

Minutes of Meeting of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 16 December 2021 in the Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon and by virtual means

Chair Councillor McLean

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

Officers in Attendance Mr McCreesh, Chief Executive
Ms Canavan, Strategic Director of Organisational Development Strategy & Performance (SDODSP)**
Ms Campbell, Deputy Chief Executive & Strategic Director of Environment (SDE)**
Mr Kelso, Director of Public Health & Infrastructure (DPHI)**
Mr Moffett, Assistant Director of Organisational Development, Strategy & Performance (ADODSP)
Mr Tohill, Strategic Director of Corporate Service & Finance (SDCSF)
Ms Ursula Mezza, Head of Marketing & Communications**
Mrs Forde, Member Support Officer
Ms O'Neill, Community Planning
Ms Totten, Community Planning

Others **Northern Health & Social Care Trust**
Ms Jennifer Welsh, Chief Executive***
Mr Owen Harkin, Director of Finance/Deputy Chief Executive***
Ms Wendy Magowan, Director of Operations***
Mr Neil Martin, Director of Strategic Development and Business Services***
Mr Roy Hamill, Director of Community Care***

Southern Health & Social Care Trust
Mrs Aldrina Magwood, Director of Planning & Reform***
Mr Brian Beattie, Interim Director of Older People's Service***

* Denotes Members present in remote attendance

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7 pm.

The Chair, Councillor McLean 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.

C254/21 Apologies

The Chair, Councillor McLean extended condolences to Councillor Bell on the death of his grandfather.

Councillors Bell, Graham and N McAleer

C255/21 Declarations of Interest

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

C256/21 Chair's Business

The Chair, Councillor McLean highlighted events and achievements over the past month including Council's Tourism taking the top spot in 'Best Digital Initiative' category at the recent Mid Ulster Business Awards for a business engagement programme. He also highlighted that Council was one of two in Northern Ireland to see an increase in its household recycling rate in the last year, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chair further advised that a number of Council facilities have recently been awarded the ISO 45001 Health and Safety Management standard which recognises a high health and safety standard.

The Chair, Councillor McLean advised that he had considered it a privilege to host breakfasts across the district for those working at the coalface delivering services on the ground and how he had visited staff at many of the leisure facilities.

The Chair, Councillor McLean paid tribute to two people in the district who had achieved major awards, Helen Shivers who has been recognised with a major accolade from the All-Ireland Business Foundation in being named as Northern Ireland Business Person of the Year in recognition of her contribution to Northern Irish business. The second was David Henderson, the managing director of Tobermore in Magherafelt, who triumphed in the industry category of the all-island EY Entrepreneur of the Year.

Councillor Monteith paid tribute to Naomh Treasa Camogie Club, Dungannon who had won the All-Ireland Junior Club Semi-Final yesterday and will play in the All-Ireland Final at the weekend and extended best wishes to them for the game.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure requested that Members note that along with facilitating the roