee in the Chamber, Magherafelt and virtually.

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast feed. The Live Broadcast will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I will 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 you are for or against the proposal or abstaining from voting
- For members attending remotely, note that by voting on any application, you are confirming that you were in attendance for the duration of, and that you heard and saw all relevant information in connection with the application you vote on
- When invited to speak please introduce yourself by name to the meeting. When finished please put your audio to mute
- 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
- An Addendum was emailed to all Committee Members at 5pm today. There is also a hard copy on each desk in the Chamber. Can all members attending remotely please confirm that they received the Addendum and that have had sufficient time to review it?
- If referring to a specific report please reference the report, page or slide being referred to so everyone has a clear understanding
- For members of the public that are exercising a right to speak by remote means, please ensure that you are able to hear and be heard by councillors, officers and any others requesting speaking rights on the particular application. If this isn't the case you must advise the Chair immediately. Please note that once your application has been decided, you will be removed from the meeting. If you wish to view the rest of the meeting, please join the live link.

- Can I remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or the use of any other means to enable persons not present to see or hear any proceedings (whether now or later), or making a contemporaneous oral report of any of the proceedings are all prohibited acts.

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.



ADDENDUM TO PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA

FOR PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING ON: 2nd March 2021

Additional information has been received on the following items since the agenda was issued.

ITEM	INFORMATION RECEIVED	ACTION REQUIRED
4,18	Condition 2 amended 'visibility splays to be provided within 8 weeks of the date of the decision'	Members to note
4.28	Late objection received	Members to note
5.1	<p>Additional conditions required by NIEA / Water Management Unit on updated Consultation response dated 19th Feb 2021.</p> <p>1. There shall be no external lighting on the site until a lighting plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The approved plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The Plan shall include the following:</p> <p>a) Specifications of lighting to be used across the site, including model of luminaires, location and height.</p>	

	<p>b) All measures to mitigate for the impacts of artificial lighting on bats and other wildlife, eg timing of lighting, use of low level lighting, screens, hoods, cowls etc.</p> <p>c) A horizontal illuminance contour plan (isolux drawing) showing predicted light spillage across the site with boundary woodland, hedgerows and scrub to have light spill of less than 1 lux.</p> <p>Reason: To minimise the impact of the proposal on bats and other wildlife.</p> <p>(this condition is to replace Condition 7 in your report)</p> <p>2. Prior the commencement of any development hereby approved, a full and unified drainage plan shall be submitted to the Council and agreed in writing with Water Management Unit. All the drainage elements (proposed and existing) which are to be used as part of the development should be shown, the pathways of all drainage channels should be shown in unbroken form, and all surface water and foul drainage as well as the siting of any existing and proposed septic tanks / treatment plants, soakaways, interceptors, sumps and silt traps with their associated drainage channels, with the direction of flow clearly labelled. The destination of all drainage should be clearly stated and</p>	
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	<p>identified. This plan should also identify the material surfaces of the site.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of ensuring the development will not have an adverse impact on the surface water environment.</p> <p>Members also to note that Drawing No. 02/E to be superceded to remove any reference to the adjacent car park application still under consideration.</p>	

Minutes of Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 4 March 2021 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt and by Virtual Means

Members Present

Councillor Quinn, Chair

Councillors , Buchanan*, Cuddy*, Doris*, Elattar*, Forde*, Gildernew*, Hughes*, McFlynn*, S McGuigan*, McKinney, McLean*, S McPeake*, Molloy*, Totten*

Officers in Attendance

Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Mrs Canavan**, Director of Organisational Development
Mr Cassells, Director of Environment & Property Services
Mr Kelso**, Director of Public Health & Infrastructure
Ms Mezza**, Head of Marketing
Mr Moffett**, Head of Democratic Services
Mr O'Hagan, Head of ICT
Mr JJ Tohill**, Director of Finance
Mrs Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

Others in Attendance

Ms Ellen Fearon, NUS-USI President

* Denotes members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes Others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Quinn, the Deputy Chair, Councillor McKinney took the Chair.

The Chair, Councillor McKinney (Deputy Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor Quinn 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.

Councillor Quinn entered meeting at 7.01 pm and took the Chair.

PR043/21 Apologies

Councillor Ashton.

PR044/21 Declarations of Interest

None.

PR045/21 Chair's Business

The Chair advised that Updated Branding Guidelines would now be taken in Matters for Information.

PR046/21 Deputation – NUS - USI

The Chair welcomed the Ms Elle Fearon, President of National Students Union (NSU) – USI to the meeting and invited her to make their presentation. (Appendix 1).

Ms Fearon thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak to them tonight and provided update on the work carried out by NUS-USI. She advised that the membership had over 200,000 students; 4 Higher Education (HE) – QUBSU, UUSU, St. Mary's SU, Stranmillis SU; 6 Further Education (FE) – SRC, NWRC, SWC, SERC, NRC & Belfast Met; 1 Agricultural College (CAFRE); National Society of Apprentices; with 100% affiliation.

She stated that the NUS-USI "Students Deserve Better" campaigns for:

Fully funded education; The Right to Defer to End Course; Rent Rebate; The Right to Leave Accommodation; Food Necessities & Wellbeing Support and Accessible Online Teaching and was glad to say that 85 Politicians have signed the pledge. She concluded by saying that it would be beneficial to extend the £500 Covid Disruption Grant and would appreciate any Council support going forward.

The Chair thanked Ms Fearon for her impressive presentation and said that he had very fond memories of being a student. He enquired about the £500 payment that students had now received but it was his understanding that this wasn't to be paid through Student Finance, but this is now not the case which was causing some confusion for those students who were not availing of a student loan or getting a scholarship and asked how this would work out if students hadn't got a student loan.

Ms Fearon advised that this would be up to Universities to issue the payment to students and although it was originally to be processed through Student Finance there had been confusion as it was also stated that Student Finance wouldn't issue the payment to students studying in England, Scotland and Wales which NUS-USI were still campaigning on. She said that her organisation were working closely with Universities to make sure that the payment was distributed to all eligible students.

The Chair said that this put a lot of pressure back on the Economy Minister and hoped that students studying in the UK could avail of the funding.

Councillor S McPeake commended the work that Ms Fearon and her team were doing as it was very important at this time as students seemed to be left behind during this pandemic, a forgotten sector which still had to pay bills and hoped that the students across the water and down South were able to avail of the £500 as their costs were even more substantial than the ones in the North and was pleased to say that he had signed the petition a few weeks ago. He advised that his party colleague Councillor Niall McAleer recently had brought a successful motion through Council to

ask for support towards the Students Union to plug gaps and to write to the Department of the Economy in helping students during these unprecedented times.

Councillor Doris stated that it was great to get some background on what the organisation does as she also had fond memories of Uni and had to say that her heart really went out to the students this year as they had missed out on so many memories. She said that there had been a real failure on behalf of the landlords on how they treated students and also the government as they have been seen as an after-thought. She wished to reaffirm Sinn Féins commitment on behalf of the students and was glad to see £500 payment being made, but felt that it took too long to come forward.

The Chair asked Ms Fearon what the Council could do to support the campaign going forward. He said that he was aware of two motions being brought forward by Sinn Féin and also his party had been trying hard with the petition to try and get things moving.

Ms Fearon thanked members for their support and asked that the Council make parents and students aware of the campaign and the Union as there would be a lot of students who were angry and feeling incredibly hopeless right now and just don't know where to go and this was a worry due to mental health. She said that support would be given to these students and possibly getting them involved in active campaigning. She said that it would be beneficial for Council to encourage others to sign the campaign and share links from the NUS-USI and for political parties who have any power within the assembly to try and get them on board.

Councillor McFlynn commended Ms Fearon on her detailed presentation and was magnificent to see over 200,000 students coming under the NUS-USI umbrella and passed on her congratulations on the group's sterling work. She said that the SDLP would continue to support the students and all young people and the SDLP's spokesperson Daniel McCrossan along with Sinn Féin had been fighting the fight with the Economy Minister to try and get financial help for students. She said that she was aware of a lot of students being affected mentally as they cannot get into the social aspect and cannot experience the true Uni life and asked Ms Fearon and her team to continue on the fight and keep getting communications out in the public domain.

The Chair thanked Ms Fearon for attending meeting tonight and asked her to keep up the good work at which she left the meeting at 7.26 pm.

Matters for Decision

PR047/21 Revised Equality Scheme, Draft Disability Action Plan (2021-2026) and Equality Action Plan (2021-2026)

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report to make members aware of the outcome of the public consultation held on Mid Ulster District Council Revised Equality Scheme, Draft Disability Action Plan (2021-2026) and Equality Action Plan (2021-2026).

Councillor Doris said that she would be happy to propose the report and added that at the last meeting of the Coalisland Town Centre Forum a representative from the Disability Forum commended the Council on tying the Forum in from the start of the project, which was good on the part of the Council.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that the feedback from respondents be incorporated into the Scheme and associated action plans.

PR048/21 Improvement Objectives 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 (Proposed) and Consultation

The Head of Democratic Services presented previously circulated report to consider the proposed objectives for 2021/22 and 2022/23 as set in compliance with the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 (the Act) and subsequent guidance as issued by the Department for Communities (LG21/2016 onwards) and establish timelines for a public consultation exercise relating to the proposed improvement objectives.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor McLean and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the four draft improvement objectives for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and the initiation of consultation together with associated timeline.

PR049/21 Revised Code of Conduct for Local Government

The Director of Organisational Development presented previously circulated report and sought approval of adoption of a Revised Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees for Mid Ulster District Council as approved by the Local Government Staff Commission at its meeting on 19 January 2021.

Proposed by Councillor S McPeake
Seconded by Councillor S McGuigan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to adopt the Revised Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees for Mid Ulster District Council from 1 April 2021.

PR050/20 Revision of Data Protection Policy

The Head of ICT presented previously circulated report and sought approval for a Revised Protection Policy (Appendix 1).

Proposed by Councillor McKinney
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the adoption and revision of the updated Data Protection Policy version 2.0.

PR051/20 Video Conferencing Options for Council and Committee Meetings

The Head of ICT presented previously circulated report to advise members of the software options for Video Conferencing facilities for Council and Committee meetings remotely attending meetings.

Options being:

- Microsoft Teams
- Cisco WebEx
- Zoom

Councillor Molloy stated that even with fibre to his premises he still had issues with Webex but was aware of whatever platforms there were that this could be the case regardless. In terms of committee meetings there may be an anticipation that members may be able to actually conduct business in person from the Chamber in that not so distant future, but in terms of committee and confidential business enquired if these could be facilitated within the options mentioned tonight as well as broadcasting.

The Head of ICT advised that security features for the paid for options for Zoom and Teams facilitate sufficient controls for the Council to control the security of the Zoom and Teams meetings.

Councillor McLean advised that he experienced both and used both every day and was really much of a muchness as far as he was concerned due to the functionalities. He said that it was down to what worked best for everyone in trying to be as wide catching as possible and whichever facility works better for the majority of Council should be the preferred option. He suggested trialing the options for a month to see what the feedback and people's experiences was as this was what was going to test the water.

Councillor McFlynn advised that she was the current Chair of PCSP and all the meetings were carried out by Microsoft Team and although she found it difficult to operate at the start, she said that it now works well and agreed with the suggestion of seeing which facility works the best.

Councillor McKinney said that he was content with Webex as the system had worked fairly well for the 40 Councillors. He did agree however that there had been some issues at the beginning but had worked relatively well these last few months and felt that issues may relate to members bandwidth and didn't matter how good a system was unless you had good broadband. He stated that if something was working relatively well, why change it.

The Chair concurred with Councillor McKinney and said there could be problems with any platform if there was inadequate broadband. He said that he would be concerned as it may cause some confusion but would not be against trialing other methods if this could be accommodated.

The Head of ICT agreed that this could be trailed and would be happy to take away and implement and report back on feedback received.

Councillor Gildernew said that he would be happy to propose trailing Zoom as a preferred option as he had nothing but problems with Webex. He stated that he had been on zoom meeting with 88 participants with no issues and was not all down to broadband issues.

Proposed by Councillor Gildernew
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to proceed with Zoom trial as a preferred approach.

PR052/21 Member Services

No issues.

Matters for Information

PR053/21 Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee held on 4 February 2021

Members noted Policy and Resources Committee Minutes of Meeting held on 4 February 2021.

PR054/21 Processing and Transacting Confidential Business

Members noted report on Processing and Transacting Confidential Business.

PR055/21 NILGA Draft Response – Programme for Government

Members noted copy of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) draft response to the Northern Ireland Executive's consultation on a Draft Outcomes Framework for the forthcoming Programme for Government.

PR056/21 Updated Branding Guidelines (continued)

Members noted report on Updated Branding Guidelines.

Live broadcast ended at 7.50 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn 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 PR057/21 to PR066/21.

Matters for Decision

PR057/21 Full Fibre Project Update
PR058/21 ICT Software Contract Extensions March 2021
PR059/21 Land Acquisitions and Disposals
PR060/21 Cookstown Town Centre

Matters for Information

PR061/21 Confidential Minutes of Policy & Resources Committee
Meeting held on 4 February 2021
PR062/21 Staff Matters for Information
PR063/21 Prudential Code for Capital Finance Indicators and
Authorised & Operational Borrowing Limits
PR064/21 Insurance Arrangements for 2021/22
PR065/21 Financial Report for 10 Months ended 31 January 2021
PR066/21 Contracts and DAC

PR067/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.40 pm.

Chair _____

Date _____

**Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee of Mid Ulster District Council
held on Tuesday 9 March 2021 in Council Offices, Ballyronan Road,
Magherafelt and by virtual means**

Members Present	Councillor S McGuigan, Chair Councillors Brown*, Buchanan*, Burton*, Cuthbertson, Glasgow*, N McAleer*, S McAleer*, McFlynn*, B McGuigan*, McNamee*, Milne*, Totten*, Wilson*
Officers in Attendance	Mr Cassells, Director of Environment and Property Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure Mr Lowry, Head of Technical Services** Mr McAdoo, Head of Environmental Services** Mrs McClements, Head of Environmental Health** Mr Scullion, Head of Property Services** Mr Wilkinson, Head of Building Control** Miss Thompson, Democratic Services Officer
Others in Attendance	Councillor Cuddy*, Gildernew*, Councillor McLean*, Councillor McKinney*

* Denotes members and members of the public present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers 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 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.

E060/21 Apologies

Councillor O'Neill.

E061/21 Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor Burton declared an interest in agenda item 24 – Appointment of Mid Ulster – Ageing Well Contract.

E062/21 Chair's Business

Councillor Burton advised she had been contacted by the Unit Manager for St John Ambulance at Clogher who is seeking Council help and support for a lock up facility

in the area. The Councillor asked that officers progress this matter as soon as possible.

The Director of Environment and Property agreed to progress this.

Councillor S McAleer referred to the high amount of littering along roadsides and in particular mentioned the dual carriageway from Ballygawley which joins the M1. The Councillor stated this littering consists of fast food packaging, plastic bottles, cans, and cardboard cups and that so much of this type of waste could be taken home for recycling. Councillor S McAleer stated that clear up of such rubbish along the roadside puts people at risk and that members of the community could not go on to a 70mph road to undertake such a clean up. The Councillor stated that the littering is along either side of the road and not in the laybys which are maintained by Council and asked how Council can discourage such behaviour.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he supported Councillor McAleer's comments and that he had also noticed the problem recently as well. Councillor Cuthbertson felt it is down to enforcement and the only way people will start to get the message is when Council can publicise that it has prosecuted people for such offences. The Councillor stated that littering takes place everywhere and highlighted a large amount of littering in trees and shrubbery at Tesco car park in Dungannon.

Councillor B McGuigan stated that littering is an issue right across the District and referred to the recent meetings held to discuss littering and dog fouling. The Councillor stated that officers have a job of work in relation to these issues and felt that Members should wait until a report comes back to Committee to see the direction of travel being proposed.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure stated that officers are aware of the issues and that recent working group discussions with Members had been very useful. The Director advised that officers are working through the issues that were raised and that a draft action plan will be brought to the next meeting of Committee for consideration.

Councillor Burton agreed with Councillor McAleer's comments and stated that littering is a significant issue along this stretch of road which could cause an accident. The Councillor suggested a potential deterrent may be for fast food retailers to print the number plate of the vehicle collecting the food on to the bag the food is in. Councillor Burton also spoke in relation to the littering of glass bottles which when broken can cause glass splinters in the feet of animals.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure advised that officers were in discussions with high volume hot food outlets on this particular issue to consider the use of such controls. The Director stated that Council takes littering very seriously as it costs the ratepayer in excess of £1.7 million each year to deliver the street cleansing services across the District which could be reduced if there was less litter deposited.

Councillor Glasgow stated he had received a number of complaints in relation to the quality of the bin collection service carried out yesterday in a small area outside of Cookstown. The Councillor stated the complaints related to bins being left on their side over the white line on the Drum Road. Councillor Glasgow stated that residents

are committed to helping to improve the service and recognise the work of the bin collectors but that when they pay £25 for a bin they don't want it abused. The Councillors stated that residents leave their bins out in good faith and that officers need to look at the quality of service being provided.

The Director of Environment and Property agreed to look into this matter.

Councillor McNamee asked officers to carry out an inspection of the public realm scheme in Cookstown and to record the defects. The Councillor referred to utilities working in the town and that damage has been caused to the public realm and that he wanted to ensure that those responsible are held accountable for the damage and that the public realm scheme does not run into disrepair.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure stated there have been problems in the past with utilities doing work at public realm schemes and that officers would undertake a survey in Cookstown.

Matters for Decision

E063/21 Proposed Kerbside Recycling Trial Project

The Head of Environmental Services presented previously circulated report which sought approval to undertake a kerbside refuse/recycling trial based on an increased capacity for recyclables alongside a reduced capacity for residual waste.

Councillor Milne asked how long the trial will run for.

The Head of Environmental Services advised that the trial will run for at least six months to a year in order to assess seasonality fluctuations.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he noted this was a trial but felt there could be a number of problems. The Councillor referred to those who have purchased their bin privately and there could be a perception that the Council will take the bin from them. Councillor Cuthbertson also spoke in relation to situations when people will have extra waste and that this will just be held over until the next collection time and will therefore not reduce the amount being disposed of. The Councillor stated he was not against the trial but asked if any consideration had been given to starting a new housing development with the new system.

The Head of Environmental Services stated that the trial will include a mix of old and new housing and public and private housing.

The Director of Environment and Property stated that the purpose of running the trial on an existing route is that there is existing data for those routes and comparisons can then be taken from before and after the trial. The Director stated that anyone visiting the waste transfer stations can see the amount of material coming from the black bin which is able to go into the blue bin. The Director stated there are both economic and environmental benefits in the approach being proposed in that the blue bin capacity is being increased and will give householders the ability to recycle more, black bin capacity is being reduced marginally but that overall capacity is being increased. The Director highlighted it costs twice as much to process black

bin material than blue bin material and felt the proposal is a prudent approach which will give the Committee information to make future decisions.

Councillor Brown stated that if a household relies on the 240l bin then reducing the capacity will make things harder for these households and asked if this has been taken into account and if there is an option to opt out of the trial.

The Head of Environmental Services stated that for the purposes of the trial, Council will honour any pre-existing arrangements and approved second bin collections.

Councillor B McGuigan proposed the recommendation and that there was a need to encourage people to use their blue and brown bin.

Councillor McFlynn seconded Councillor B McGuigan's proposal but felt Councillor Brown's comments in relation to larger families who rely on the 240l bin were relevant. The Councillor asked if there was any merit in keeping the 240l black bin and potentially reducing how often it is collected.

The Head of Environmental Services stated this is another option however it is felt that collecting a smaller bin will be more acceptable.

Councillor Glasgow asked if the £20k cost is solely for the 500 houses in the trial. The Councillor also felt that communication from Council will be vital going forward as it is important to have the public on board with what is being implemented. Councillor Glasgow stated he would have some concerns in relation to those people with medical needs and require two black bins and asked would these people get two smaller bins or remain with the two 240l bins and asked if this has been taken into consideration.

The Director of Environment and Property stated that this has been taken into consideration and those with a medical condition and have been provided with a second 240l black bin will retain this.

Councillor Burton stated she agreed with Councillor Glasgow's comments in relation to the black bin capacity for those with medical needs. The Councillor asked if officers are content with how brown bins are being used as she felt that this service should be promoted.

The Director of Environment and Property stated that officers want to continue to promote the brown bin which is for food and garden waste and that work will continue with the marketing and communications team to keep the message in the public domain.

Councillor Glasgow asked if the costings outlined in the report were specific to the trial.

The Head of Environmental Services advised that the £27k is the cost of the bins for the trial.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to undertake undertake a kerbside refuse/recycling trial based on an increased capacity for recyclables alongside a reduced capacity for residual waste to approximately 500 households in Magherafelt.

E064/21 Fees for Entertainment Licences

The Head of Building Control presented previously circulated report which advised on a Determination issued by the Department of Communities in relation to Fees for Entertainment Licences.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated this report was welcome news and a sensible approach. The Councillor stated that as part of Council's rate setting process he had asked if this would be a rates pressure on the Council but that the announcement had come from the Executive a short time later advising it would meet any shortfall. Councillor Cuthbertson proposed the report recommendation.

Councillor McNamee seconded Councillor Cuthbertson's proposal stating this was excellent news.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to agree to the reduction in fees for the renewal of Entertainment Licences as detailed in the Determination issued by the Department for Communities for the Financial Year 2021/22 as set out at appendix 1 to report.

E065/21 Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) Draft Cavity Wall Action Plan

The Head of Building Control presented previously circulated report which outlined Council's response to consultation on the NIHE Draft Cavity Wall Insulation Action Plan.

Councillor McNamee referred to the 1000s of homes sold by NIHE to the public that may now have defective wall insulation and asked if it is within the consultation that these homes will be advised of the issues.

The Head of Building Control stated that the consultation dealt with the NIHE stock and did not include houses that had been sold to the public.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan referred to single walled properties and asked if the consultation considered these type of properties.

The Head of Building Control advised that this has been highlighted in the Council response as the consultation does not address the issue of single wall properties.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he welcomed the action plan as it is an important issue and he was sure every Councillor is contacted in relation to damp walls in houses and that something needs to be done to make houses liveable. The Councillor referred to NIHE houses which were sold privately and that no advice was previously given to those houses in relation to the removal of asbestos. Councillor Cuthbertson stated it is important that advice is given to those who have purchased NIHE properties.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure stated that the Councillors comments were noted and that the issues raised would be included in the response.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to respond to the NIHE consultation on Draft Cavity Wall Action Plan as set out at appendix 2 of report including commentary in relation to NIHE properties now in private ownership being advised of defects to insulation.

E066/21 Review of Policy on Street Naming and Numbering

The Head of Building Control presented previously circulated report which advised on the review of the Policy on Street Naming and Numbering.

Councillor McNamee proposed the report recommendation and stated that it is important that when renaming a street the public are informed of issues such as changing bank account details, mortgages, driving licence etc.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to the issues of changing address and advised of a situation which had been brought to his attention in that if a person changes address for a second time with a GP practice and this is outside the catchment area then that person will be struck off the practice list. The Councillor stated this should also be highlighted to the public.

In response to Councillor Cuthbertson's question it was advised that renaming a street will still require 100% agreement.

Councillor B McGuigan seconded Councillor McNamee's proposal and stated that this is a robust policy but that it is important that issues regarding the renaming of a street are flagged up to the residents.

Councillor Wilson stated it is vitally important to highlight to residents what the consequences of changing a road/street name are. The Councillor stated that when a request to change a name is put out to consultation there should be information included pointing out the issues ie. changing bank account details, mortgages etc.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan asked if this information was being provided at present.

The Head of Building Control advised that information had not been provided to date but that so far there have been no successful outcomes to requests to rename a street/road. The officer advised that information relating to what the renaming of a street entails can be provided going forward.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council agree the points raised within the Review of the Policy for Street Naming and Numbering as set out at appendix 2 of report.

E067/21 Bus Shelters Update

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

Further to the report the Head of Technical Services advised that the bus shelters at Killeenan Road, Cookstown, Glebe Court, Dungannon and Thornhill Road/Agharan Road, Pomeroy had now been installed.

Councillor N McAleer referred to bus shelter for Stewartstown and advised that at a meeting with DfI last week they had indicated that Council could proceed with installing the bus shelter. The Councillor asked if this is the case and if a date could be provided as to when works will commence.

The Head of Property Services advised that the location for the bus shelter has been confirmed and work in relation to preparing the base for the shelter can take place. The officer advised that delivery of the bus shelter is expected week commencing 12 April.

Proposed by Councillor B McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor Brown and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to progress the “On Hold” applications on the Bus Shelter Register following approval of the revised Bus Shelter Procedures -
- Main Street, Benburb
 - Tullyhogue village
 - St Colmans Park, Moortown
 - Cappagh village
 - Whitebridge, Ballygawley
 - Innishrush Village
 - Annaghnaboe Road, Clonoe
 - Bellaghy (2 no)
 - Knockloughrim Village
 - Meenagh Park, Coalisland
 - Eglishev View, Ballinderry

E068/21 Bus Shelters Procedural Guide

The Head of Technical Services presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the Council’s Procedural Guide for Installations of Bus Shelters within the District.

Proposed by Councillor S McAleer
Seconded by Councillor Buchanan and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the Bus Shelter Procedural Guide and survey documentation as detailed at appendices 1 and 2 of report.

**E069/21 DAERA – Valuing Nature – A Biodiversity Strategy for NI to 2020 -
Report on the implementation of the NI Biodiversity Strategy**

The Head of Technical Services presented previously circulated report which advised of a request from DAERA on progress made by Local Authorities on the promotion and conservation of biodiversity through the Local Biodiversity Plan process. This feeds into the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy which is a requirement under the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011 (the WANE Act).

Councillor S McAleer spoke in relation to incident at Knockmany last weekend in which over 100 bikers arrived and took up all the parking spaces. The Councillor advised that 40 bikers were also counted going over Queen Aine's burial site, they then proceeded to go through the forest destroying nature and fauna along the way and that this was not acceptable. Councillor McAleer stated the local community are annoyed with this activity and the effects on the environment and nature and stated she was also concerned as the area is being slowly destroyed.

The Head of Technical Services stated he took the Councillor's comments and concerns on board and would ask the Biodiversity Officer to look at the site to assess what damage has been done. It was advised that the Biodiversity Officer will also liaise with the Parks team on the issues raised as well.

Councillor Burton stated she agreed with Councillor S McAleer's comments and that it was a disgrace that this has happened at Knockmany. The Councillor referred to the number of walkers at the moment due to Covid and that this is causing a lot of litter and parking issues, the Councillor stated that there was also a lot of concern at the state of rural roads leading to forests etc due to increased volumes of traffic visiting these sites. Councillor Burton felt that Council has some work to do on these issues as there is frustration in relation to the amount of litter at these sites which is often left to local people to clear up. The Councillor stated that Council wants to encourage biodiversity and maintain the peace and tranquillity of these areas but that it needs to take on board and deal with the issues being raised.

The Head of Technical Services stated that he will raise the issues with the Biodiversity Officer and highlighted that going forward consideration may need to be given to projects and whether they will require additional car parking.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he had also received a number of calls in relation to issues at Knockmany and asked what role Council has at Knockmany and who issues should be reported to.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure stated it was probably best to raise issues with the Parks dept. and that concerns raised tonight would be forwarded to the Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation.

Councillor Burton stated that she understood there is a meeting with Forestry this week and that issues should be raised at this meeting. The Councillor also spoke in relation to broken trees on Cullenfad Road and overhanging branches on Glenhoy Road which are both owned by Forestry.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to respond to the consultation from DAERA as set out at appendix 2 of report. Draft response to be submitted in advance of the deadline of 25 March 2021 and confirmed following ratification at March Council meeting.

E070/21 Department of Health - Draft Mental Health Strategy

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure presented previously circulated report which advised on the Department of Health Consultation on the Draft Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031 and sought approval for Council response.

Councillor Graham stated that she had attended the meeting with the Mental Health Champion which she felt was very worthwhile and would propose the report recommendation.

Councillor Burton suggested that the Director of Public Health and Infrastructure liaise with the Policy Officer from Nilga before the Council response is sent. The Councillor advised that Nilga had also met in relation to this issue and had been asked to submit their five priority issues and that she wanted to feed into the Strategy the issues regarding transition from a young person to adult as safeguards were required to be built in. Councillor Burton also highlighted that the Mid Ulster area is covered by both the Northern and Southern Health Trusts and that she felt that there is a difference in the way each Trust deals with Council and that this causes issues as well. The Councillor also stated that representatives from the Southern Health Trust are not always at the table and involved in discussions which is detrimental to the Dungannon town area and wider Clogher Valley.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan stated he would agree with Councillor Burton's comments in relation to the Health Trusts and at times there seemed to be a disparity in how both Trusts operate and that the weakest response was often from the Southern Trust. The Chair stated that the issues regarding transition from young person to adult were important and that Council should continue to argue for that.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure advised that the transition issue was raised with the Mental Health Commissioner yesterday and that the Commissioner stated they were aware of the matter and are specifically addressing it with health trusts at this time but that Council would reinforce their concerns. The Director stated that issues in relation to the differences between Trusts was also discussed with the Mental Health Commissioner yesterday who took on board the comments raised.

Councillor Burton seconded Councillor Graham's proposal.

Councillor Wilson stated this is Council's response document and whilst he appreciated Councillor Burton's comments in relation to liaising with Nilga he felt that they may have their own views just as Council can have their own views. The Councillor stated that the response should also include commentary as to the need for mental health champions in industry and that Council would encourage this.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure agreed to reflect the point raised by Councillor Wilson. The Director also advised that the Community Planning Officer

was heavily involved in preparing the response document and that the Nilga view should already be reflected.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Council response to the Department of Health Draft Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031 as set out at appendix 1 of report with reinforcement of issues relating to transition of young person to adult, the differences between Health Trusts and the need for mental health champions in industry.

Matters for Information

E071/21 Minutes of Environment Committee held on 9 February 2021

Members noted minutes of Environment Committee held on 9 February 2021.

Councillor Cuthbertson asked if the issues at Coalisland Recycling Centre had been resolved. The Councillor referred to grass cuttings having to be lifted up into the container.

The Head of Environmental Services advised that bin lifters for blue and black bin compacters had been removed from the site for modification however these will be back on site by the end of the week. The officer advised that the green waste compacters do not have bin lifts and there are no plans to change these compacters.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated it is difficult for some people to have to lift green waste up into the compacter.

E072/21 Public/Bank Holiday Working Arrangements for 2021/22

Members noted previously circulated report which set out the proposed public/bank holiday working arrangements for Environmental Services for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

E073/21 Tullyvar Joint Committee Update

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on the business of the Tullyvar Joint Committee.

E074/21 Building Control Workload

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

E075/21 Entertainment Licensing Applications

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

E076/21 Product Safety Update Following EU Exit

Members noted previously circulated report which provided an update on work carried out by the Environmental Health Department, in association with the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), from a safety perspective for consumer goods.

E077/21 MUDC Health and Wellbeing Programmes

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the current programmes available to residents through the Environmental Health Department's Health and Wellbeing Team.

Councillor Cuthbertson asked if a resident cannot make contact remotely if a house visit will be made.

The Head of Environmental Health stated that each case is taken on its own merits and house visits will be undertaken if the situation arises and that officers will adhere to all health and safety guidance when making such visits.

E078/21 Live Here Love Here Awards Event

Members noted previously circulated report which advised of a Live Here Love Here virtual event to celebrate volunteer successes.

Live broadcast ended at 8.20 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor Milne 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 E079/21 to E089/21.

Matters for Decision

- | | |
|---------|---|
| E079/21 | Full Business Case (FBC) for the Development of Waste Management Infrastructure for Kerbside Collected Recyclates |
| E080/21 | Tender for Grave Digging & Associated Works |
| E081/21 | Review of Policy on Dual Language Nameplate Signage |
| E082/21 | Entertainment Licensing |
| E083/21 | Appointment of Mid Ulster - Ageing Well Contract |
| E084/21 | Public Analyst Services for the 11 District Councils |

Matters for Information

- | | |
|---------|---|
| E085/21 | Confidential Minutes of Environment Committee held on 9 February 2021 |
| E086/21 | Capital Framework – ICT Contracts Update |

E087/21	Capital Framework – IST Contracts Update
E088/21	Capital Projects – Scoping Contracts Update
E089/21	Any Other Business

E090/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 9.45 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.

**Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council
held on Thursday 11 March 2021 in the Council Offices, Ballyronan Road,
Magherafelt and by Virtual Means**

Members Present

Councillor McNamee

Councillors Ashton*, Black, Burton*, Clarke*, Corry*,
Cuddy*, Doris*, Elattar*, Hughes*, Kearney*, Kerr*,
Milne*, Molloy*, Monteith*, Wilson*

**Officers in
Attendance**

Mr McCreesh**, Chief Executive
Ms Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
Mr Browne**, Head of Tourism
Mr Gordon**, Head of Leisure
Mr Hill**, Head of Parks
Ms Linney**, Head of Community Development
Mr McCance**, Head of Culture and Arts
Ms McKeown**, Head of Economic Development
Ms Grogan, Democratic Services Officer

**Others in
Attendance**

Councillor McFlynn***
Councillor McKinney***

- * 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.

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

The Chair, Councillor McNamee wished everyone a Happy New Year, he stated that last year was difficult but that there was now a vaccine and the infection rate was coming down and that he hoped the situation would improve in the coming months.

D044/21 Apologies

None.

D045/21 Declaration of Interest

The Chair Councillor McNamee reminded Members of their responsibility with regard to declaration of interest.

Councillor Clarke declared an interest in Agenda Item 6 – Cooperative Partnership Marketing Fund and Digital Technology Refresh for Visitor Information Centres.

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in Mid Ulster Pipe Bands under Community Development Report – Good Relations.

D046/21 Chair's Business

Councillor Molloy referred to Moy Shared Education Campus which was announced in 2014 as a project with a number of others to provide a shared education project on a same campus with Moy Regional and St.John's being chosen as part of that project. He advised that the project was now forging ahead and asked that the Council look at identifying their own site if one cannot be ascertained and urgently re-engage with the Education Authority and the design team of Moy Shared Campus to seek opportunities to maximise facilities as the people of the Moy had waited long enough for this.

Councillor Monteith agreed with Councillor Molloy and said that this had been discussed at the last DEA Capital Workshop and while he had concerns around the whole project and rational behind the Campus, there was a lack of facilities in the village of Moy and agreed if space could not be identified that the Council locate a site to provide top class recreational provision to accommodate Moy residents as they had waited long enough and would fully support the liaising with the Education Authority, but more importantly the Statement of Intention of Moy village and the people of the village. He said that the people of Moy had waited long enough and was unacceptable for a village of that size to have no Council facilities which was a poor reflection on this Council and the previous Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council and would support Councillor Molloy in his proposal, but most importantly that he would support the people of the Moy in getting top class facilities which they rightly deserve.

The Head of Leisure advised that a brief discussion had taken place with the Education Authority this week and had spoken to one of the Officers which was on the project board who gave a commitment that they would engage with Council within the coming weeks. He referred to appointment of ICT team last October and they were anticipating the first draft design to be back from the team within the next number of weeks and at that time the Education Authority had advised that they would be more than happy to engage with Council and sit down and determine what this may look like. He hoped that an update could be brought back after the discussion with the Education Authority.

Councillor Corry sought an update on the theft of items at Maghera 3/4G pitch and new leisure arrangements after there were security arrangements were put in place.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation confirmed that a theft had taken place at the new 3/4G pitch at Maghera with some of the carpet being stolen within the last number of days. She advised that the security of the site was the responsibility of the contractor who were confident in their thinking that arrangements were adequate. With the length and the size of the carpet, this was not done by opportunists as it had taken an orchestrated effort to get it removed from the site which was now under investigation by the contractor and will have to be replaced by them to allow the pitch to be finished. She advised that once she had all the relevant information, members would be updated further.

Councillor Doris advised that today she had met with representatives from Kevin Barry's GAC, Derrylaughan and Council Officers regarding the club's lands which were up for lease within the next few years. She stated that it was a credit to the people of Derrylaughan as they had completed all the maintenance on that bit of ground and was extremely well used and now the club were looking to extend the lease or potentially purchase the land themselves.

It was proposed by Councillor Doris that a report be brought back to the next Development Committee with the two options so a choice could be made.

Councillor Elattar seconded Councillor Doris' proposal.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation advised that there was no difficulty in bringing back a report to committee, but would have to engage with Legal and Land & Property Services and may not come back within the month, but once all the information was received that this would be brought back to committee.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that a report be brought back to a future Development Committee on options for lands at Kevin Barry GAC site in Derrylaughan.

Councillor Wilson advised that some time ago a lot of funding was designated to Moneymore Recreational Centre and he was of the opinion if some work was going to be carried out at the site that local residents would be consulted. He stated that he had been contacted by a number of residents who were not consulted about the installation of flood lights.

The Head of Leisure advised that this was a Peace IV Shared Space project that was taking place in Moneymore and wasn't aware of the whole history behind the project as this was more to do with Community Development.

The Head of Community Development advised that the lighting installed was low level and low lux to light the pathways to ensure minimum impact to the residential properties and river bio diversity. She advised that there had been consultation with the wider community who identified the project for delivery; however due to it being low lighting away there had been no direct consultation.

Councillor Wilson said that although he remembers this, the residents living along Riverside Drive had advised that there was no consultation with them at all. He said that he appreciated that the lighting was low level, but a number of the residents were

elderly and were concerned about additional traffic etc. and wanted to raise his surprise at these residents not being consulted who were impacted the most. The Chair said that it was unfortunate that work had already taken place and not much the Council could not do but appreciated Councillor Wilson's point.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation referred to issue at Ballysaggart Lough where part of the retaining wall had collapsed a few weeks ago and advised that a Structural Engineer had looked at the wall and his recommendation was that it needed replacing. She sought permission to start a process for procuring a contractor or consultant to come in and repair and rebuild the wall as soon as possible as the wall was currently cordoned off due to health and safety reasons, but another report would be brought back once approval was granted to proceed once the costings involved with it were known, but this would allow for repairs to be done as soon as possible.

Councillor Molloy referred to the ownership and said that this entailed the layby and asked if there was any update on work which may be considered in partnership with Roads Service.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation advised that as part of the process the Council would be consulting with Roads Service in terms of ownership but in this point and time nothing was committed to yet, but were proceeding to get more realistic costs to try and get repairs done as soon as possible.

Councillor Monteith said that although he would agree, he would however have a fear that this could drag on and would urge that although we need to do the job right, we need to do the job as soon as possible and need to treat this issue the same as one of our Leisure Centres having a collapsed wall and move at the same speed for getting it sorted. He said that he would have a fear when discussions take place with Roads Service there could be a lot of toing and froing with them and also be the concern in the community that this could linger on. He felt that this needed to be done as a matter of urgency.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to start a process for procuring a contractor or consultant to come in and repair and rebuild the wall at Ballysaggart Lough as soon as possible. Going forward a report to be brought back on costings once they were identified.

Matters for Decision

D047/21 Schools Sports Facilities Grant

The Head of Leisure presented previously circulated report to advise Members on the advertised Schools Sports Facilities Access Grants. Details below:

- Cookstown Hockey Club – funding proposal - £4,500.00

- Dungannon Rugby Club – funding proposal - £500.00
- St John's PS Swatragh – funding proposal - £1,864.00

Councillor Black referred to £10,000 for the grant with award coming in under £7,000 and enquired where the remainder of the £3,000 was being allocated. He also sought clarification on sentence within the report on “*Council recognises that a few underrepresented sports may be constrained by lack of access to suitable facilities*” and enquired what those sports were.

The Head of Leisure advised as Council were reaching the end of the financial year, he wouldn't anticipate reallocating the remainder of the budget, however it would be the intention to go out with this grant programme within the next number of months, towards the summer to give clubs and schools an opportunity to apply again. In terms of criteria for the grants, it was to facilitate access for a shared collaboration where Council do not have synthetic sport facilities to try and increase participation between clubs and schools for underrepresented sports to help fund the ongoing costs.

In response to Councillor Black's query, the Head of Leisure advised that unrepresented sports were normally guided criteria by Sport NI, with an example being non mainstream sports like Women's & Girls and Youths.

Councillor Cuddy agreed that it was a good programme but asked if schools could apply for using other schools or sports facilities.

The Head of Leisure advised that this wasn't the case but clubs could make a request for access from schools in which they use, so as to increase this collaboration between the community groups and the local schools.

Councillor Wilson referred to comments regarding non mainstream sports being targeted towards Youth and Women and no mention of sports which this grant was set up to target for instance cricket and hockey etc. and felt that it would be useful to have a list of the sports rather than the target group.

Proposed by Councillor Elattar
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to agree to the recommendation for successful grant applications as detailed above.

Councillor Burton referred to the youth annex at Fivemiletown College and stated that two different parties had contacted her this week advising that none of the football grounds were floodlit in the Fivemiletown area and asked if the Officers could work with some of those people to try and investigate opportunities as there was some antisocial behavior ongoing within that area with the young people and some community activists considering this as a possible deterrent of getting these young people of the streets at night.

The Chair advised that this would be investigated.

D048/21 The Provision of Access for Outdoor Recreation in Northern Ireland – Key Stakeholder Consultation

The Head of Parks presented previously circulated report and sought Members approval in responding to the Provision for Access for Outdoor Recreation in Northern Ireland – Key Stakeholder Consultation, prepared by DAERA.

Councillor Corry thanked Council staff on the hard work they had put into the consultation response as it was well answered and correct in what they were saying about opportunities but there was still many improvements to be made with walkways to be better used and so on. She referred to the Public Rights of Way and the special website and advised that she had went on to it and bar the well publicised walkways, she couldn't see any of the other walks and asked how these could be located and asked if these could be raised as only well publicised walks were advertised.

The Head of Parks said that in regards to Space NI, where Public Rights of Way were advertised and recognised for anyone to check on the website. The Council has other ways of promoting walking routes like WalkNI which we contribute to the material which was posted on those portals and said that Officers could certainly check if there were any omissions, but there were also other websites which carry relevant information in a tourism capacity for Mid Ulster area. He agreed to investigate this issue.

Councillor Doris commended the report as it was good to see and said she may have to declare an interest in the following correspondence. She advised that she grew up in Derrylaughan and to the rear of her mother's home there had been a lot of moss they were fortunate to walk on, with a very unique landscape and unique wildlife at the area such as the Curlew. She said that concerns were being raised that more of the moss was being dug up lately and was devastating to see a change in the landscape within the last 10 years. She said that she realised that Officers may not have an update on the situation tonight but would like officers to correspond with the Moss Group in Derrylaughan and the Lough Neagh Partnership to act very quickly before more of that area was destroyed forever.

Councillor Clarke agreed with Councillor Doris and said that it was important to look after that landscape. He commended Officers on providing a good report and would be happy to propose it.

Councillor Black said that he would like to put it on record his thanks to Council Officers on their response to this consultation. He said that he noticed that there were 16 asserted Rights of Way that we currently have and to pick up on Councillor Corry's point of these being advertised online and the fact the Council always doing their own types of publicity themselves through our own website, wondered if there was something else that could be done to reflect the Rights of Way that there are within our own area and to encourage people to go to them. He also stated that under the Access to the Countryside NI Order 1983, we've been working with landowners to develop Rights of Way and enquired if there was a template around maintenance on the Rights of Way and potential Rights of Way so we know where responsibility lays going forward.

The Head of Parks in referring to the first point stated that information was put on Space NI and certainly some of those Rights of Way were an attractive locations to visit as they offer good access to the countryside as not all public Right of Ways provide that as sometimes these can be very short and limited. He said that most popular walkways were promoted in other ways using different vehicles also. In response to member's second query, the Head of Parks advised that the template on legislation covers those areas with regards to Council as they do not automatically have a responsibility to maintain and spend money on public Rights of Ways as it was a discretionary role which Councils have and they can do the works and claim that back from the riparian landowners. This was part of the legislation and guidelines that provides that information.

Councillor Black said that if there was any kind of promotion around our own website that this would be a good idea and good to be able to direct people to that and good to know that there would be no ambiguities around where responsibilities lay going forward.

The Head of Tourism advised that Officers were developing a tourism destination website with outdoor activities being very prominent including walking so that will be there also.

Councillor Monteith said that he had no difficulty with the report as it was a good piece of work and commended the Officers on the response but referred to question 10 and asked if the legislation could be strengthened to give the Council the power to push past through wherever they see fit. He felt there needed to be an in-between place to deal with the current situation where there was very little power for the Council to try and develop a path in a particular area. He said there could be an argument for some strength in the legislation to put back some more powers to give the Council more authority on part of the community to try and ensure the paths were developed and put in place as the current situation as things seem to go around in circles with everyone crying out for a path within a certain area around a geographical feature or particular community. He felt that these type of things don't happen as there were no powers in place to initiate and make it happen and felt that there was an opportunity there at question 10 where it talks about current issues with legislation and we should be saying that legislation be strengthened to give the Council more power, but not to override completely. He said that communities were crying out for access to local beauty spots.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation agreed that Councillor Monteith's suggestion be included in Question 10. She advised that Question 12 was identified as an opportunity for strengthening the legislation, but the difficulties were not identified but this could be reworded and incorporated into Question 10.

Councillor Molloy referred to litter being the epidemic within the pandemic and said that many landowners may be reluctant to open up their lands due to irresponsible people discarding rubbish and members just had to look at the roadsides to see the amount of litter in ditches.

Councillor Burton said that she took on the points raised by the two previous speakers and would be in total agreement with them. She referred to some forestry areas

where were licensed and some which were not for the public to walk and would be very keen as part of futureproofing in investment for the area and push forward for a new project at Favour Royal. She said that this was about getting agreement with everyone that the Council can work with. She advised that the points raised by Councillor Molloy were very valid on places which were opened up like Knockmany where local people were getting concerned about how their local area was being treated in terms of inconsiderate car parking and the generating of litter and felt that there was a need to have a process that works for everyone. She enquired if the meeting went ahead with the Forestry Service and also asked for an update on Lumford's Glen and wanted it recorded on where Forestry Services was being linked into that there was a necessity for them to ensure that maintenance work was carried out in terms of the trees as there were literally trees hanging over the roadside and other trees which may a danger and fall onto a road. She felt that it would be very beneficial to get a good working partnership with Forestry Service and would be keen to progress this going forward.

Proposed by Councillor Clarke
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the response to the Provision for Access for Outdoor Recreation in Northern Ireland – Key Stakeholder Consultation, prepared by DAERA. Also to include reference to investigate a way of strengthening up legislation.

The Head of Parks in reply to Councillor Burton's query advised that the meeting with Forestry Service was anticipated to take place on 29th March 2021 with all relevant information on Lumford's Glen would be brought back after the meeting. He confirmed that this issue had been raised with Forestry Service in the hope of moving it on and was within the block licence held for Knockmany which was important to the Council as a solution was needed to assist us and would be looking at outdoor recreation strategy funding to match from other sources to make this happen at Lumford's Glen

He referred to concerns around unsafe trees and advised that he was aware of some at Glenhoy Road and Parkanaur and had engaged with Forestry Service this morning in regards to their responsibilities to inspect and maintain these trees along these sections of the road and any other trees in other areas which they have responsibility for.

Councillor Burton advised that it was Cullenfad Road not Parkanaur which was opposite Parkanaur up a side road just in case there was any confusion of the matter.

The Head of Parks agreed that this was still part of Parkanaur Forest.

Councillor Clarke advised that in recent years Forestry Service did not carry any amount of manpower to do work on the ground and this may be one of the reasons why they were slow or unable to carry out any maintenance.

The Chair advised that the issue of manpower could be raised at the meetings arranged for the next few weeks.

Councillor Burton referred to Councillor Clarke's comment and said that Forestry Service should not get away with neglecting their responsibilities on maintenance and referred to meeting last year where a young girl made a presentation to committee regarding the death of her father due to a falling tree. She felt that as an organisation, the Council should hold Road Service to account and make them aware of any trees which were deemed unsafe and the same should go for Forestry Service if a tree falls within a forest and a person was injured or killed.

Councillor Kerr agreed with Councillor Burton and said although there may not be manpower, there was an onus on them to prioritise as these trees were very dangerous. He referred to his own employment where risk assessments were continuously being carried out and felt that the same should be done regarding dangerous or overhanging trees and suggested that a stern discussion was needed with Forestry Service on their responsibilities.

D049/21 Cooperative Partnership Marketing Fund and Digital Technology Refresh for Visitor Information Centres

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report and sought approval from Members to apply to Tourism NI for Cooperative Marketing funding and avail of the Digital Technology Refresh Scheme.

Councillor Doris said that there was real good work being done through the Tourism Development Group and wanted take the opportunity to congratulate Councillor Clarke and Mary on their appearance on BBC regarding Davagh Dark Skies and the Stone Circles.

Proposed by Councillor Burton
Seconded by Councillor Doris and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be granted to avail of the funding opportunity for both Cooperative Partnership Marketing Fund and Digital Technology Refresh for Visitor Information Centres from Tourism Northern Ireland.

Councillor Kearney enquired if livelinks were still operational in schools in the area.

The Head of Community Development advised that these were still operational in some post primary schools, but could use a lot more if there was something to go on them.

D050/21 Corporate Events

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to provide an update to Members on the Corporate Events Calendar 2021.

Councillor Molloy said that he fully agreed with the proposal and advised that he had been approached by some groups enquiring about the future possibility of utilising and opening up of the Events Space on the Hill of The O'Neill. The groups involved

included musicians who felt that the Event Space was a prime location to practice due to ample ventilation.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that he would investigate the issue and report back to members. He asked members if they were aware of any groups to refer them to his team and they would liaise with them.

Councillor Ashton enquired if the same budget was there for events this year, the same as last year event though there was an intention there now not to hold them.

The Head of Tourism advised that at this current time the budget was there, however this would be reviewed as we go along in terms of what happens to that budget.

Councillor Cuddy said he totally agreed with the Head of Tourism regarding the larger events. He referred to St. Patrick's Day event which was very good and a useful tool for virtual technology and said he would be interested to see how it works out. He felt that this allowed people to mark the day as no-one knew how long this pandemic was going to last and asked what kind of budget was being used for St. Patrick's Day events and enquired if this kind of thing could be transferred to other days throughout the summer like the 12 July celebrations in the event of an actual day being postponed.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that in the terms of transferability and process that any events planned for St. Patrick's Day at the Burnavon and the Hill of The O'Neill, could be transferable to events delivered by external organisations and this is something that has been done before, but obviously now we need to be mindful of Covid restrictions. In terms of transferability this certainly could be done and in terms of cost implications, the delivery would be significantly less compared to events delivered pre Covid, but there would obviously be cost implications for the hire of professional sound and lighting equipment and sound and light technicians which needed to be invested in to stage the events in a way to attract an online viewing audience.

Councillor Cuddy said that it would be interesting to hear the feedback and felt that it was a good idea as there was an onus on the Council to improvise as people were unaware how long this pandemic was going to go on for.

Councillor Burton said that she would also like to be involved in a meeting with members going forward.

The Head of Culture and Arts advised that after the St. Patrick's Day events officers would touch base with the Councillors and issue an email to arrange a meeting via Zoom with any interested member linking in and having a discussion.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be given to:

- (i) Council not to organise any formal or planned events that would attract mass gatherings until the restrictions will facilitate such events.
- (ii) Events team submitting a further report in the months ahead to agree plans to celebrate Halloween and Christmas.

D051/21 Council Support for Mid Ulster (Heaney) Cluster

The Head of Tourism presented previously circulated report to seek support from Mid Ulster District Council for the Mid Ulster (Heaney) cluster of businesses in their application for Phase 2 Collaborative Growth Programme funding.

Councillor Kearney congratulated HomePlace staff on their delivery of successful virtual events and their work on St. Patrick's Day and wanted to commend that.

Proposed by Councillor Milne
Seconded by Councillor Elattar and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that support be granted to this cluster in their request for financial support of £12,500 over the next three years.

D052/21 Community Development

The Head of Community Development presented previously circulated report to provide an update on key activities and sought approval for the following:

(i) Community Grants – agree the rolling grants for Good Relations

Proposed by Councillor Milne
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Good Relations Grants, noting that the Desertcreatives is for 2021 – 2022 year activity. (£2,040.00) as appendix 1.

(ii) Derrynoid Forest and Future Strategic Use – agree Council Support

Councillor Corry referred to the Rural College and said it was a terrific asset to the area and very popular with people outside the district. She said that it was very sad to see it not being used and was aware of the hard work by Workspace in trying to get it utilised and felt that it was now a liability due to damage being done to it. She proposed that the Council to do whatever they can to support Workspace in their negotiations with Forestry Service. She said that this base was used as a hub and was a central point for Mid Ulster from other areas and was very popular for local people.

The Head of Community Development said that Officers were working very closely with Workspace and were anticipating taking forward a number of issues particularly with DAERA to seek flexibility for private sector use, to make connections with community planning regarding the potential of the asset and to support Workspace in its bid for it to be considered as a potential government hotdesk location. Councillor Elattar seconded Councillor Corry's proposal and said she echoed her sentiments entirely regarding her proposal for the Council to get this up and running again for the good of the community.

Councillor Wilson advised that this issue had become before LAG and would be supportive of that, but unfortunately they lost out and asked that any support that the Council can give them would be welcomed. However, he was somewhat concerned to read that the Council were heavily involved in negotiations and working with the public sector enquired if the Council done this for every group that came before Council.

The Head of Community Development advised that no actions had been undertaken as yet and was proposing to support Workspace in trying to get a use for the site; through a supportive role. It was confirmed that Council do not do this for all groups and this was the reason to bring it for members agreement.

Councillor Wilson proposed to see what we were actually going to do on this as it seemed and looked like the Council were taking a lead on this issue regarding Workspace and see what members were agreeing to.

The Head of Community Development advised that the role of Council would be to write a letter to DAERA Minister with regard to look at the potential for flexibility if there was any private sector interest in the site. Secondly, Officers were planning to send the site profile to Community Planning partners to identify if there was any interest or need for the space. Finally, Workspace has put in a proposal to see if the Rural Centre could be used as the new 'out of office hubs and hot-desking' which Council support was sought and we would be confirming Council support for this.

Councillor Wilson said that he was happy to agree to this as the matter was clarified.

Proposed by Councillor Corry
Seconded by Councillor Elattar and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that support be provided to Workspace in seeking potential usage for the Derrynoid Rural Centre.

**(iii) Paupers' Grave (South Tyrone Hospital site) Dungannon Memorial –
To update members and agree way forward**

The Head of Community Development provided an update to the paper. She advised the original proposal was to partner the Trust on the commemoration garden; however the Trust confirmed they were undertaking the project directly themselves and did not wish to partner Council. They confirmed they were working with the Historical Society as a stakeholder but did not see the Council as a key stakeholder. She said that the Council has asked if they could be a stakeholder and still waiting on a reply on that.

Councillor Molloy said that he welcomed the work which was ongoing behind the scenes but took exception to the name of 'Paupers' Grave' as it was a workhouse where people endured horrific conditions and buried in unmarked graves. He felt that it would be important to stay from these type of titles and suggested that it be renamed 'Workhouse Graves' going forward.

Councillor Monteith agreed with Councillor Molloy's sentiments regarding terminology and also the renaming to 'Workhouse Graves'. He felt that these people were forced into poverty and once they were in this position it was virtually impossible to get out of the Workhouse where people were emotionally impacted on regarding separation from their families. He advised that the community were now a lot more confident that this was going in the right direction and conveyed their thanks and appreciation to Council Officers on their work to bring the Trust back into discussions again with the local History Group. He felt that there was still an opportunity to get involved and proposed that a meeting be arranged with the Trust and if they were unwilling to get involved with the Council then suggested Council provide funding support to the Historical group to allow them to be involved in marking the site.

The Chair felt that a meeting with the Trust shouldn't be a problem as Cookstown had created a simple site to mark Workhouse Graves which weren't expensive.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to support the provision of a memorial site at the Workhouse Grave site Dungannon, through the Historical Society, and for Council to write to the Trust for an update on this.

(iv) Good Relations Plan 2021-2022 – for Members' consideration and approval

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to agree the annual Good Relations Action Plan 2021-2022.

Councillor Ashton enquired if the Good Relations plan give consideration to the 100 years commemoration.

The Head of Community Development noted that this is under the Decade of Anniversaries, where there is included the annual lectures and annual grant programme as per the update report provided by the Head of Arts and Culture and a further £5000 towards for an educational project led by the Arts and Culture Section.

(v) Community Development – Note Community Development update

Noted.

Councillor Wilson advised that there would be no pipe band happening this year at the first week of June and may have to be carried over to August or September if it takes place at all.

Councillor Wilson said he raised this issue each year regarding the Clergy Forum across the district and enquired how many new members were on these and not only on these but on other programmes we have or was it the same people which benefit from it all the time.

The Head of Community Development advised that the Council had signed up two years ago to a three year plan with the TEO Office and to minor updates for the 3 years. An audit is being carried out of the programme to help inform a new 3 year plan and will give consideration to this. In relation to the delivery of the good relations programmes each year, they would have different audiences particularly the school and youth, however Clergy Forum and the Churches Forum's membership changed very little if someone left or someone came on and would say that 75% of the people were the same each year. They did deliver projects, engagement activities, talks etc. The review will give consideration to this and future plans for the following three years was something for discussion.

Councillor Burton asked that Aughnacloy and Fivemiletown be used for the Sports programme.

The Head of Community Development advised that she would investigate this and come back to the member with an update.

D053/21 Economic Development - OBFD

The Head of Economic Development presented previously circulated report to provide an update on key activities and sought approval for the following:

(i) ICBAN Funding Request (2021/22)

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve funding request from ICBAN for up to £15,000 from Council's Economic Development Budget (2021/22), to be paid in two equal instalments twice yearly, subject to Council being provided with the requisite documentation (application form, confirmation of match funding, copies of accounts, insurances, financial report and progress updates).

Councillor Monteith commended Officers on the engagement works with Traders which had taken place recently on business recovery and welcomed the use of new technology in doing so, as old models doesn't suit modern working. He also commended Officers on their efforts on securing a meeting with senior officials from the Bank of Ireland to address the anticipated closure of the Dungannon branch.

Councillor Kearney declared an interest in ICBAN.

The Chair stated that Traders should be happy about the recent good news story relating to rates relief extension for this year.

(ii) Coalisland Great Places Projects

Councillor Kerr welcomed the contribution from Council towards the coalpits and Coalisland Canal and said it was something that residents should cherish and should be proud of.

Proposed by Councillor Doris
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve reallocation of funds for year 3 of Coalisland Great Places Project, and make provision for Council's final contribution of £3,000 to Lough Neagh Partnership in the new financial year (2021/22). This flexibility will allow final works on the project to be completed, having been delayed as a result of the pandemic, with no additional costs to Council.

Matters for Information

D054/21 Minutes of Development Committee held on 11 February 2021

Members noted minutes of Development Committee held on 11 February 2021.

Councillor Corry referred to Community Planning Poverty Plan and made reference to Mr Harvey's publication last week on Social Inclusion Strategies - Expert Advisory Panel report which will now form part of the work to co-design strategies alongside communities on poverty, anti-poverty, children's poverty, gender disability and LGBTQI equality and hopefully this Council can be part of that alongside our communities.

The Head of Community Development stated that Officers would get the reports and send to members and do a link in on these and hope to get an update session with DFC and members regarding these and links to our own plan.

Councillor Doris referred to D035/21 – Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan and said that although she wasn't looking at update tonight, she wanted to raise an issue with was raised through Coalisland Town Centre Forum regarding better access and installing of ramp at Brackaville Playpark. She said that there was a meeting due to take place shortly and asked if there was any movement on that.

The Head of Parks advised that Officers were aware of access issues at Brackaville Playpark and a review of the current lease which also has to take place but will bring back a more clearer update regards to the access issue.

Councillor Monteith referred to D032/21 Community Development – Mid Ulster Community Planning Poverty Plan and said that it was around the same issue previously raised by Councillor Corry on affordable housing. He stated that people

would be aware of letters being sent out to tenants regarding the increase in rent by Housing Associations which was totally unacceptable during these unprecedented times. He felt the Council had a onus on their residents to challenge these rent increases as Housing affordability was a problem, whether for people to purchase or rent homes for themselves or their families. He advised that families were paying over £600 per week in Dungannon for social housing and this was supposed to be affordable and some not fit for purpose.

He proposed that the Council write to the relevant Housing Associations which may be proposed the rent increase to say in our strongest terms that this increase on working families was not acceptable and request a meeting, but in the meantime, representations be made immediately on this increase not being acceptable and a duty of care and a public responsibility on the houses that they own being paid by the public purse and not acceptable to cost more to rent than some private houses.

He said that this was a major issue which had arisen in the last while and would commend the work which had been done on housing issues around Dungannon.

He also asked for an update on the same item – Timorese Association Inclusion Group Engagement. He said that last month it was stated that a meeting was being organised for a reengagement for the East Timorese Community and asked where the Council was sitting with that.

The Chair stated that the issue of affordable housing would be raised through the Housing Forum as well.

The Head of Community Development stated that research would be carried out on the rent increase issue and a meeting could then be organised with the Housing Working group as it was the time to have another housing meeting.

In response to East Timorese she advised that this would be actioned as soon as possible and advised members that due to work constraints within her section on the fuel vouchers this had been not followed up as quickly as first hoped.

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal.

He said that he wished to be associated with Councillor Monteith's comments as it was absolutely ridiculous that when people were in the middle of a global pandemic and families struggling financially, that a Housing Association decides to raise their rents. He felt that this was unacceptable.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to research the rental issue further and write to the relevant Housing Associations which may have proposed the rent increase to say in our strongest terms that this increase was not acceptable and request a meeting and urgent representation on this not being acceptable.

The Head of Community Development agreed that suggestion by Councillor Monteith would be carried out and a meeting will be organised with the Housing Working group as it was the time to actually do that.

In response to East Timorese advised that this would be actioned as soon as possible and advised members that due to work constraints within her department regarding fuel vouchers this had been not followed up as quickly as first hoped.

Councillor Kerr seconded Councillor Monteith's proposal.

He said that he wished to be associated with Councillor Monteith's comments as it was absolutely ridiculous that when people were in the middle of a global pandemic and families struggling financially, that a Housing Association decides to raise their rents. He felt that this was unacceptable.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Kerr and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to write to the relevant Housing Associations which may have proposed the rent increase to say in our strongest terms that this increase was not acceptable and request a meeting. In the meantime, representations to be made immediately on this increase not being acceptable and a duty of care and a public responsibility on affordability and fit for purpose.

Councillor Kerr referred to item D035/21 – Parks & Play Five Year Strategic Plan and sought update on upgrading of equipment at Killen Playpark as he had been approached by residents of the area concerned about the damage to swings, damaged kerbing and other issues which were highlighted regarding safety asked that Council Officers be more forthright on their response and provide an adequate timescale as residents were very concerned about the safety of their children.

He also sought an update on Washingbay Walking Shoreline regarding flooding issue and also if there was any strategy in place to deal with dog fouling on the walkway. He advised that he had met with a community representative and done a lap of the walkway and dismayed to say that over 25 pieces of dog excrement, with representative advising that during the month of January over 50 pieces were lifted. He asked that a more serious attitude be shown towards Washingbay and other areas where there was a high level of concentration of dog fouling.

Councillor Kerr referred to D034/21 – Scoping Studies for Altmore & Cappagh and proposed that a meeting be facilitated between Council, Roads Service, Housing Executive and Electricity Board to try and solve the flooding issues the residents of Altmore View experience after heavy rainfall out their bank entries.

He also referred to Cappagh Main Street and requested that Council organise a meeting with Road Service to discuss the ongoing issue of who is responsible for maintaining and refurbishment of road maintenance issues particularly around the street islands. He stated that there were legacy issues there and Council needed to stand by the residents of Cappagh.

The Head of Parks in referring to Killen Playpark advised that the Council took the safety of children very seriously and this was the case with Killen also. He said that Killen Playpark was identified with the strategy for the investigation for additional age-related play which was being investigated and conducted a survey in relation to available room for that site was a very narrow, long piece of ground with a limited number of play equipment on it. The provision of play equipment depends on having safety zones in and around free pass areas which all come into play with regards to any redesign or additional equipment to be brought onto a site. He said that this was being looked at within the strategy and as there wasn't a timescale within the strategy and this was what the Council were working to, but would undertake to investigate further and bring back further information back to committee. In referring to safety he advised that a seating had been replaced and a number of items were not safety related and were maintenance of axillary items relating to kerbing etc had been noted and would be identified under the maintenance process and would continue to work through issues with the local community.

He referred to Washingbay and stated that officers were aware of persistent dog fouling along the walkway. He said that officers had spoken to community representatives relating to the Gaelic Football club and Muinteach Community Group and Council reacted with making a clean-up which was on record. He said there definitely was an issue relating to dog walking and fouling on the site and felt there was an issue for the wider community to respond to cleaning up after their dog, but there would be more resources being put into the issue with more Council staff being deployed to carry out clean up around that area. It's anticipated that a wraparound campaign would be introduced around a litter campaign and dog fouling as part of a proposed action plan.

The Head of Parks advised that the Washingbay Shoreline Walk has now been inspected which showed erosion and currently waiting on a report on appropriate action to be taken, which is hoped to be done as quickly as possible and in hindsight it was now recognised that the pathway was too close to the Lough resulting in some significant erosion issues. Appropriate costings for the works were now being identified for a permanent solution and hoped within the next few months water levels would remain low so as to not cause any additional erosion.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation in response to issue relating to dog fouling advised that it was anticipated that approximately 50 staff which were to return from furlough would be redeployed to Technical teams to go out and support litter teams across the Parks and other areas of need which would allow for a solution to improve the dog fouling issue.

In relation to Altmore View and Cappagh Public Realm, the Director advised that this would be followed up.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Monteith and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council:

- (i) That a meeting be facilitated between Council, Roads Service, Housing Executive and Electricity Board to try and solve the flooding issues the residents of Altmore View experience after heavy rainfall out their bank entries.
- (ii) That a meeting with Road Service be facilitated to discuss the ongoing issue of who is responsible for maintaining and refurbishment of road maintenance issues particularly around the street islands.

Councillor Wilson referred to issue previously raised regarding Open Water Swimming at Ballyronan and said that this now came under the government body of Swim Ireland and would do no harm to contact them around safety issues.

Councillor Burton referred to matter around Mobile Catering Concessions and said that it was her understanding that a tender would be coming out any day now. She said that this was a slow process to get to this stage but felt frustrated that traders were still blatantly operating at Forest Parks when they have been advised to follow the tender process. She felt it was unfair on other Vendors who follow the guidelines on tendering process whilst others proceed to operate regardless. She asked if this left offender's opportunity lesser as she was aware of staff speaking to Vendors advising them to follow the process for them to return the following weekend which was totally unfair on the other traders.

The Head of Parks advised that the tender was almost ready to go out and was currently with procurement with anticipation of it being going out next week and in his opinion the sooner the better. He said that he totally agreed with Councillors sentiments as he was aware of Vendors trading at Brantry but they were not on Council owned land but on private ground, communication was sought by Environmental Health in relation to requirements for inspections and visit the unit to make sure that everything was in place. He advised that these Vendors would be spoken to and advised that respect the procurement process going forward.

The Chief Executive advised that litter was now the epidemic within the pandemic and that Council were doing their utmost to try and deter this through social media platforms. He said that there was now a strategy in place, with a meeting taking place three weeks ago with members to look at options and out of that an action plan would be collated and worked upon. He said that it was encouraging to see such community spirit each weekend by volunteers to go out on a litter picking exercise and in turn these litter champions were commended through Council's social media. He advised that Community Development would be trying to promote grants for such projects going forward.

Councillor Ashton felt that if Vendors refuse to follow the tendering process at Forests or Parks, then they should be advised that they would not be considered in the process as it was unfair to the other Vendors who follow the appropriate guidelines.

The Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation advised that Officers would be liaising with Environmental Health team and if they felt there was a breach then Procurement could be liaised with to discuss options.

D055/21 Economic Development Report – OBFI

Members noted update on key activities as detailed below:

- BT Openreach: Delivering the Broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) in Mid Ulster

Councillor Clarke referred to BT Openreach and the activity at the moment and felt that there was a lot of misunderstanding amongst the general community on what was going on. He said that in the middle of the Department for the Economy and Fibres rolling out Project Stratum, there has been a high number of scam phone calls and emails being sent to consumers on all sort of prices and deals and during discussions with people they were receiving all this information and were totally confused. He felt that clarification was needed and referred to correspondence from BT leading to people in the Stratum programme could take up the BT offer and leave them outside Project Stratum. He suggested that some sort of a media campaign be identified to explain and simplify the difficulties which were in front of consumers who were not able to avail of decent broadband service at the minute.

The Head of Economic Development concurred with member's comments on BT Openreach USO which they had brought forward at this time which has caused some confusion in the midst of Project Stratum. She advised that the Broadband Working Group had recommended that this matter be brought to Members attention to raise awareness that 2873 premises in Mid Ulster are receiving correspondence from BT Openreach on Universal Service Obligation (USO), indicating that every home and business has the legal right to request that BT provide a 'decent' broadband service, defined as 10 mbps download speed and 1mpbs upload. BT Openreach advise in their letter that they are likely to meet the cost if it is lower than £3,400 per premise and if more than that, BT Openreach will provide the customer with the option of paying the difference. The BT service upgrade works are estimated to take place within 12 months.

The Head of Economic Development advised that DfE and Fibres are rolling out Project Stratum to households and businesses in Mid Ulster on their "white postcode list", identified as not currently receiving a 30mbps broadband service, whilst concurrently BT Openreach are contacting residents and businesses to advise of their USO upgrade offer. She added that it is important residents and businesses choose carefully whether to opt for the short term gain of availing of the 'wireless option' under the Broadband USO, as doing so may result in them being removed from Project Stratum's white postcode list, where they may be deemed eligible to receive a long term future proofed fibre broadband solution.

The Head of Economic Development concluded by saying that DfE and BT Openreach have the right to rollout their individual solutions and ultimately it will come down to customer choice. However, she indicated before doing so, it is important that residents and businesses have all the facts and said it was important Members are aware of this, should any business or resident contact them.

Councillor Kerr declared an interest as his employer carried out work for Project Stratum and BT Openreach.

The Chair stated that it was good for this to be brought to members' attention tonight and was confident that Broadband Working Group would be working on it.

- Coalisland Town Centre Forum Minutes - 07.12.20
- Virtual NI Apprenticeship Week (NIAW 2021) – 26-30 April 2021

Live broadcast ended at 8.45 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Black
Seconded by Councillor Burton 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 D056/21 to D057/21.

Matters for Decision

D056/21 Catering Provision at Seamus Heaney HomePlace

Matters for Information

D057/21 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 11 February 2021.

D058/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting commenced at 7 pm and concluded at 8.53 pm.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____

Report on	Consideration of Requests for Civic Recognition
Date of Meeting	Thursday 25 th March 2021
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	E Forde, Member Support Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report					
1.1	To consider approval of request(s) for civic recognition from members, in line with council's current <i>Civic Honour and Receptions Policy</i> .					
1.2	In the context of the Coronavirus outbreak in March 2020, the Council has been transacting essential business only from this period. Reports on civic recognition have not been considered over this period					
2.0	Background					
2.1	All requests for recognition are to be submitted with Democratic Services using the pro-forma, <i>Request for Civic Recognition: Civic Honour & Civic Reception</i> . Requests for recognition are reviewed against the categories and associated criteria contained within the policy as detailed at 2.2.					
2.2	<u>Recognition</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Civic Honour: recognition will be permissible when the following has been achieved at an All-Ireland, European, International, or National level:<table><tr><td>Have won first place at a competition in their relevant field at the highest level of competition</td></tr><tr><td>Have received an outstanding achievement award at the highest level. Outstanding achievement relates to when a participant or group has not been involved in a competition</td></tr></table>Civic Reception: will be permissible for individual, groups or organisations when:<table><tr><td>Representing their country at International, European, All-Ireland or National level at the highest level</td></tr><tr><td>Winning first place at a competition at the highest level at a Northern Ireland or Provincial level in the relevant field at the highest level of competition</td></tr><tr><td>Receiving an outstanding achievement award at the highest level at a Northern Ireland or Provincial level. Outstanding achievement relates to when a participant or group has not been involved in a competition</td></tr></table>	Have won first place at a competition in their relevant field at the highest level of competition	Have received an outstanding achievement award at the highest level. Outstanding achievement relates to when a participant or group has not been involved in a competition	Representing their country at International, European, All-Ireland or National level at the highest level	Winning first place at a competition at the highest level at a Northern Ireland or Provincial level in the relevant field at the highest level of competition	Receiving an outstanding achievement award at the highest level at a Northern Ireland or Provincial level. Outstanding achievement relates to when a participant or group has not been involved in a competition
Have won first place at a competition in their relevant field at the highest level of competition						
Have received an outstanding achievement award at the highest level. Outstanding achievement relates to when a participant or group has not been involved in a competition						
Representing their country at International, European, All-Ireland or National level at the highest level						
Winning first place at a competition at the highest level at a Northern Ireland or Provincial level in the relevant field at the highest level of competition						
Receiving an outstanding achievement award at the highest level at a Northern Ireland or Provincial level. Outstanding achievement relates to when a participant or group has not been involved in a competition						

2.3	<p><u>Processing the Request</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed against the policy/criteria Reviewed to identify if recognition provided for similar achievement within 3 years prior to this Requests meeting criteria will be recommended to Council for Civic Honour or Civic Reception Requests not meeting criteria will be recommended to receive letter from Council Chair
2.4	Appendix A details those requests received for recommendation to and approval by council. The request have been categorised in line with the revised policy.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Implementation of the policy allows the Council in acknowledging the achievements of organisations and persons from the district, as put forward by members. Recognition requests received from Members since the meeting of Council in February 2020 have been categorised, details of which are set out within appendix A to this report.
3.2	Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, Council has been transacting essential business only and reports/requests for same have not been brought to Council since the outbreak. It is proposed that requests as detailed in Appendix A, where agreed, should be dealt with as previously resolved by April Council that is, recipients will receive a letter together with award as appropriate.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: not applicable
	Human: not applicable
	Risk Management: not applicable
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: not applicable
	Rural Needs Implications: not applicable
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members give consideration to approving civic recognition requests as presented and be dealt with as previously resolved by April Council in that recipients receive a letter together with an award, where appropriate.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix A: Civic Recognitions Recommended for Approval

Appendix A: March 2021 Requests for Civic Recognition Submitted: For Approval

Category: Civic Honour

Proposed Recipient	Achievement	Submitted by	Condition/Criteria Met	Recipient Previously Acknowledged
None				

Category: Civic Reception

Proposed Recipient	Achievement	Submitted by	Condition/Criteria Met	Recipient Previously Acknowledged
Carntogher Community Association (Charn Tochair Community Association)	Glor na nGael - All Ireland Community Award Charn Tochair community association.	Cllr B McGuigan Cllr M Kearney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding Achievement 	Not Applicable
Damian Casey (Member of Eoghan Ruadh Hurling)	GAA Champions 15 (Hurling)	Cllr Monteith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represented County at All Ireland Level & Outstanding Achievement 	Not Applicable

Report on	Response (draft) Programme for Govt. Draft Outcomes Framework
Date of Meeting	Thursday 25 th March 2021
Reporting Officer	Adrian McCreesh, Chief Executive Philip Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	Ann McAleer, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To make members aware of the draft consultation response developed on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council in response to the Consultation on being undertaken on the draft Programme for Government and seek their comment as necessary.
2.0	Background
2.1	On 25 January, the Executive launched the public consultation on its Programme for Government draft Outcomes Framework. Members were informed of the above consultation at February Council.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The draft response examines each of the nine areas that make up the draft Programme for Government, as well as the associated Key Priority Areas aligned with each.
3.2	The draft document takes an outcomes based approach and as such, comment and contribution has been sought from across the relevant services/departments of Council. Community Planning has also provided a contribution to the response from the perspective of the Community Planning Partnership.
3.3	The closing date for this consultation was 22 nd March but an extension was provided to Council for which to submit a response.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A

	Risk Management: N/A
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None
	Rural Needs Implications: None
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	It is recommended that Council approve the draft response for submission.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix A: Response (draft) to the consultation on the Draft Programme for Govt.
	Appendix B: Consultation Document: Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework

Appendix A: Mid Ulster (draft) Response to PfG Outcomes Consultation



March 2021

Programme for Government Team
The Executive Office
Block E
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SR

Re: Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework Consultation

To whom it may concern:

Mid Ulster District Council would like to take this opportunity to put forward relevant feedback in relation to the Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework Consultation. The response is set out as follows:

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Feedback on the Key Sections of the Draft Outcomes Framework

Section 3: Community Planning Specific Feedback

Section 4: Delivery Feedback

Section 5: Conclusion

1. Introduction

Mid Ulster District Council welcomes the development of this updated framework and the focus that it places on cross departmental working across the nine central government departments as well as providing scope for meaningful collaboration with local government.

The current Covid-19 has placed an emphasis on the delivery of local government services and has demonstrated how local government can effectively provide direct support to residents in a practical, effective and timely way. Mid Ulster District Council hopes that this will encourage a refreshed focus on resources being put directly at the disposal of Councils in order to allow Council to support residents directly to achieve positive outcomes.

2. Feedback on the Key Sections of the Draft Outcomes Framework

Theme 1: Our Children and Young People have the best start in life

Key Priority Areas:

- Access to Education
- Capability and Resilience
- Care
- Early Years
- Skills and Attainment

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Overall Mid Ulster District Council is content with this Theme and the associated key priority areas. However in order to support communities to provide the best start in life for children and young people the Programme for Government (PFG) should provide a response to local community within their local areas through Council's community development delivery model.

Council would also support the view that 'Sustainable Development is added as a key priority as it should underpin all other initiatives. The principle of working sustainably will certainly assist in the principle of both protecting the environment and achieving balanced regional development.

There is a need to develop hubs to facilitate home working and it is extremely disappointing that Mid Ulster was omitted from the recently announced list of areas to benefit from the establishment of Connect2 Hubs. This needs to be revisited to allow people who travel significant distances the option of working in a suitably equipped 'local hub' which would help to reduce carbon footprints through reduced fuel emissions etc. The Council believes that an effective cross-government and local approach to the Circular Economy will contribute to achieving this proposed outcome.

Theme 2: We live and work sustainably-protecting the environment

Key Priority Area:

- Natural Environment
- Green Economy
- Built Environment
- Housing
- Active and Sustainable Transport
- Waste Management
- Water and Wastewater Management

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

In the opinion of Mid Ulster District Council, a new Waste Management Strategy is required to provide clarity on how the EU Circular Economy Package (CEP) will be implemented in Northern Ireland as previously committed to. Also Northern Ireland does not have its own climate change legislation (unlike all other parts of the UK). Therefore, a local climate change law (Bill) with targets for Northern Ireland to contribute fairly to UK Net Zero by 2050 needs to be addressed by the Programme for Government with the relevant actions put in place and committed to.

Mid Ulster District Council also actively promotes access to the natural environment. Council work closely with other government departments and communities to create outdoor spaces to promote health & well-being. Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan, March 2020, outlines the action plan for outdoor recreation within MUDC for the next 5 years.

However, from the perspective of Mid Ulster District Council there is a need for rurality to be specifically addressed here via a Key Priority Area (and indeed in other themes/priority areas) as a core issue. This is particularly relevant when it comes to issues such as active and sustainable transport. As a District which is made up by 70% of rural dwellers it is disappointing that a reference to Rurality is made once in whole document (Theme 6: Growth where rural industries are mentioned). Mid Ulster District Council would recommend that this is reconsidered in the final version of the PFG and its associated themes and key priority areas.

Theme 3: We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

Key Priority Area:

- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage
- Rights and Equality
- Legacy
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council recommends that in order to deliver positive outcomes from this theme and the associated key priority areas, that good relations projects/programmes are delivered across Mid Ulster in partnership with the NI Office under the Together Building United Communities. This should include the delivery of Peace Plus (2001-2027) at a local level to support developing shared space and building positive relations under the Peace Plus guidance.

It is also worth noting that Mid Ulster is a low wage economy so there is a need to address the minimum wage to tackle poverty, disadvantage and inequality. The Executive should review the use of zero-hours contracts, casual contracts and living wage implementation in order to support the achievement of this outcome.

Theme 4: We all enjoy long, healthy and active lives

Key Priority Area:

- Access to Health
- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Older People
- Physical Health and Wellbeing

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council are largely content with the key priority areas of this theme and the related key priority areas. In relation to their delivery; Mid Ulster District Council's Leisure Services already aim to deliver on access on health (GP Referral/PARS, McMillan Move More, GOGA, 4 leisure centres, 2 sports arenas and a number of outdoor free spaces i.e. trim trails. Council's Leisure services also already deliver on Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage via leisure concession pricing scheme for leisure service and via the provision of Disability Sports Hub. This also includes concessionary pricing for Older People as well encourage and targeting age group to part take in specific classes and programmes.

Council's leisure services are also already delivering on Physical Health and Wellbeing via GP Referral/PARS, McMillan Move More, GOGA and extended opening hours of facilities. There is also a future capital development programme in place which secures significant investment in Council's leisure facilities.

However it should be recognised that the loss and non-replacement of the Everybody Active Programme (EBA) will make it significantly more difficult to continue to deliver for these highly successful and beneficial service to key target groups. In order to address this require support and funding from central government on building sustainable physical activity delivery models

Council would also like to make it clear that support is required in order to support the facilitation of greater collaboration between government departments and services specifically. Provision of the opportunity to innovate by seeking to encourage additional and new participants into physical activity through non-traditional routes would be extremely benefit to supporting the outcomes of this

theme. Currently there is poor engagement and alignment with the education sector that should be addressed and well as the aim to aspiring to promote early years to the elderly age group participation. Greater focused cooperative working required in future between Ministerial Departments, E.A, PHA, Health Trusts and Local Councils would be enormously useful. Partnership working needs to be developed and facilitated officially and not simply encouraged. The expectation is that we as a population rely on education to teach, train, develop future generations and when our educational system fails to give physical activity a pre-eminent position then opinion that we will continue to struggle to enforce a life-long healthy mind set. Mid Ulster District Council would urge that this perspective is taken into account in relation to this consultation feedback.

Also, opportunities to embrace new technology and the provision of support should be provided in order for service users to be able to become more digitally advanced. More clarity is also needed with the prioritisation and objectives on investment between participation versus performance (i.e. the new draft corporate plan for Sport NI).

Finally in relation to this theme, the benefits of Arts involvement and arts participation on Health and wellbeing is really worth highlighting within this theme and should not be overlooked. There are good examples of Arts practitioners, Arts organisations Local authorities and Health Trust working together to address health and wellbeing issues through Arts activity programme delivery and participatory Arts projects. Mid Ulster District Council would urge practical implementation of arts based programmes with the aim of improving health and wellbeing outcomes.

Theme 5: Everyone can reach their potential

Key Priority Area:

- Capability and Resilience
- Better Jobs
- Skills and Attainment
- Sports, Arts and Culture

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council would support the view that Education and Careers Policy in Northern (NI) must fundamentally change, as qualifications often do not match skills needed by local industry; we have the wrong mix of skills and skills levels are too low. The NI Skills pipeline is not responsive, adaptable or competitive as it needs to be. For example, Mid Ulster is the hub of manufacturing and engineering in NI, where it accounts for 21% of the local economy (compared to 9% in the rest of NI). However, there is undersupply of

talent entering this critical sector, which reflects the deficiencies in current skills policy. Skills is a key driver for economic growth and development and we must attract and retain the best and brightest talent.

There also needs to be significant reform in the NI Skills Eco-System – greater collaboration with industry, schools and colleges is essential to ensure students study relevant curriculum and subjects needed by the local region and are taught appropriate skills including enterprise. Employers should play a significant role in shaping the demand for training courses. Education and Training providers must pro-actively engage with employers to ensure they are better informed about job opportunities and industry skills requirements.

It is clear that funding for post primary schools should not be dependent upon retaining pupils to study towards the academic route – this is part of the problem. There are too many generic degrees having no contribution economically. There needs to be a much greater focus on training and apprenticeships which unfortunately are still perceived by many as being of lower status than the academic route. The apprenticeship pathway will be a critical skills pipeline in the rebuilding of the NI economy, improving the transition from school to work.

Council would support the proposal that pupils should not be able to leave full-time education in Northern Ireland until 18 years of age, similar to other parts of the UK. A cohesive cross-departmental strategy is needed to address levels of economically inactive to minimise skills shortages with targeted approaches for each of the different cohorts e.g. students, carers, people with disabilities.

Council would broadly support the recommendations outlined in the OECD Skills Strategy Northern Ireland with regards to strengthening the governance arrangements for effective skills policies to ensure a well-functioning skills system add better skills outcomes for NI.

Importantly it is already recognised in our region that industry leadership is central to addressing prevailing labour and skills challenges. To this end, the Council established the first industry-led skills partnership in Northern Ireland in 2017. The Mid Ulster Skills Forum is a 30 strong partnership of local businesses, colleges/universities, government departments and industry sectoral bodies, speaking as one voice to take forward its skills and employability agenda in a focused and co-ordinated manner.

The Skills Forum also established the MEGA (Manufacturing and Engineering Growth & Advancement) Network in 2019, which is supported by both Mid Ulster District Council and Invest NI to address the immediate and medium-term skills shortages in the manufacturing and engineering industries in the Mid-Ulster area.

Both the Mid Ulster Skills Forum and MEGA Network are recognised as models of best practice.

However, there is a need for sustained funding from central government departments to progress the delivery of 'local' programmes and initiatives aimed at addressing skills issues in the area.

The Council considers it essential that Further & Higher Education Colleges continue to develop Educational pathways from levels two to Honours Degree level 6. The provision of Higher Education full time and part-time courses at all levels within colleges is critical to ensure there is regional balance regarding rural educational opportunities that traditionally are urban centric.

In addition, having Higher Education Degree courses within Colleges supports local industry and provides a pool of skilled talent for now and the future. This will also contribute to reducing the brain drain of talent that leave the area never to return. Honours Degree provision would also support the objectives of the programme for Government, and contribute support to the College Widening Access and Participation agenda.

It is also the opinion of Mid Ulster District Council that this theme would benefit from the inclusion Heritage in its subsection (i.e. Sports, Arts, Culture and Heritage). Heritage is included alongside Sports Arts and Culture in section 9, but not included in this section. Therefore the Council would recommend that reconsideration is given to the benefits of including Heritage within Theme 5.

Theme 6: Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral

Key Priority Area:

- Competing Globally
- Green Economy
- Growth
- Food, Farming and Fishing
- Infrastructure
- Innovation

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Council would suggest that the word 'inclusive' is included in the outcome to reflect the aspiration of an inclusive economy.

The Council would support a separate, outcome aligned to the development of high value infrastructure in terms of roads, rail, air and sea transport, environmental improvements, urban development, public transport, sustainable travel and availability of high speed telecommunications (broadband and mobile phone networks).

Council is particularly supportive of “regionally balanced” because Northern Ireland had developed an unbalanced economy with investment in jobs and infrastructure focussed largely on Belfast.

In order to drive the regionally balanced growth agenda, there needs to be a focus on investment West of the Bann. Council is particularly supportive of the inclusion of ‘Infrastructure’ as such regional imbalances and inequalities are profound.

A commitment to delivering modern and sustainable economic infrastructure and “levelling-up” is essential particularly due to the historical underinvestment in Mid Ulster’s basic enabling infrastructure, communication networks including broadband and mobile coverage, and utilities such as wastewater and sewerage systems. To achieve the aspiration of a regionally balance economy, rural communities must have access to services and an equal opportunity to participate in the economy.

Facilitating transport, advanced cross-border connectivity, greater access to road, rail, ports and airports, progressive digital communication capability, access to industrial land, energy and water are all considered by Council as the bedrock to prosperity and well-being for the regional economy.

Key catalyst projects to achieve this outcome include the completion of a full fibre broadband network, the A29 Cookstown bypass, Dungannon bypass and investment in wastewater and sewerage systems.

Council also welcomes the rollout of Project Stratum, however, it will still not address a significant proportion of our district and this needs to be prioritised and funded as a matter of urgency. Firstly, there are many premises within our towns and villages that are outside of Project Stratum who have inadequate broadband provision and it is very unclear what the solution is for these people.

Secondly, there is new information to suggest that anomalies have been identified whereby numerous premises previously eligible for consideration under Project Stratum have been removed during the roll out stage. Again no solution has been proposed.

Investment in infrastructure should include “access to economic / industrial land” to allow for business growth and expansion. The acute need for development land has been identified as the single most important development constraint for medium/large sized companies in the Mid Ulster area. Despite being the most enterprising and entrepreneurial region in Northern Ireland (and having the largest business base outside Belfast), underinvestment in the provision of industrial land is a contributing factor to the fact that too many indigenous businesses in Mid Ulster fail to grow. For a number of years Mid Ulster District Council and its legacy Councils have been lobbying for an increased supply of industrial zoned land to meet growing demand for existing and new business in the area.

Mid Ulster presently has no industrial land available for development; industrial estates in Granville, Dungannon, Cookstown and Creagh are at full capacity with no room to expand. As a consequence the area has missed out on significant business investment which is totally unacceptable.

Key catalyst projects to achieve this outcome is the acquisition of land by DfE/Invest NI to develop serviced sites for businesses in Mid Ulster. Council would recommend that the Theme should include ‘Encouraging Entrepreneurship’ as a priority area given that Northern Ireland has one of the lowest businesses churn rates in the UK (i.e. low business births and deaths). Economies with higher rates of business churn tend to be more dynamic and with businesses in higher value-added, high skilled, high growth sectors. Mid Ulster is recognised as one of the most entrepreneurial regions in Northern Ireland and business starts are a fundamental basis for job creation in any economy. The Council strongly asserts that encouraging entrepreneurial activity in priority sectors will help to promote sustainable economic growth as Northern Ireland recovers from the pandemic. Indeed Council would suggest that ‘Growth’ should be expanded to ‘Sustainable Growth’ which is a key tenet of balanced regional development.

Council would question the rationale and prioritisation of the 3 sectors included (Food, Farming and Fishing). The NI Economic Strategy prioritises a number of key sectors which are strongly represented in Mid Ulster which include advanced manufacturing and engineering. Mid Ulster has been described as Northern Ireland’s manufacturing hub. With a GVA of £3.24bn this accounts for 7.7% of the NI GVA, however a much larger proportion is from manufacturing output and is heavily export driven, accounting for 12% of NI exports. Manufacturing is hugely important to the area, accounting for 21% of the area’s economy (NI - 9%) and provides nearly 11,000 jobs. 40% of the world’s crushing and screening equipment is made in Mid Ulster. Council would urge the NI Executive to focus and target investment in these key economic clusters.

Continued support for Micro and SME businesses is critical in light of the devastating impact of COVID 19. Re-balancing of the regional economy is fundamentally important and must recognise the importance of growth within micro and SME's sectors in this regard. The loss of EU funding which previously supported growth within this sector needs to be maintained at current levels at the very least with Local Authorities given the flexibility to develop and deliver innovative initiatives which build on local sectoral strengths. There are limited details on the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) but it is understood that the SPF will not provide a full replacement for EU Structural Funds and it will not be devolved, but rather administered as a UK wide fund. This raises significant questions around the basis on which funding will be allocated and implications locally.

The estimated EU funding loss 2021-27 to Mid Ulster is £28.5M. The main areas being the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Investment for Growth & Jobs Programme (2014-20) where Mid Ulster Council will lose 80% funding (£1M) for our suite of business development programmes. The NI Rural Development Programme is financed through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. LEADER funding within the NI Rural Development Programme for the period 2014 – 2020 was worth approximately £11.1m to Mid Ulster and administered through the Local Action Group – Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership. Also, a total of £7.9M was leveraged under the European Social Fund (ESF) for the period 2018-22 which is targeted at helping the most vulnerable and distant from the labour market to undertake training and find employment.

Council would assert that sustainable rural development is a key tenet of balanced regional development. Mid Ulster is a largely rural region and the Council is committed to developing and supporting local rural communities and economies. A replacement, properly resourced Rural Development Programme will be critical in achieving these ambitions.

Promoting 'Innovation' is a fundamental in successful economies and investment is needed in R&D right across the business community. This will in turn help to raise productivity and create higher value jobs and wages.

Key catalyst projects to achieve this outcome include the development of an Innovation and Skills Academy in Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing and "Centre of Excellence" for Robotics and Automation, specifically for food and drink processing as part of the MSW Growth Deal.

Developing the skills base will be critical to achieving the proposed outcome. Firstly, by reducing the number of young people with low / no skills and encouraging them to remain in education to the level appropriate with their skills

and abilities (the only long term sustainable way to develop an inclusive economy). Secondly, ensuring young people are given the right advice and guided towards career pathways in tertiary level education that best suit them and also meet the needs of the economy. Finally, providing upskilling and re-skilling opportunities for those already in or seeking to re-enter the labour market. NI Executive need to progress the NI Skills Strategy and 14-19 Strategy to reduce the current skills deficits and mismatches within the local economy as a matter of urgency.

Access to skilled labour is fundamental to achieving this outcome. Mid Ulster is heavily reliant on migrant labour and depends on EU national to supplement the workforce particularly within Agri-food and Engineering. There is a need for a differentiated and more flexible migration policy that keeps our economy open to all levels of international talent.

Achieving a carbo neutral economy will require a “Whole of Government” response to help support economic growth. Long term funding co-ordination across departments will be necessary.

Theme 7: Everyone feels safe-we all respect the law and each other

Key Priority Area:

- Access to Justice
- Address Harm and Vulnerability
- Early Intervention and Rehabilitation
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council would recommend representation on the PCSP for delivery of the PCSP Plan under the DOJ and NIPB policy and guidance in order to achieve the outcomes in relation to this Theme.

This could be further strengthened by delivering good relations projects/programmes across Mid Ulster District Council area in partnership with the NI Office under the Together Building United Communities.

Theme 8: We have a caring society that supports people through their lives

Key Priority Area:

- Disability
- Housing
- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Older People

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Mid Ulster District Council welcome this theme and the emphasis that it places on improved outcomes for older people and people with disabilities. However, Council would also like to highlight the role played by carers in relation to both older people and people with disabilities. The role of carer support is crucial to positive outcomes for both older people and people with disabilities. It is the opinion of Council that carers need to formally recognised for the role they would play in relation to the support they provide, formally and informally.

Mental Health and Wellbeing is also a welcome part of this theme, particularly in light of the damaging impact that the pandemic has had on the mental health and wellbeing of all age groups in society. As such Mid Ulster District Council strongly supports more equal access to the provision of Mental health and wellbeing services for all age groups. For rural dwellers in our District this can currently prove extremely challenging.

Mid Ulster District Council also supports the inclusion of Housing and Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage within these theme. The specifics detail of the feedback in relation to these areas are contained with the Community Planning section of this consultation response.

Theme 9: People want to live work and visit here

Key Priority Area:

- Competing Globally
- Better Jobs
- Growth
- Housing
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity
- Sports, Arts and Culture
- Planning

Specific Feedback from Mid Ulster District Council

Council would strongly assert the role of town centres in the economic recovery from the pandemic. However, substantial financial support is needed to support the rebuilding and place making of our towns and high streets as attractive places to live, work and visit.

Devolution of “Regeneration” powers and resources to local authorities will be required to achieve this outcome.

The Council welcomes the establishment of Northern Ireland High Street Taskforce, however, there is a need for rural districts such as Mid Ulster to have a voice on this forum.

The Council would support the view that the provision of substantial funding is required to address the challenges facing the High Street; for example the Future High Streets Fund in England and Strategic Sites Acquisition Fund in Wales which are not available in Northern Ireland.

Fundamentally, a cohesive, joined-up approach by central government involving the Department for the Economy (DfE), Department for Communities (DfC) and Department of Agriculture, Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is essential to enable our towns and high streets to emerge from the pandemic.

Mid Ulster Council has called upon government departments to prepare longer term development plans (i.e. over 4 years) instead of the current “ad-hoc” funding to Councils at short notice which prevents the development of more strategic programmes and project being taken forward.

The Council would also assert that investment in rural towns and villages to create civic pride should be a priority area in achieving this outcome. This should include improving access to services for rural communities and community infrastructure needed to make rural areas more appealing as places to live and work.

As referenced previously, investment in modern economic infrastructure is fundamental if NI is to achieve inclusive growth and compete globally. The pandemic has demonstrated that working from home either f/t or p/t basis (hybrid model) will be the future, but only if high value infrastructure is in place to facilitate this.

To create better jobs will require a focus on supporting innovation in specialist cluster economies including advanced manufacturing and engineering and agri-foods in Mid Ulster. Innovation increases productivity which is the foundation for higher value added jobs. This, along with a focus on skills pathways will help to ensure there are more people working in better jobs locally.

In the absence of EU funding, replacement funding will be essential to support businesses to grow and innovate in order to compete globally.

Historically, the Mid Ulster region has had minimal public sector investment and therefore has relied on the private sector to create employment opportunities. The Council would assert that public sector investment in Mid Ulster is crucial to the “levelling up” agenda in Northern Ireland.

3. Community Planning Specific Feedback

Mid Ulster District Council also has responsibility for the facilitation and delivery of Community Planning within the district in partnership with 12 Statutory Partners listed in The Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016, as well as over 30 additional support partners from across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. The Mid Ulster Community Plan is closely aligned to the outcomes of the Programme for Government (PfG) and therefore inextricably linked to its delivery.

Whilst Mid Ulster Community Planning appreciate that PfG is an outcomes document for the entire region, Community Plans are its reflection at a local district level. In this submission, Mid Ulster Community Planning would like to draw attention to a number of PfG outcomes that have specific bearing and impact on the priorities of the Mid Ulster Community Plan and the Mid Ulster District. Please note however, this is not the views of our individual partners, but rather, comments based on priorities set within the Mid Ulster Community Plan, which are of course endorsed by all partners.

Our children and young people have the best start in life

Access to Education

Disadvantage has a detrimental impact on a child’s educational attainment. Statistics show that children in low income families can underperform at key stages in education by up to 10% from their peers not impacted by poverty. Education must be free at the point of delivery. Research has highlighted that many children skip school on days where money is required, for example, to purchase text books, for home economics resources, art materials, school fees, school visits, charity days etc. There should be provision for low income families. This must not be a stigmatised system which highlights children from low income households. Good practice exists with uniforms based on transferable badges, educational school trips linked to public facilities (many of which are free), school resources books, art materials and so on included in budget etc.

Breakfast clubs can be an ‘effective support’ solution as many children, especially in disadvantaged areas, are going to school hungry and struggle to participate. After School Clubs can again provide effective support, particularly to children from disadvantaged backgrounds where they are less likely to be supported with

school work at home. Research would show those children who are struggling with school work are also more likely not to attend, further impacting on their achievement outcomes.

As evidenced above, low attendance and poverty are inextricably linked. There is a key importance to monitoring attendance and provide support in addressing it to ensure the child or young person is fully supported to attend education. There needs to be a promotion of young carers' needs as they are an unidentifiable group and are at risk of low attendance/attainment.

The family environment has a major impact on a child's educational attainment. Various issues within a family unit, such as physical and mental health problems, abuse, financial difficulties, can affect a child greatly and his/her ability to learn. A cross departmental whole family approach is required to address the health, economic and educational issues within the family, in order to achieve the best outcomes.

Family Learning Centres aim to provide parents with the support, knowledge and guidance that they need to support their child to achieve their full potential and overcome the barriers to learning that they are experiencing. Effective programmes delivered specifically to address educational attainment and poverty within Neighborhood Renewal areas in Mid Ulster are the Family Learning Programme (FLP) and the Primary Attendance Matters Programme (PAM). The aim of the FLP is to ensure that parents are provided with the skills needed to help their children at home, ensuring a good link is forged and nurtured between home and school. The aim of the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programme is to help parents to develop their written and spoken English skills, which will ultimately help them to assist their children at home.

IT equipment are essential items for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in improving their educational attainment. The current pandemic has highlighted this as a major issue for children.

Capability and Resilience

Mid Ulster Post Primary Schools are delivering a Peace IV funded Schools for Hope programme to engage all post primary schools across the district in a focused programme to improve children and young people's resilience and mental health. Emotional wellbeing in schools must not be ad hoc and should not have to be funded year on year via community grants programmes. Linkages must be made between the Government Departments of Health, Communities and Education to ensure a co-ordinated approach to children and young people's physical and psychological safety and wellbeing. The Schools for Hope model needs to be sustained and extended to primary schools. All schools should be required to deliver health and wellbeing as part of the curriculum and funded

appropriately to do so, with direct support linked to the PHA and Health Trusts, not relying on ad hoc voluntary and community led programmes. Mid Ulster Community Planning would like to see legislation that enshrines wellbeing in schools, with associated teacher training and dedicated funding put in place.

Early Years

Focus on early years development is fundamental to improving the outcomes of young people. Mid Ulster Community Planning supports the huge benefits of early years programmes and acknowledges the great work carried out by local organisations such as Sure Start. However, too often these programmes are targeted by methods such as geographical areas of disadvantage. Whilst Mid Ulster Community Planning acknowledges the need for area based intervention to address disadvantage, this can exclude pockets of severe deprivation that exists across the district. All early years intervention programmes must be made available to those identified by relevant services regardless of their post code.

Mid Ulster Community Planning would advocate that all pre-school children are allocated 30 hours per week in a pre-school setting in line with other regions of the UK.

We live and work sustainably - protecting the environment

Active and Sustainable Transport

Mid Ulster Community Planning has prioritised provision of an Integrated Transport Model for the district, as a response to local communities transport concerns around access needs and rural connectivity. As a first step to improving integration of transport services, it is proposed to establish an integrated working group to look at potential solutions/good practice, taking on board lessons learned from the Integrated Public Passenger Transport Pilot Project carried out in the Dungannon area in 2014/15. However, after discussions with the relevant organisations, it was agreed that progressing with the actions was unachievable without significant policy change and departmental commitment. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek that the required policy is implemented and there is cross departmental commitment to deliver an integrated transport scheme across the District.

Water and Wastewater Management

The issue of water and wastewater management in Mid Ulster will have detrimental impact on the district achieving a number of key PfG outcomes. Many people living in the Mid Ulster District Council area are facing significant housing stress because of house building not keeping up with housing demand. New housing developments particularly in our urban towns and key settlements are being refused by NI Water, due to lack of upgrading wastewater treatment

works and new water mains not being delivered. Significant wastewater network capacity issues are emerging in our five main hub towns including Magherafelt, Cookstown, Dungannon, Maghera and Coalisland. These towns have been identified within the Area Plan for Mid Ulster for growth status. Mid Ulster is currently completing on the development of the Area Plan and has estimated a need for approximately 10,950 new houses by 2030. In addition to the wastewater treatment works (WwTW), wastewater network capacity issues are emerging in 20 areas across the district. Because of this, new connections are being declined in parts of the catchment.

It is not only social housing provision that is required but also general housing needs. Mid Ulster boasts Northern Ireland's fastest growing manufacturing business base, and the largest outside Belfast. Our district produces 7.3% of Northern Ireland's economic output. As part of our evidence gathering in the process of preparing the Local Development Plan, we plan to meet the needs of our growing population by providing an adequate supply of economic development land to facilitate the creation of at least 8,500 new jobs up to 2030. 10,950 houses are required to support the delivery of this economic growth across the District. Given this significant increase, it is essential that significant investment be prioritised to upgrade and provide new sewerage infrastructure across the District.

NI Water have confirmed to Mid Ulster Community Planning that pump away solutions to provide easement on problematic areas of the sewer network were not an expensive option. More sustainable solutions such as SUDs needs to be explored, to offset rain water capture to alleviate pressure on the sewerage system re capacity. Council would therefore support greater consideration of SUD systems through development.

We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Mid Ulster Community Planning is fully committed to reducing poverty and the impact of poverty on individuals and communities within Mid Ulster and would call on the NI Executive to publish the Regional Anti-Poverty Strategy as a matter of urgency.

In 2019, in the absence of a Regional Anti-Poverty Strategy, Mid Ulster Community Planning partners came together from statutory agencies, business and community to look at a range of priorities impacting on poverty; with the aim to create a Poverty Plan that seeks to identify strategic actions for partner delivery. A number of poverty issues were identified through the development of the Plan for Mid Ulster. These were:

- Mid Ulster District has greater levels of absolute poverty than the NI average, whilst there shows to be a small percentage reduction in poverty across the region, mainly attributed to the uplift in the economy and job opportunities Mid Ulster remains higher than the NI average.
- Children in absolute poverty also remains higher than the NI average. A key issue that remains for Mid Ulster is high level rental costs greater than other parts of the region that impacts on disposable income for families and particularly contributes to the working poor.
- The cost of living also contributes to poverty due to high levels of expenditure on basic needs such as oil, coal etc, again these are high West of the Bann.
- Similarly childcare and access to good quality childcare is an expenditure item that is a barrier on a lower disposable income but also impacts on entering the employment market in the first instance.
- Pupils from poorer backgrounds have much lower attainment on average than those from better-off backgrounds.
- Key stage levels would highlight this differential; where those in lower income and in poverty have lower levels of attainment in Maths and English.
- At all key stage levels and GCSEs there can be up to 20% differential between pupils on free school meals and other pupils.
- There is a greater chance of a young person from a more affluent area attending university than those from areas of disadvantage.
- People who have higher qualifications and higher level training have higher paid jobs.
- Young people from areas of disadvantage do not have the same opportunities as those from more affluent communities as often there is a cost to support greater achievements in education.
- Charities involved in supporting people in poverty would state that children and young people in poverty are also not participating to the same level in school due to cost of additional activities e.g. school trips, visits etc. and often have higher levels of non-attendance.

- There are greater instances of mental health issues in areas of deprivation and for people living in poverty. There is shown to be a correlation between those in poverty and who have greater issues of mental health including depression.
- One in 10 young people are at risk of presenting with mental health issues at the age of 15 years, this increases to 29% for young people from a deprived background.
- Suicide is 3 times more likely in areas of disadvantage.
- There is a greater risk of a lifestyle related illness if you live in an area of deprivation or low income.
- People from areas of disadvantage can die up to 5-7 years earlier than those from more affluent areas.
- People living in deprived areas are more likely to be in a house that is of a lower standard of quality living e.g. house standard and heat etc.
- There is a higher possibility of people in deprived areas turning to drugs and alcohol and this links to the earlier issue on mental health.

In terms of moving towards alleviating the main causes of poverty, the key objectives are to:

1. Maximise the number of people in better paid jobs; through secured living wage employment, and through training and education.
2. Increase disposable income; through reducing housing/rental costs, reducing debt and maximising available income support.
3. Improve health and wellbeing; through increasing support to those in poverty to engage in better health and wellbeing activities and lifestyle choices.
4. Increase the level of quality of life and wellbeing opportunities; through targeting early years intervention and development.
5. Reduce levels of social exclusion; through greater access to services, support and opportunities.
6. Provide everyone with a quality home for life, through affordable rents via rent interventions of increased rent support, adequate social and affordable house provision in mixed tenure development and quality environments using the following model that is currently being applied by various local authorities in Scotland:



The Mid Ulster Poverty Plan does not seek to provide solutions or programmes for all agencies with a remit for addressing poverty but to provide priority issues where agencies can work together to develop localised initiatives and solutions. Mid Ulster Community Planning is fully committed to working with all government departments to fulfil the actions of the Mid Ulster Anti-Poverty Plan and a Regional Poverty Plan.

We all enjoy long, healthy and active lives

Access to Health

Due to the reduction of services and its peripheral location, much of Mid Ulster has the poorest access to acute hospital and care provision. Two thirds of Mid Ulster's population of 145,000 are rural; and by 2037 83% will be aged 65+ (against an NI average of 68%). During Mid Ulster District Council's extensive community consultations to draw up the new 'Community Plan' for Mid Ulster, the issue causing most concern was the ongoing reduction of health and social care services and facilities in the area and the apparent lack of investment in alternative provision. Opportunities now exist across sites which are already in public sector use in Mid Ulster, where services have been removed, which would facilitate the co-location of a broad range of localised health and social care provision, while also achieving a greater integration of service delivery. These sites have the potential to deliver a comprehensive range of local diagnostic facilities, primary care and elective surgery provision, which will also contribute to alleviating the pressures on Antrim and Craigavon. In line with the Bengoa Report, this seeks to "provide simpler and easier access to healthcare professionals and diagnostic equipment needed to assess and diagnose conditions". Whilst the Mid Ulster district has lost two acute hospitals, it does not have a Community Care and Treatment Centre in any of its three hub towns. Mid Ulster Community Planning would urge that this matter is urgently addressed.

A key action of Delivering Together is also enhancing support in primary care, 'a new model of person-centred care focussed on prevention, early intervention,

supporting independence and wellbeing...our future model of primary care is to be based on multidisciplinary teams embedded around general practice'. 'Primary care is the bedrock of our health and social care system and provides around 95% of the care people need throughout their life'. However, like other rural districts, Mid Ulster is experiencing a chronic shortage of GPs, particularly in our rural practices. Mid Ulster Community Planning has been working closely with HSCB to monitor this issue. Whilst we acknowledge the number of programmes developed by DoH and HSCB to address the shortage, a concerted effort is required to ensure that they are implemented with the utmost urgency.

In recent years, Mid Ulster has recorded some of the worst Ambulance response times, consistently higher than the NI average and increasing year on year, and also poor access to acute provision – Mid Ulster travel time to a hospital with major injury treatment capabilities is over eight minutes longer than the NI average. Mid Ulster is the fastest growing of the 11 new Council areas (this is projected to continue as its population is expected to grow to 165,000 by 2030); the District and its road network is predominantly rural, adversely impacting on travel times. A longer term solution will therefore require planning and investment to ensure greater availability and more rapid deployment of vehicles in rural areas furthest from acute provision. This should also include developing the capacity of existing local ambulance stations as well as exploring the potential to use Mid Ulster as a regional base for some or all parts of the service.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Mental Health draft Strategy is most welcome as a means to drive forward the health and wellbeing agenda for the next 10 years. To date the provision of mental health services in Northern Ireland has been vastly underfunded. The number of people experiencing mental health problems in Northern Ireland has increased exponentially over the years to an estimated one in five. The current Covid19 pandemic has resulted in a sharp rise in the need for mental health support, with GPs estimating that the numbers of people presenting with mental health issues has doubled since March 2020. Waiting times to access support services have increased in line with this. In Mid Ulster, local community consultations have indicated that individuals and families have faced barriers to accessing the right mental health support services at the right time and therefore, a regionally consistent response for people suffering from mental health problems is essential.

The Health and Social Care Board published a Regional Mental Health Care Pathway in 2017 and Acute Mental Health Care Pathway in 2018, both lengthy documents filled with information about the delivery of Mental Health services and yet people are still voicing their confusion about who they should talk to about mental health, the services that are available at every level, and how to access those services and support. A clear pathway model that is easy to

navigate and provides clarity from early intervention, to targeted support, to treatment and recovery is essential.

Suicide increased every year in Mid Ulster from 2015 – 2018, with 179 deaths over the 10 years from 2008 to 2018. There is a deeply unequal level of provision in counselling services for those in need of support, particularly before they reach crisis point. This disparity is evident across the two Health and Social Care Trusts serving Mid Ulster, with 51% of GP practices in the Southern Trust having an in-house counsellor compared with 89% in the Northern Trust (figures provided by HSCB to PPR). This also applies to access to other talking therapies, which are low cost and can help address distress before it becomes acute, ensuring that fewer people end up needing crisis care, statutory mental health services and anti-depressants.

Just as physical poor health and pain are often the outward manifestations of mental health problems, physical illness and chronic pain, particularly experienced as people age, can lead to heightened levels of anxiety and depression. There is a direct correlation between short and long term mental health problems caused by biological, psychological and environmental factors including traumatic incidents, abuse, fertility problems, organ failure and transplant, menopause and many more illnesses and conditions that must all be taken into consideration when seeking to treat and improve people's overall wellbeing and health. Taking a whole body and mind approach to health and wellbeing is essential if the objective is truly to provide services that are tailored to meet the needs of the individual, highly personalised and recovery orientated.

More and more people are being referred by the mainstream healthcare system to the Community & Voluntary Sector for help, particularly in rural areas. In many cases, groups are reliant on donations and fund raising. One community/voluntary counselling group in Mid Ulster accepts referrals from a catchment area covering 38 towns across the district. Groups have reported that while they do not turn away anyone who cannot afford to pay, this causes an added financial burden. Community and voluntary mental health and counselling groups provide an excellent service but should not be overburdened by Health Trusts, particularly through knee jerk referrals to traumatic events in the community.

Mid Ulster Community Planning would highlight the role that local Councils and Community Planning Partnerships can play in addressing mental health. Mental health is incorporated into all Mid Ulster Community Planning themes, namely Health and Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Economic Growth and Vibrant and Safe Communities. In February 2020, the Council developed a Protect Life 2 Action Plan, co-ordinated through Community Planning, to embed suicide prevention through all community plans by building and strengthening

communication pathways for the Protect Life 2 message, suicide prevention awareness training, signposting and promotion of services and help-seeking behaviours, representation on Protect Life Implementation Groups, investment in suicide prevention initiatives, media and communications training and exploration of a Council charter on suicide prevention for employers.

Everyone can reach their potential

Better Jobs

The challenges facing all our town centres in recent times has been the economic downturn. The development pipeline has slowed to a trickle and many retailers have reduced their representation in poorly performing centres, or have disappeared from the town centres altogether. As a result, many town centres have experienced rising vacancy levels and falling market demand. However public services can play an important role notwithstanding that Mid Ulster has one of the lowest reliance on public sector workers in Northern Ireland. Presently there is limited public sector employment in Mid Ulster (22% against NI 31%). Co-location of public services in town centres has many advantages such as:

- It creates a network of Government Hubs making it easier for the public to access services
- Makes it easier for public servants to travel to work in NI
- Can occupy a derelict site and/or an unused building within a town
- Generates wealth to local economy
- Towns will become more resilient and have the ability to respond to challenges they face
- Produces positive outcomes for places
- There is a social role and economic benefit to the end user
- Provides a community focal point
- Co-location costs can clearly be reduced by sharing some capital and operating expenditures.

Taking all this into consideration, Mid Ulster Community Planning was extremely disappointed that the district was not considered for one of the 11 Civil Service Hubs announced by the Minister for Finance, given its central location in the region. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek to work with the Minister for Finance to re-evaluate the Hub sites and to discuss consideration of Mid Ulster as a potential location.

Skills and Attainment

Addressing the gap between skills demand and skills supply to create new jobs in the Mid Ulster region is a key priority. The Mid-Ulster sub region is home to over 8,500 small businesses, which is the second largest concentration of small businesses outside of the Belfast Metropolitan area. As the most entrepreneurial region in Northern Ireland, its business base provides the lifeblood of the local economy, whilst the skills and capabilities of its workforce are vital to its sustainability and growth. The availability of a high performing workforce, appropriately equipped to meet the current and future needs of the local industry's key sectors is therefore of vital importance. From education through to industrial strategy, the skills that are developed are important both for the local economy and for providing an opportunity for individuals.

This all has become the driving force for the establishment of Northern Ireland's first ever Skills Forum in Mid Ulster. This industry-led body works closely with the education sector to ensure that future talent aligns with the needs of business. The Mid Ulster Skills Forum is a ground-breaking initiative uniquely led by the private sector in collaboration with Community Planning partners and other statutory organisations and is the first of its kind to be developed in Northern Ireland. The Forum is currently overseeing the delivery of the Skills Strategy for Mid Ulster; with some early successes including greater engagement between the vocational and educational providers and industry. Mid Ulster Community Planning would put forward the proposal that the Mid Ulster Skills Forum is used as a model for skills development across the region or is incorporated into the development of the DfC's proposed Labour Market Partnerships (LMP).

Mid Ulster Community Planning welcomes proposals from DfC to create Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) in each council area, allowing for tailored interventions to address the district's particular issues. Key areas for delivery would be the retraining of sectors no longer providing sustainable employment, an issue that has been further exacerbated by the Pandemic. It is hoped that the LMP will complement and enhance the work of the Mid Ulster Skills Forum. Mid Ulster Community Planning is fully committed to working with DfC to establish a LMP in Mid Ulster and seeks full commitment from the Department to do so.

The Mid Ulster Community Plan seeks to ensure that every 18 year old person achieves a positive destination. In doing so it has become apparent that the current funding model between academic and vocational educational settings is a major impediment to this outcome. These two settings should not be competing as the current system forces them to. Instead, they should be working together to provide the most suitable pathway for each young person which often will require a blend of both settings. Mid Ulster Community Planning seeks that this issue is addressed as a matter of importance.

Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon neutral

Competing Globally; Growth; Food, Farming and Fishing; Infrastructure; Innovation

A number of economic growth, infrastructure and skills actions from the Mid Ulster Community Plan have been incorporated into the development of a Mid South West Region Growth Deal that will 'supercharge' the growth of our economy and ensure inclusive prosperity for the Mid South West region. Mid Ulster Community Planning therefore supports the issues raised within the Mid South West Growth Deal submission to this consultation.

Green Economy

A Green Society is becoming increasingly important, and the focus and champions among young people is of great value to ensure our environment is not only sustained for our future but that it supports an equitable and quality life for all.

Please refer to the Mid Ulster District Council Service response for the important work on biodiversity, sustainable development and awareness and promotion, air quality, waste management and recycling. Other regional areas that remain important are good water quality, good waste infrastructure not only for our environmental protection but to support housing and jobs for the basic needs of people to live a good quality of life.

The climate change agenda is important and there is a need for a coordinated approach to ensuring that everyone plays their part and contributes to protect our environment. We also must provide for economic sustainability and growth, as well as equitable quality of life for people so that they can afford the quality of lifestyle needed to support good health. The Stern Report in 2006 instigated the thinking around the economic impact of climate change and its impact, and underlined that a fully integrated approach based on champions, awareness and action all play an important role in its development.

People want to live work and visit here

Housing

The Mid Ulster Housing market has experienced significant change over the last 20 years with significant increase in population and growth. Mid Ulster population growth has outpaced the NI average between 2001 and 2013 as population grew by 19% (compared to NI growth of 8%). The number of households increased by 18% between 2001 and 2010. There is a projected Housing Growth Indicator new

dwelling requirement of 10,300 for the period 2016 to 2030 for the district, which is well above the NI average of 7,709. Due to the levels of growth particularly in Dungannon this has had an impact upon housing demand and rental values; and limited increase in social housing stock which have all led to issues of poverty in the area.

Mid Ulster has one of the highest levels of social housing need and this is reflected in the level of housing stress. At March 2020, there were 1,899 applicants on the waiting list for Mid Ulster with 1,169 in housing stress and only 306 allocations over the year. Housing stress in rural areas is also increasing on an annual basis since March 2016. At March 2020 there were 501 applicants on the rural housing waiting list for Mid Ulster with 279 in housing stress and only 131 allocations over the year. Over 1/3 of the housing stress comes from the issue of affordability of other rented options; both private and some housing association provision. Mid Ulster has the second lowest number of NIHE and Social Housing properties across all districts. Up to March 2020, NIHE and Housing Associations have sold 7,654 units under the house sales scheme, leaving 3,875 of NIHE housing stock in the district. NIHE has identified a social housing need of 685 units required for the 2019/2024 period. There were 42 units completed and 76 units onsite at March 2020; and 202 units programmed for the 2020/2023 period, falling well short of what is required by 2024. Almost 50% of all units required are in the Dungannon 1 area followed by Coalisland and Magherafelt.

Affordable and social housing provision is a key strategic issue identified for Mid Ulster as part of its Community Plan. Whilst the allocation of housing is a central element in addressing many of these themes it is difficult to consider it in isolation of the other key areas, particularly the supply of social housing provision and the affordability issue of housing. Both of these are critical issues for the district. Mid Ulster Community Planning has identified a number of actions to address the housing crisis in the District.

1. Social Mixed Tenure Housing provision

There is strong evidence that highlights the benefits of mixed developments in promoting quality housing, social cohesion, reducing social exclusion and creating stronger communities. This requires a two tier approach; one through the delivery of the social and affordable housing provision and through private developer schemes via planning. Quality management of delivery of such provision is essential by the NIHE as an independent overseeing body to ensure adequate provision of social and affordable housing remains a priority.

2. Intervention in the Rental Market

The private rented sector across the district has seen an unprecedented increase in its tenure share between 2001 and 2019. The impact of COVID19 on rising levels of unemployment, lending restrictions and growing social housing waiting lists will ensure that demand for the private rented sector will continue to grow.

Rental values in Dungannon and to a lesser extent Cookstown are very high and there is significant difference between actual rental charges and Local Housing Allowance amounts with a shortfall between rental charge and benefit payable between £50 - £60 pw. In addition, the largest number of housing benefit claimants are living in properties belonging to the private sector. There is a real need for intervention. If a solution is not found the social housing crisis will continue to escalate and the social issues heighten. It will also cause further problems with regard to housing allocation in terms of meeting need, vulnerable people, family unity, strong communities, etc.

Mid Ulster Community Planning would advocate for Executive intervention in the rental market, to monitor rental values in our main hub towns and cities (which are where the populations are concentrated) and to intervene where the market is creating real issues of poverty and social deprivation. Similar models are being delivered in the South of Ireland and other EU countries.

3. Balance between town centre regeneration and social and affordable housing provision.

Mid Ulster Community Planning wants to see a better balance achieved between town centre regeneration and the provision of social and affordable housing. It is unarguable that Mid Ulster has a high level of social housing need but addressing the need cannot come at the expense of negatively impacting on other areas of society, like our town centre viability or growth.

There has been a number of recent instances where Housing Associations have been granted permission and provided with grants to build social housing (mainly apartments) in streets primarily dominated by retail and leisure. The provision of social housing in such locations is not viable or addressing real need. Not only does it impact on the retail and leisure economy of our hub towns, but they are often occupied by young families living in 1st or 2nd floor apartments, with no garden or space to play and near bars, restaurants or gambling establishments. At a recent NIHE meeting with the proposed social housing development list, 90% of proposed delivery was town centre retail units across the main towns. This was a cheap option based on easy provision and not taking account of the needs of families that are in real need on the social housing list.

Mid Ulster Community Planning has initiated a pilot Housing and Regeneration Place Shaping Plan in Dungannon, in partnership with NIHE. This plan will identify 'Place Shaping Principals' for town centre development based on complementing the priorities for regeneration for Dungannon town. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek Executive support to replicate this partnership and process across all hub towns.

4. Housing Quality

It is important that housing provision takes account of long term sustainability of areas and lifetime homes. Housing is one of the basic hierarchy of needs for people. The provision of suitable homes for people is critical to all elements of wellbeing. Families should have adequate space for children to grow and develop in all areas of life. This is similar in the allocation of housing to people who are separated and have children for part of a week, and the importance of the family unit and tie with parents which is invaluable to the wellbeing of the child. It is the central principle of community planning, where the wider integrated impact of one policy has on another and on resources.

Mid Ulster Community Planning would like to see targets that support both mixed tenure and mixed housing type developments. Design concepts should be agreed by NIHE in advance of grant support to Housing Associations.

Other issues that we are seeking to address is to ensure the planning gain of adequate green space provision in housing; that green space is not edge strips of green around an estate but a central space that is accessible to all. Evidence would show that where our social housing provision has been well planned with good space and green space provision then there are less social issues in the longer term. Green space needs to be integral to the design for social and affordable housing and to the allocation of the housing grant to build. NIHE needs to have a greater say in the final design that allows for good practice.

House quality does not just relate to new housing, but to existing provision. There are quite a number of people renting in poor accommodation. The repair grant is still available in NI but it is very hard to get, as to be eligible you must have a statutory notice from environmental health to apply.

There is also a need for greater legislative remit for inspecting house quality condition to ensure it is fit for purpose for health and wellbeing, not just in a state of complete disrepair. The issue of lung related conditions and asthma in houses of poor quality have long lasting impacts on health and the health service.

5. Supported Housing Schemes

The 2020 annual update of the Housing Investment Plan for Mid Ulster states that the gross, three year (2019/20) SHDP contains no supported housing schemes for Mid Ulster as there is currently no identified or known requirement

for supported housing in the district. Mid Ulster Community Plan has identified a need for supported housing across the District. Supported housing need has been identified for people with disabilities, older people and vulnerable women who are victims of domestic violence. A need was also identified in Dungannon for people with learning disabilities. This has been brought to the attention of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust who did recognize the need but stated that there is no current funding.

There has been no supported housing provision in the last number of years, which would question the issue re lack of need whilst other plans and engagement with the sectors are identifying a real need. There is confusion if it is need or lack of resource that is driving the agenda. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek a review of supported housing needs for people.

Sports, Arts and Culture

The Mid Ulster Community Plan recognises the importance of sport and physical activity in order to shift responsibility for the population's health away from traditional health and care structures to more focus on intervention and prevention. There are several key objectives that the Mid Ulster Community Plan seeks to address through its actions delivery and would ask PfG to take these into consideration when developing the strategy.

Better coordination by statutory agencies

It was identified that there were several organisations and agencies working in Mid Ulster to deliver Health and Wellbeing Initiatives, including sport and physical activity programmes. Several of the actions named above set out initially to map these organisations, initiatives and programmes and bring them together in one plan. To date much of the mapping has been carried out and a number of working groups have been established, bringing together the various organisations involved in Health & Wellbeing delivery. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek to see all sport and physical delivery in a similar coordinated approach, taking into account current sports and physical activity organisations and programmes already operating in the district. Any outcomes and targets set should also aim to be cross organisational eg 'To keep all children and young people active' which would require a range of partners to achieve.

Access to services in our rural communities

One in four people live in a rural community in Mid Ulster which are serviced by poor transport links. At the most critical end of the Health and Wellbeing scale, this translates into the worst ambulance response times in Northern Ireland. However, it also has a detrimental effect on a person's ability to participate in sports and physical activities which are often based in the population centres in the district. Through our 'Healthy Towns and Villages' action, Mid Ulster Community Planning want to address this issue, looking at the health and

wellbeing offering throughout the district, ensuring equitable provision. Mid Ulster Community Planning would seek all PfG delivery to consider the equitable provision of services across the district.

Mental Health

At the start of this year, Mid Ulster Community Planning commenced a number of actions to address mental health. COVID-19 has reinforced this as a priority area moving forward. Mid Ulster Community Planning will be exploring the impact of poor mental and wellbeing on infant mental health, young people and families, workplace mental health and crisis response as well as developing actions to address it. It is well documented that sports and physical activity plays a hugely important role in positive mental health and wellbeing. Mid Ulster Community Planning would like to see mental health directly addressed with a sports and physical activity delivery.

Other actions and objectives that the Mid Ulster Community Plan is seeking to achieve that are also relevant:

Poverty

The Mid Ulster Community Planning Poverty Strategy identifies the increased risk of lifestyle related illnesses in areas of deprivation. There is much evidence published on the key determinants of health inequalities. At a fundamental level, for many, the cost of participating in sports and physical activity is simply one they cannot afford, a key issue the Mid Ulster Poverty Plan seeks to address, and one the PfG needs to take important cognisance of, if it is to make sport and physical activity accessible to all.

Older people

One of the first achievements of the Mid Ulster Community Plan was the successful delivery of an Ageing Well action, addressing the social isolation and wellbeing of our older people. The next phase of this action is to develop Mid Ulster as an Ageing Friendly society. This will involve activities and programmes to promote the participation of older people in various parts of society, including sport and physical activity. Mid Ulster Community Planning believes that older people need to be a specific and targeted group for sport and physical activity.

ASB

Addressing disengaged young people and ASB is an important element for the Community Planning partners of the Vibrant & Safe Communities thematic group. This work acknowledges the positive impact sport and physical activity can play in this. Sporting role models can be used to change perceptions, reduce ASB and seek to make positive statements for young people e.g. drugs and alcohol.

Team sports can have a positive effect on community integration, civic pride and cross community relations, as well as mental health.

Volunteering

The Mid Ulster Community Plan acknowledges the important role of volunteers in society and the contribution they make to their communities. These contributions are no more apparent than in the sporting communities. Mid Ulster Community Planning believe that volunteers need to have a specific focus within any sports and physical activity strategy, providing for necessary support, training and guidance required to sustain and grow this sector.

Overall whilst it is important for support to traditional organisations for sports development there is potential to allow for greater support to those that outreach to disengaged groups of young children, older people and women, to encourage wider participation, to achieve this better and to underline ALL the benefits of sports and physical activity, beyond the traditional sporting achievements.

4. Delivery Feedback

Mid Ulster District Council welcomes the overall long-term strategic direction presented by the Programme for Government but would also like to reinforce the benefits of joined up, cross lateral working in order to achieve effective delivery and implementation of the strategic themes and priorities identified above. This Programme for Government and its associated outcomes based approach presents an opportunity to create the delivery of inclusive and effective public service delivery. Mid Ulster District Council welcomes this opportunity to be involved in constructive collaborative delivery mechanisms and looks forward to playing a part in the improvement of outcomes for the residents of the Mid Ulster district.

5. Conclusion

Mid Ulster District Council looks forward to the implementation of a robust and ambitious Programme for Government that provide local government with an effective collaborative role which builds on the delivery of the its current services and the associated positive outcomes for residents.

Yours sincerely

Cathal Mallaghan
Chairperson of Mid Ulster District Council

Programme for Government

Draft Outcomes Framework

Consultation Document



25 January 2021

Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction.....	5
Responding to the Consultation	10
Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework	12
Our children and young people have the best start in life.....	12
We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment.....	14
We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect	16
We all enjoy long, healthy active lives.....	18
Everyone can reach their potential.....	20
Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral.....	22
Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other.....	25
We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives	27
People want to live, work and visit here	29

The Outcomes in the Programme for Government Framework present a picture of the kind of society we want to see. An inclusive society in which people of all ages and backgrounds are respected and cared for and in which we all prosper. A society which has no barriers to prevent people from living fulfilling lives. The Outcomes apply equally to everyone, and no one is excluded.

The Programme for Government will be underpinned by a budget and supported by key Executive strategies including an investment strategy, an economic strategy and an anti-poverty strategy aimed at building a strong and prosperous society by tackling disadvantage and achieving sustainable economic growth.

Foreword

The Executive is united in its aim to improve the well-being of all of our people.

To do this we are developing an ambitious and comprehensive programme of work that will harness the full power of joined-up action across Departments.

We are committed to making sure that this is a Programme for Government that fully reflects and responds to the needs of our society and protects the environment in which we live and work.

A proposed strategic framework of nine Outcomes presents a picture of the kind of society we want to see. An inclusive society in which people of all ages and backgrounds are respected and supported. A society which has no barriers to people living prosperous and fulfilling lives.

This has been informed by engagement with representative groups across different sectors and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all involved for sharing with us their ideas, energy and expertise.

Now we want to hear your views on the Outcomes Framework which will guide our actions over the next business year and beyond.

This is what will drive any changes to laws, the delivery of our public services and investment in future projects.

It is the starting point for a real and positive transformation and we need you to help us get it right.

Tell us what your priorities are, share with us your knowledge and experience, work with us to create and innovate to help build and sustain a better society and a healthy, clean environment for everyone.

Although we are in the midst of the worst global health pandemic in 100 years, we are beginning to see and understand that, in the midst of the difficulties and challenges, there are emerging positives.

We have seen an awakening sense about the things that are most important in life: people's health and happiness. We have experienced a willingness to work in new and innovative ways, harnessing technologies and using them to best advantage to ensure business continuity and to find more efficient ways of working.

In responding to the pandemic we have learned a great deal about working in partnership with others - not just across central government, but with other sectors

too, including local government, the private sector and the community and voluntary sector. We have had to move quickly and decisively and we have seen that great success is possible when we get it right. This has helped us get things done and make a difference where it is needed most.

That is the vision we have for the new Programme for Government.

Signed:



The Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA
First Minister



Michelle O'Neill MLA
deputy First Minister

Introduction

Where are we now?

The 'New Decade New Approach' (NDNA) document set out the process and approach for developing the Executive's Programme for Government (PfG). The key points being that the Programme should:

- be developed through engagement and co-design, using an Outcomes-based approach;
- focus on prosperity and wellbeing for all;
- establish a shared and ambitious strategic vision for the future;
- provide for accountable and transparent monitoring and reporting arrangements.

The Executive had begun to develop the new Programme prior to the COVID-19 pandemic which, since March 2020, has been the predominant matter facing the Executive. The Executive has agreed that work to develop a long term, multi-year strategic PfG should now commence.

The Executive wants this to be a PfG that recognises and proactively responds to the dependencies and connections that exist between different strands of public policy – a Programme that focuses on the things that matter most to people (health, happiness and life-satisfaction) and which uses that focus to design, shape and deliver public services that will achieve the best possible Outcomes of societal wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has given the world a different perspective on the way we live our lives and it has shone a light on established principles and standards that we have taken for granted for so long but which are now falling out of favour. We have also been able to see and measure the impact of different governmental responses to the pandemic and, in doing so, have learned that those countries that have been most successful have acted responsibly by putting citizens first and by working collaboratively with those who have the skills, knowledge and expertise to bring about positive change and to get things done.

COVID-19 has exposed flaws in traditional models and approaches to public services, but it has also progressed thinking and practice around new and different ways of working. Most importantly, it has demonstrated very clearly that, when it comes to putting in place fast and effective responses to challenges and problems, governments cannot do it by acting alone. Rather, a whole societal approach is needed – an approach which draws together scientific and technical expertise, combines it with local knowledge and information about what might work at community or individual level, and which uses relevant data to target where need is greatest. That means government working across departmental boundaries and the wider public sector as well as with partners in other sectors – in local government, academia, the private sector, with the community and voluntary sector and beyond.

That is the essence of an Outcomes-based PfG – government partnering with civic society to respond to the needs of people and communities everywhere. An inclusive society where Outcomes of individual and collective wellbeing are the drivers for the government agenda.

The Outcomes-based concept is not new to the Executive, and the concept has gained currency internationally in recent years, with governments in a number of countries using the approach to set their agenda. The United Nations has set a series of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are part of an internationally agreed performance framework designed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. All countries are aiming to achieve these goals by 2030. The intention is that the Outcomes Framework will be our way to demonstrate progress towards the achievement of SDGs. The Executive has agreed on an approach which draws on the techniques set out by Mark Friedman in his book 'Trying Hard is Not Good Enough', which describes a range of practical techniques designed to help keep the focus on Outcomes.

Developing an Outcomes-based PfG requires the Executive to have a clear view of the things that matter most to people and to know what their aspirations are in relation to those things. In order to do that as fully as possible and to ensure that everyone is able to have their say, the Executive is opening a public conversation around the quality of life conditions people want to see and what those conditions would be like if we could experience them.

That is the critical first step in the development process, and getting it right is key to everything that follows from it – knowing how to measure success and understanding where as a society we are currently; identify partners that can help make improvements; and, learning and understanding what works well and what does not. That is the conversation the Executive wants to have right now so that it can reach an informed view on the actions which, taken together, it needs to incorporate in the new Programme for Government.

The Executive believes this is an approach with immense potential to transform public service delivery. The expectation is that it will help remove organisational barriers and be a strong driver for the collaborative working practices that are needed to effect real and lasting change and improvement. The key principle is the Executive working in partnership with people and communities everywhere to identify and deliver actions that will help achieve the quality of life conditions that go to the centre of people's wellbeing.

Previous Programmes for Government had been prepared on the basis of service inputs and outputs which, when it comes to measuring success, are strong on counting levels of activity but which are less good at the more fundamental assessment of

whether the activities are the right thing to be doing based on their effectiveness when it comes to achieving positive change and improvement. The old, traditional model also underpins rigid organisational structures in delivering public services which then makes it difficult to see the bigger picture and to present a whole of government response to societal challenges and needs.

Despite significant investment and effort, the core Indicators that signal economic and social progress and improvement in the areas that matter most to people and their elected representatives had been static for too long. Evidence, including from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and from progressive governments around the world points to Outcomes-based working being much more likely to drive innovation and creativity in how we do things and to deliver better results in the longer term.

What we are doing?

The Executive's approach to the Programme for Government begins with a draft Framework of Outcomes – statements of societal wellbeing which, taken together, are intended to capture the range of things that experience and research suggest matter most to people – good health; a fair, equal and inclusive society; the economy; climate change; being able to fulfil potential; feeling safe and secure; having respect for each other; living in a place where people want to live, work, visit and invest; being able to reach out and connect with others; ensuring children and young people have the best start in life.

However, the Executive recognises the need to determine the completeness of these Outcomes and wants to hear the views of people and communities, and test them against the experiences of people of different gender, age, with/without disabilities, marital status, race, religious belief, political opinion and with/without dependants.

The Executive also wants to know more about the challenges and problems that people face and what they would like to see done differently or better in order to make improvements that would enhance their wellbeing. The Executive also needs to know who can help deliver real and lasting improvements in those things that matter most.

As a basis for the public conversation about these matters, officials have prepared an outline Framework of Outcomes. This is intended only as an aid to the conversation – a starting point for discussion and debate. The Framework sets out draft wording for the Outcomes and incorporates some early thinking around what the key priority areas might be under each one.

It is crucially important to get the wording of the Outcomes right as they will provide the starting point for future long-term strategic policy planning by the Executive and act as a touchstone for its strategies and actions moving forward. A key feature of the approach is that the design and content of work plans will be directly dependent on

the contribution they make towards helping achieve one or more of the desired Outcomes within the Framework.

The intention is that new PfG will be maintained in a “live” format with work plans being continually evaluated and adjusted to ensure they are achieving the desired impact. New actions to achieve positive change and improvement can be introduced as and when it is appropriate to do so, for example in response to changing circumstances or to put innovative thinking into practice or to utilise new partnership approaches. By the same measure, old/completed actions or ineffective plans (those not contributing to desired improvements) will be halted and removed from the Programme.

The benchmark always will be the contribution that each action makes towards achieving the desired Outcomes, **and that is why it is so important to get the Outcomes right at this early stage, and why the Executive wants to take the views of others.** The purpose of this consultation is to find out what people (individuals, communities, groups, businesses, sectoral bodies) think – to give everyone an opportunity to provide forthright feedback on the draft Framework, the individual draft Outcomes and outline key priority areas – **Do people agree with the Outcomes and Key Priority Areas that have been identified? Are there things missing or which are not relevant?**

A survey questionnaire has been designed to help structure responses to the above questions. We would encourage respondents to use the online survey, but written responses are equally welcome.

When completing the survey or in providing written comments, it might be helpful to think in terms of how to make this a Programme for Government that makes real and lasting positive change towards improving wellbeing for all – Think about what you or your group can bring to the Programme? What could be the game-changing actions? Who can help show the way forward? Who should the Executive partner and invest with to get the most impact from our collective efforts? Who is best placed to deliver programmes on the ground? What ideas are there for innovative new things or for seeing problems in a new light or for working in different ways?

Next Steps

This initial consultation is open for the next eight weeks to Monday 22 March 2021. The results will then be analysed and, where appropriate, adjustments made. More detailed action plans will then be developed and there will be further engagement with stakeholders and delivery partners.

To support the fact that this is to be a Programme for Government that is maintained in a “live” format responsive to changing circumstances and always open to new ideas and ways of working, and with a view to making it a programme that is impactful, responsive and inclusive, the Executive recognises the importance of continuous civic

engagement and it sees that as an essential aspect of the Outcomes-based approach moving forward. In that respect, consultation about the Programme and its monitoring processes will never close.

Responding to the Consultation

The best way to respond to this consultation is online, through our survey which can be accessed here:

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nisra-pfg-analytics/pfg-consultation/>

This is quick and simple to complete, and provides for views on the Outcomes and Key Priority Areas for Action that form the Framework.

A copy of the survey is also available for you to download at the following link:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-downloads

Completed hard copy survey questionnaires and general written responses can be sent to us by:

E-mail at: pfg@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Or

Post at: Programme for Government Team,
The Executive Office
Block E, Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SR

Separate easy read and children's versions of the consultation document, and a children's survey questionnaire are available here:

Easy Read Version Consultation Document:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-consultation-documents

Children's Version Consultation Document:

www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-consultation-documents

Children's Version Survey Questionnaire:

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/nisra-pfg-analytics/pfg-childrens-consultation>

Responses to this consultation are invited until 11.59pm on 22 March 2021.

We look forward to hearing from you and are keen to engage with you. If you want to speak to a member of the Team about the PfG or the approach being taken, or if you or a group you are involved with would like to participate in a PfG engagement event, please do let us know.

Note – Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all engagement activities will be conducted using a virtual platform.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Access to Consultation Responses

To support transparency in our decision making process, all responses to this consultation will be made public (subject to our Moderation Policy). This will include the name of the responding organisation (if applicable). However, names of individuals will only be published if you give consent. Your contact details will not be published.

For more information about what we do with personal data please see our consultation privacy notice at Annex A.

Your response, and all other responses to this consultation, may also be disclosed on request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR); however all disclosures will be in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential, so that this may be considered if the Department should receive a request for the information under the FOIA or EIR.

For further information:

TEO Data Protection Officer
Dr David Lammey
Room A.5.16 Castle Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3SR

TEL: 028 9052 8242 (or NICS internal number: 28242)

EMAIL: david.lammey@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework

Our children and young people have the best start in life

We know there is a strong relationship between what happens in the earliest years of life and future health and wellbeing. It is our responsibility to ensure our young people get the best start in life and grow up safe, healthy and happy.

This Outcome is about ensuring all our children and young people grow up in a society which provides the support they need to achieve their potential.

We want to ensure all our children and young people have access to the high quality education they all deserve and are equipped with the skills to help them make the best life choices. We also recognise the importance of ensuring our children and young people have good health, quality physical environments with space to play, opportunities for cultural and artistic expression and to make a positive contribution to society, and protection from violence and harm.

We want to make sure that families, childcare and education providers and those responsible for meeting the needs of more vulnerable children and young people are equipped to provide the high quality level of care and support required of them, so that all our children and young people enjoy their childhood and adolescence and grow to become resilient, confident and well equipped to take on the challenges and opportunities that adulthood brings.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Education

Addressing resourcing pressures, taking a strategic approach to area planning i.e. ensuring all have access to fit for purpose schools and supporting our education sector, including integrated and shared education.

(Department of Education, Department of Finance)

Capability and Resilience

Equipping children and young people with the knowledge and support to make safe, healthy and sustainable life choices, building their social, cultural and environmental awareness and self-confidence through team sports, and cross community activities.

(Department of Health, Department of Justice, Department for Communities, Department of Education, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Care

Providing stable, nurturing environments for looked after children, those formerly in care, and 'newcomer' children, and giving them the best possible standards of support.
(Department of Education, Department of Health)

Early Years

High quality healthcare provision for parents and infants, supporting and enabling parents into work with accessible and affordable childcare, meeting the complex needs of children, addressing child poverty with appropriate welfare and support, and supporting learning and development with universal and targeted services.
(Department of Health, Department for Communities, Department of Education)

Skills and Attainment

Delivering a high quality curriculum and an enhanced approach to careers advice, improving educational achievement and life chances, addressing persistent underachievement, and supporting children with specific needs, such as SEN and those with English as an additional language to access the curriculum.
(Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas
(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- Childcare Strategy (NDNA),
- Child Poverty Strategy (NDNA)
- Food Strategy Framework
- Strategy for Looked After Children
- Road Safety Strategy
- Sports Strategy
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

Our health and wellbeing are directly affected by the quality of the environment around us. We have a collective responsibility to tackle climate change to ensure that our children and future generations can draw benefit and enjoyment from our environment, and each of us must play a part in ensuring that happens.

By taking a Green Growth approach we will manage our resources efficiently and effectively, reducing our carbon emissions to ensure our environment is protected and enhanced while achieving sustainable economic growth to create a living and working active landscape that can be enjoyed and valued by everyone.

We need to ensure our infrastructure is integrated, efficient and sustainable and people are encouraged to make environmentally responsible choices.

Key Priority Areas

Natural Environment

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and the natural environment, supporting sustainable practices and resource use in the energy, agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors and ensuring human, animal and plant health.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Green Economy

Creating economic opportunity through tackling climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (including energy decarbonisation).

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Built Environment

Creating and shaping high quality, sustainable, places for people to live, work and spend leisure time. Furthering sustainable development and supporting positive place-making and effective stewardship.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Housing

Maintaining and redeveloping our current housing stock and ensuring new houses are built in an energy-efficient, sustainable way that protects our natural environment and built heritage.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Active and Sustainable Transport

Promotion of and access to safe, active and sustainable transport to encourage people to make environmentally responsible choices about transport.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department of Education)

Waste Management

Reducing and reusing the waste we produce by improving the services and infrastructure to enable the processing of waste materials and increasing awareness and understanding to drive cultural and behavioural change to result in less waste being generated, and a greater proportion of waste being reused or recycled.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Water and Wastewater Management

Enhancing and improving the existing network and infrastructure to ensure service delivery and sustainable environmental management.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Green Growth Strategy
- Environment Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Future Agriculture Policy Framework
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Sustainable Land Management Strategy
- NI Forestry A Strategy for Sustainability and Growth
- Marine Strategy
- Fisheries Strategy
- R&D Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy
- Energy Strategy
- Regional Development Strategy
- Circular Economy Strategy
- Economic Strategy
- Education and Skills Strategy
- Invest NI Strategy
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- NIHE draft Supporting People Strategy
- Investment Strategy
- Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Future Clean Air Strategy
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect

It is important that everyone in our society feels included and valued and that we can all respect and celebrate the diversity of our society.

This Outcome is about tackling inequality and discrimination, increasing trust and respect, promoting understanding, ensuring that a person's background or identity is not a barrier to their participation in society.

We want to address the legacy of the past and create space for sharing between traditionally divided and new communities.

Key Priority Areas

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Tackling the issues that lead to inequality and disadvantage in terms of welfare and poverty, and providing support where it is needed in both urban and rural communities.
(Department for Communities, The Executive Office, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Rights and Equality

Promoting and protecting the rights of individuals to ensure we are recognizing and respecting diversity, ensuring everyone feels included.
(Department for Communities, The Executive Office, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Legacy

Delivering for those affected by the legacy of the Troubles, seeking to promote a shared and reconciled future for all, and recognizing and valuing the achievements of the peace process to date.
(The Executive Office, Department of Justice)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Tackling the issues of the past and ending sectarianism. Promoting, protecting and providing education on the rights of individuals across our public services to ensure different values and identities are respected and welcomed in society.
(The Executive Office, Department for Communities, Department of Justice, Department of Education)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas
(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Anti-poverty strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty (NDNA)

- Childcare Strategy
- Racial Equality Strategy
- Active Ageing Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy
- T:BUC Strategy
- Disability Strategy
- Gender Strategy
- Sexual Orientation Strategy
- Irish Language Strategy
- Ulster Scots Strategy
- Anti-poverty Strategy
- Strategy for Looked After Children
- Food Strategy Framework

We all enjoy long, healthy active lives

Our physical and mental health impacts on every aspect of our lives.

This Outcome is about enabling and supporting people to maintain their health and lead healthy, active lives, addressing the factors which impact on mental and physical health.

We want to ensure everyone has access to high quality care when they need it throughout their lives.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Health

Taking forward health and social care reform to ensure we can deliver safe, high quality services to meet the challenges of the future, and provide the right services where they are needed.

(Department of Health, Department of Finance)

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Address the issues that lead to inequality and disadvantage in terms of health and healthcare.

(Department of Health, Department for Communities)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive attitudes towards mental health and wellbeing. Ensuring access to a comprehensive array of early intervention and healthcare services to address mental health issues where they present.

(Department of Health, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Older People

Considering the health and social care needs of an ageing population, promoting positive attitudes to older people and tailoring support to enable them to enjoy better health and active lifestyles.

(Department of Health, Department for Communities)

Physical Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive public health measures, increasing awareness and supporting safe, active and healthy lives.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Anti-poverty strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty (NDNA)
- Active Ageing Strategy
- Mental Health Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together
- Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy 2026: Delivering for Our People
- Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
- Disability Strategy
- Cancer Strategy
- Substance Misuse Strategy
- Making Life Better 2012-23
- Green Growth Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Anti-poverty Strategy
- Mental Health Action Plan
- Protect Life 2 – Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- Sports Strategy
- Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Tackling Rural Poverty and Isolation Framework

Everyone can reach their potential

It is important that everyone in society is supported to help them realise and achieve their potential.

This Outcome is about giving people access to better jobs across different sectors by developing more opportunities, supporting personal development, addressing the issues that lead to underachievement and strengthening links between industry and academia.

We want to help people achieve their ambitions and to feel confident and empowered to pursue their goals and interests.

Key Priority Areas

Capability and Resilience

Supporting personal development opportunities for everyone, and building confidence and capacity.

(Department for Communities, Department of Education, Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Better Jobs

Creation and development of more opportunities and better jobs, by tackling issues such as job security, wages and flexibility and giving employees a voice. Improving employability and helping those who are unemployed into work and ensuring we develop a workforce that is equipped and ready for employment. Protecting workers' rights, addressing "zero hours" contracts and barriers to employment.

(Department for Communities, Department for the Economy)

Skills and Attainment

Addressing underachievement alongside skills shortages, aligning Further Education and Higher Education to labour market demand, supporting vocational training and apprenticeships, as well as qualifications and tertiary education and continuing professional development.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Sports, Arts & Culture

Supporting creative industries, oversight and delivery for the arts, cultural and language sectors. Promoting cohesive communities through the culture, arts and language sectors

(Department for the Economy, Department for Communities, The Executive Office)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Economic Strategy
- Skills Strategy
- Childcare Strategy
- DfC employability NI
- Disability Strategy (NDNA)
- Gender Strategy (NDNA)
- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- Child Poverty Strategy (NDNA)
- Securing our Success – Apprenticeship Strategy
- Generating our Success the Youth Training Strategy Preparing for Success
- Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework
- DAERA Knowledge Framework

Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral

A strong, regionally balanced, inclusive economy is essential if we are to tackle the social and economic challenges facing us. This will be very significant in terms of the impacts of exit from the EU and recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. It is also important that our economy grows in a sustainable way that supports and protects our environment.

It is internationally recognised that a sustainable development approach seeks to progress economic and social ambitions while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

This Outcome is about creating the conditions required to achieve a strong, competitive economy that helps Northern Ireland compete on the global stage, attract investment and stimulate innovation and creativity.

The production of high quality, nutritious food is a crucially important factor for our economy. We want to provide the tools to enable the industry to pursue increased productivity in international terms. The intention is to grow an industry that is environmentally sustainable, supporting high quality air, water, and soil. An industry with a low carbon footprint which promotes biodiversity; is resilient to external shocks and operates within an integrated, efficient, sustainable, competitive and responsive supply chain.

We want to develop our infrastructure to enhance opportunities for growth and ensure growth in our economy is undertaken in an environmentally friendly way to help tackle climate change, striving for low-carbon/zero-carbon alternatives.

Key Priority Areas

Competing Globally

Dealing with the outworking of the EU Exit Protocol and developing internationalisation to help Northern Ireland compete on the global stage, and to promote Northern Ireland as a sector to visit and invest in.

(Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Green Economy

Developing our economy and energy supply in an environmentally friendly way, recognising the impacts industry has on climate change and striving for low-carbon / zero-carbon alternatives.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department for Infrastructure)

Growth

Growing the economy to attract and stimulate investment across Northern Ireland, including building sustainable investment, encouraging business start-ups and development through City and Growth Deals and supporting sustainable development of rural industries.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Food, Farming and Fishing

Providing the tools under a future agricultural policy to increase productivity, enhance environmental sustainability, improve resilience and supply chain integration of the agrifood industry.

(Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Infrastructure

Developing our digital, energy and physical infrastructure to provide opportunities to grow business in all areas.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for the Economy, Department of Finance)

Innovation

Helping companies engage in innovation and research, and develop creativity and entrepreneurship.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- NI Innovation Strategy
- UK R&D Roadmap
- UK R&D Place Strategy
- Economic Strategy
- EU Exit Protocol
- Tourism Strategy
- Circular Economy Strategy
- Investment Strategy
- International Relations Strategy

- Exports Strategy
- Energy Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy
- Food Strategy Framework
- Future Agricultural Policy Framework
- City and Growth Deals
- Environment Strategy
- DAERA Innovation Strategy
- DAERA Digital Strategy
- NI Forest Service Strategy
- Marine Strategy
- Fisheries Strategy

Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other

This Outcome is about ensuring we all have a safe community and feel respected.

We need to tackle crime, reduce reoffending and divert people, especially young people, from entering the justice system by challenging and supporting people to change and assisting those in custody to make better life-choices when they are released.

It is important that we address the harm and vulnerability caused by crime and make the justice system more effective; the speed that cases progress through the system matters to victims and witnesses, their families and their communities and can help offenders to better understand the implications of their actions.

We need to promote understanding of different cultural identities to help build respect for each other.

Key Priority Areas

Access to Justice

Improving the effectiveness and accessibility of justice at all levels, speeding up justice and supporting the PSNI in bringing about transformational change, and delivering for victims and survivors of historical abuse and for those affected by the legacy of the Troubles.

(Department of Justice, Department of Finance, The Executive Office)

Address Harm and Vulnerability

Supporting and putting protections in place for those who are vulnerable, meeting the needs of those who have experienced serious crime, including the complex needs of children, and delivering for victims and survivors.

(Department of Justice, Department of Health)

Early Intervention and Rehabilitation

Addressing offensive behaviors and tackling organized crime, supporting rehabilitation, intervening early, meeting the often complex needs of both children and adults throughout the justice system.

(Department of Justice, Department of Health, Department for Communities, Department of Education)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Supporting safe and resilient communities, building respect for cultural identities and rights of individuals, providing integrated and shared education, addressing hate crime, tackling sectarianism, ending paramilitary activity and addressing the harm and vulnerabilities caused by it.

(Department of Justice, Department of Education, The Executive Office, Department for Communities)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Organised Crime Strategy
- Racial Equality Strategy (NDNA)
- T:BUC Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy (NDNA)
- A multi-agency three year victim and witness action plan
- 7 year Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy
- Justice and Health Initiatives
- Executive Mental Health Strategy
- Digital Justice Strategy
- Reviews of Family and Civil Justice
- Committal Reform Programme (NDNA)
- Review of sentencing policy
- Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime

We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives

It is important that we as a society care for those who need our support.

This Outcome is about enabling everyone to live their life in a fulfilling way as valued members of an inclusive society.

We need to tackle the issues that lead to disadvantage and provide the services and support people need, when they need it.

Key Priority Areas

Disability

Improving the quality of life for those of us with disabilities, empowering people to have more influence over their own lives and providing opportunities to participate in decisions that affect them.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for the Economy, Department for Infrastructure)

Housing

Tackling homelessness. Facilitating and supporting housing associations, provision and maintenance of appropriate social housing, investment in new social and affordable homes.

(Department for Communities, Department of Finance)

Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage

Supporting people to build a route out of poverty, administering an effective social security / benefits system to those who need it, tackling the issues that lead to inequality.

(Department for Communities)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, and addressing social issues, risk factors and environmental impacts, such as social isolation and loneliness. Providing access to supportive services and promoting early intervention.

(Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Older People

Considering the health and social care needs of an ageing population, promoting positive attitudes to older people and tailoring support to enable them to participate fully in society.

(Department for Communities, Department of Health, Department for Infrastructure)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- NIHE's draft Supporting People strategy
- Disability Strategy (NDNA)
- Active Ageing (NDNA)
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Child Poverty Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy

People want to live, work and visit here

This Outcome is about promoting Northern Ireland as a place where people want to live, work and visit.

We want to retain and attract people to live and work here by having attractive employment, a healthy and clean environment, recreation and housing opportunities where people feel respected and safe.

We want to build on international relations and enhance our reputation, deal with the impacts of EU Exit and the COVID-19 pandemic, attract investment and help grow our economy.

We want to promote our built and natural environment our sports, arts and culture sectors to encourage tourism and provide opportunities for people to take part in the things they enjoy.

Key Priority Areas

Competing Globally

Retaining our workforce and attracting newcomers and inward investment. Dealing with the impacts of EU Exit. Meeting international environmental standards. Promotion of Northern Ireland as a place to live, study, work and visit.

(Department for the Economy, The Executive Office, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Better Jobs

Creating varied, fulfilling and quality employment opportunities for our workforce to support retention of our workforce, and attracting skilled workers to Northern Ireland's industries.

(Department for the Economy)

Growth

Growing the economy to attract and stimulate investment across Northern Ireland, including building sustainable investment, encouraging business start-ups and development through City and Growth Deals and supporting sustainable development of rural industries, including increased digital access.

(Department for the Economy, Department of Finance, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Housing

Tackling the issues to ensure everyone has access to good-quality, affordable housing and in promoting an integrated, shared society.

(Department for Communities, The Executive Office)

Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity

Supporting safe and resilient communities, building respect for cultural identities and rights of individuals, providing shared/integrated education, tackling sectarianism, ending paramilitary activity and addressing the harm and vulnerabilities caused by it.

(Department of Justice, Department of Education, The Executive Office, Department for Communities)

Sports, Arts and Culture

Providing access to sports, arts and culture and encouraging and facilitating opportunities for people to get involved. Promoting built heritage, eco-tourism and outdoor recreation. Providing spaces and facilities for sports, arts and culture events and activities to take place.

(Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

Planning

Creating and shaping high quality, sustainable, places for people to live, work and spend leisure time. Furthering sustainable development and supporting positive place-making and effective stewardship.

(Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)

The following strategies could help deliver these key priority areas

(This is not an exhaustive list):

- Investment strategy
- Economic strategy
- T:BUC Strategy
- Tourism Strategy
- Green Growth Strategy
- City and Growth Deals
- Food Strategy Framework
- Rural Policy Framework (under development)

PFG Consultation Privacy Notice

[EU General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) 2016](#) and [Data Protection Act \(DPA\) 2018](#)

The Executive Office (TEO) is committed to protecting your privacy. This privacy notice explains how TEO uses information about you and the ways in which we will safeguard your data.

Why we process personal information

We will process personal data provided in response to consultations for the purpose of informing the development of our policy, guidance, or other regulatory work in the subject area of the request for views. We will publish a summary of the consultation responses and, in some cases, the responses themselves but these will not contain any personal data. We will not publish the names or contact details of respondents, but will include the names of organisations responding along with those of individuals working in a private capacity.

If you have indicated that you would be interested in contributing to further departmental work on the subject matter covered by the consultation, then we might process your contact details to get in touch with you.

Lawful basis for processing

In order to comply with data protection legislation, we must have a lawful basis for processing any personal data. The processing that this Department carries out is on a 'Public Task' basis (i.e. Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR: the processing is necessary for the Department to perform a task in the public interest or for our official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law).

We will only process any special category (sensitive) personal data you provide, which reveals racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious belief, health or sexual life/orientation when it is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest under Article 9(2)(g) of the GDPR, in the exercise of the function of the department, and to monitor equality.

The type of personal data we process

We process personal data relating to:

- Names
- Telephone Numbers

- Postal addresses
- E-mail addresses

How will your information be used and shared

We process the information internally for the above stated purpose. We don't intend to share your personal data with any third party. Any specific requests from a third party for us to share your personal data with them will be dealt with in accordance the provisions of the data protection legislation.

How long will we keep your information

Information from responses to a consultation will be retained until our work on the subject matter of the consultation is complete. Data will be retained for five years in line with TEO's approved retention and disposal schedule.

What are your rights

- You have the right to obtain confirmation that your data is being [processed, and access to your personal data](#)
- You are entitled to have personal data [rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete](#)
- You have a right to have personal data [erased and to prevent processing](#), in specific circumstances
- You have the right [to 'block' or suppress processing](#) of personal data, in specific circumstances
- You have the right to [data portability](#), in specific circumstances
- You have the right to [object to the processing](#), in specific circumstances
- You have rights in relation to [automated decision making and profiling](#).

Alternative formats/General enquires

If you have any other queries about this Privacy Notice or need a copy in an alternative format or language, please contact the PFG Team at the address below.

Programme for Government Team,
The Executive Office
Rm A5.01, Block E
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast, BT4 3SR

Telephone: 028 9052 3466
E-mail: pfg@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Complaints

If you wish to request access, object or raise a complaint about how we have handled your data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer using the details provided below.

Dr David Lammey
Data Protection Officer
The Executive Office
Room A5.16, Castle Buildings
Belfast, BT4 3SL

Telephone: 028 9052 0694

Email: David.Lammey@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are not processing your personal data in accordance with the law, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Email: casework@ico.org.uk

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

Changes to this privacy notice

We keep this Privacy Notice under regular review. This Privacy Notice was last updated on 22 December 2020.

Report on	Correspondence to Council - March 2021
Date of Meeting	Thurs 25 th March 2021
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	Provide an update on correspondence received for attention of Council.
2.0	Background
2.1	This paper refers to correspondence to be brought to the attention of Council. Items are referred to in 3.0 below.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council</p> <p>The Chief Executive of Fermanagh and Omagh Council has corresponded with the Council giving notification of a motion which it had previously passed on 4th June 2019 calling on NILGOSC to divest from fossil fuel, tobacco and arms. Refer to appendix A.</p>
3.2	<p>Correspondence from Minister for the Economy</p> <p>The Minister for the Economy has corresponded with the Chair of Council in response to correspondence from the council following the closure of Tempest, Cookstown and impact of closures generally on town centres. Refer to appendix B.</p>
3.3	<p>Correspondence from Local Government Boundary Commissioner</p> <p>The Local Government Boundary Commissioner has corresponded with the Chief Executive offering members with an opportunity, should they wish to take it up, to receive/participate in a virtual information session in the coming weeks to put any queries forward and hear more about the process. Members/parties may wish to take up the offer. Refer to appendix C.</p>
3.4	<p>Correspondence from Chief Executive, Derry City & Strabane District Council</p> <p>The Chief Executive of Derry City & Strabane District Council has corresponded with council to notification of a motion passed at its meeting on 25 February 2021 on calling upon the Department for Infrastructure to conduct a feasibility study on rail connections and the rail network. Refer to appendix D.</p>
3.5	Correspondence from Chief Executive, NIAS HSCT

	The Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service has corresponded with the council following issues raised/in response to issues raised at February Council meeting particularly around their Ambulance crews navigating to addresses across the district. A meeting will be sought with the NI Ambulance Service to discuss same. Refer to appendix E.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: not applicable
	Human: not applicable
	Risk Management: not applicable
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: not applicable
	Rural Needs Implications: not applicable
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That Council notes and considers, as necessary, the correspondence received.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	<p>Appendix A: Chief Executive, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council</p> <p>Appendix B: Minister for the Economy, NI Executive</p> <p>Appendix C: Local Government Boundary Commissioner</p> <p>Appendix D: Chief Executive, Derry City & Strabane District Council</p> <p>Appendix E: Chief Executive, NI Ambulance Service HSCT</p>

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Our Ref: Democratic Services

Date: 17 February 2021

Email: democratic.services@fermanaghmagh.com

Mr Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council
Burn Road
COOKSTOWN
BT80 8DT

Dear Mr McCreesh

Re: Divestment from Fossil Fuels, Tobacco and Arms

At the Council's Policy and Resources Committee meeting of 10 February 2021, whilst discussing the Council's Climate Change and Sustainable Development Strategy, Members referred to a Motion which our Council had approved on 4 June 2019 calling on NILGOSC to divest from fossil fuels, tobacco and arms.

The Motion was as follows:

"Fermanagh and Omagh district council calls on the Local Government Officer's Superannuation Committee to divest the local Government pension scheme from fossil fuel companies.

Further, this council also calls on the local Government Officers Superannuation Committee to bring forward an ethical investment policy and desist from investment in tobacco and arms companies".

The Council asked that I write to the other ten Councils to seek their support for the course of action outlined within the Motion.

I have also written to NILGOSC seeking an update on progress on this matter since June 2019.

The Council trusts your Council will look favourably on its request to support this Motion and looks forward to receiving your response in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alison McCullagh'.

Alison McCullagh
Chief Executive

FROM THE MINISTER
Diane Dodds MLA



Netherleigh
Massey Avenue
Belfast BT4 2JP
02890 529510
email: private.office@economy-ni.gov.uk

Cllr Cathal Mallaghan
info@midulstercouncil.org

INV-0090-2020

22 February 2021

Dear Cllr Mallaghan

Thank you for your letter of 6th February 2021 outlining the difficulties with the closure of Tempest in Cookstown and the impact of such closures on the town centre.

Many businesses, in the retail sector, are facing an unprecedented level of challenge and I understand why you are concerned about the town centre. It is good to hear that your Council are planning to discuss this in one of your meetings. The Executive Office has agreed to establish a cross-departmental High Street Taskforce to consider and address key issues facing businesses and it would be useful if you could connect with this grouping to discuss your concerns. As urban regeneration is not a function of my Department and is a function of the Department for Communities I would suggest you should contact that Department regarding the town centre issues.

Sorry I cannot help you on this occasion, I wish you continued success in your efforts to sustain and grow your town centre in such challenging times.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Diane Dodds', with a horizontal line underneath.

DIANE DODDS MLA
Minister for the Economy

Chief Executive of District Councils
By email:

**Office of the Local Government
Boundaries Commissioner**
C/O Local Government Division,
Department for Communities,
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
BELFAST
BT2 7EG

02 March 2021

Local Government Boundaries Review

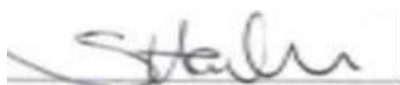
Dear Chief Executive,

I am writing to you regarding my Review of Local Government Boundaries in NI that is currently underway. You will have received correspondence from my team at the start of February, when I launched the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner (LGBC) website.

We have subsequently received a number of queries from Councillors across Northern Ireland on the process for conducting the Review and the Review timeline. While this information is available on the website (www.lgbc-ni.org.uk), I would be happy to provide some further details on the process and timeline through a virtual information session for your members in the coming weeks.

If this is something that your members would find useful, please contact my Secretary on 07971856939 to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours faithfully



Sarah Havlin

Local Government Boundaries Commissioner

cc Jenny McGuigan, LGBC Office.



Derry City & Strabane
District Council
Comhairle
Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSratha Báin
Derry Cittie & Strabane
District Council

Our Ref: TJ/C100/21

12 March 2021

Mr Adrian McCreese
Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council
Dungannon Office
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 6DT



Dear Mr McCreese

At a Meeting of Derry City and Strabane District Council held on 25 February 2021, the following Motion was passed:

That this Council recognises the strategic, social and economic benefit of restoring the former Great Northern Railway line between Strabane and Derry as an essential first phase of getting Strabane and County Tyrone reconnected to the Irish railway network.

That this Council writes to the Fermanagh and Omagh, Mid-Ulster and Armagh and Banbridge and Craigavon District Councils in regards to the feasibility of restoring the rail link from Londonderry to Portadown.

This Council calls on the Department of Infrastructure to conduct a feasibility study supported by a business case to enable this proposal to be put into effect as soon as possible.

This Council agrees to write to the Minister of Infrastructure to show our support for including rail expansion to Strabane in the Regional Strategic Transport Network Plan to 2035 and further supports the Minister of Infrastructure in working with the Irish Government and on future rail expansion for the North West.

I would appreciate your consideration in this important matter would be grateful for a response in relation thereto.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Kelpie".

John Kelpie
Chief Executive



Appendix E

Chief Executive's Office
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service

Email: michael.bloomfield@nias.hscni.net
Tel: 028 9040 0999

Mr Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council
Council Offices
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 6DT

Our Ref: AD/CE/50(1)
Your Ref:

Date: 18 March 2021

Dear Adrian

Thank you for your letter of 26 February 2021 and for the interest that the Council takes in relation to the provision of ambulance services in the area.

I would be very happy to meet with the Council to discuss the issues raised in your letter in more detail. In the meantime, I would comment as follows on the specific issues raised by Council members as outlined in your letter.

New Housing developments and the NIAS Navigation system

New housing developments are captured as part of the Ordnance Survey NI (OSNI) Pointer data set, which are released on a regular basis. The pointer dataset is the foundation of our Gazetteer held within the Computer Aided Dispatch system, which automatically updates the satellite navigation systems in our ambulances.

More generally, on the issue of locating properties, particularly in rural areas, I very much welcome your planned promotional campaign to encourage both houses and lane entrances to be clearly numbered. I believe this is an issue we could work on jointly, and with your agreement, will provide the contact details of our Media and Communications Manager who would lead on this on behalf of NIAS.

Response times

Ambulance response times continue to be challenging, particularly during the Pandemic when a substantial number of staff have been unavailable for work at any time due to Covid-19 related issues such as needing to self-isolate. This has increased our reliance on the need for staff to work overtime to provide as much operational cover as possible. The longer-term solution to this lies in the full implementation of our new Clinical Response Model which would see an expansion in our operational workforce of over 300 staff. We continue to work with the Department of Health to secure funding for this expansion.



The introduction of our new Clinical Response Model forms part of a wider framework on ongoing service reforms in NIAS. I appreciate your concerns as to how this translates into practice within rural areas and look forward to providing the Council with a full overview as to how each part of our strategy connects to deliver as equitable a service as possible across all areas.

Estates issues

Upgrading our estates to make them fit for purpose and ensuring that they are geographically sited in areas which provide most benefit is a key deliverable of our strategy to transform 2020-2026 – “Caring Today, Planning for Tomorrow”. As such, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the NIAS strategic plans to reconfigure our estate, the impact that these proposals will have on response times and the potential for collaborative work with Mid Ulster Council in the development of these plans.

I look forward to having the opportunity to discuss these issues in more detail with the Council, and would ask your office contacts my PA, Nikki Dornan via email chief.secretary@nias.hscni.net or telephone 028 9040 0712 to arrange a suitable time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Michael Bloomfield', written over a horizontal line.

Michael Bloomfield
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report on	Consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council
Date of Meeting	25 th March 2021
Reporting Officer	Philip Moffett, Head of Democratic Services
Contact Officer	Ann McAleer, Corporate Policy and Equality Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update members on the consultations notified to Mid Ulster Council for comment.
2.0	Background
2.1	Council is a consultee for many government departments and statutory agencies, and as such receives consultation documentation inviting commentary on a range of issues that may be pertinent to council services and/or the District.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Documentation relating to the aforementioned consultations can be accessed via the links provided in the table provided in Appendix A.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None
	Rural Needs Implications: None
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members review and note consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council.

6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix A: Details of Current Consultations

Appendix A: Details of Current Consultations

Organisation	Consultation Title	Issue	Closing Date	Response Currently Being Developed
Northern Ireland Assembly	Protection from Stalking Bill	Purpose of the Bill is to improve the operation of the justice system by creating a specific new offence of stalking that recognises the experience of victims and the behaviour associated with stalking. The Committee for Justice seeks commentary.	16 April 2021	
	Link to Consultation	http://nia1.me/4fm		
	Delegated Authority required to be granted to a Committee if Council agrees that a response should be made (where an extension is not given)?		Yes	
Organisation	Consultation Title	Issue	Closing Date	Response Currently Being Developed
Private Members Bill (Declan McAleer MLA)	Areas of Natural Constraint (ANC)	This consultation seeks views a Private Member's Bill which aims to develop to make Areas of Natural Constraint (ANC) payment a legal requirement in line with existing legislative powers in Schedule 6 of the Agriculture Act 2020.	6 th April 2021	
	Link to Consultation	www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/R7B5RXM		
	Delegated Authority required to be granted to a Committee if Council agrees that a response should be made (where an extension is not given)?			

Organisation	Consultation Title	Issue	Closing Date	Response Currently Being Developed
SONI Limited	Shaping Our Electricity Future	Views are sought on SONI's four draft approaches to ensuring at least 70% of Northern Ireland's electricity comes from renewable sources by 2030.	12 noon on 14 June 2021	
	Link to Consultation	https://consult.soni.ltd.uk/consultation/public-consultation-shaping-our-electricity-future		
	Delegated Authority required to be granted to a Committee if Council agrees that a response should be made (where an extension is not given)?		No	

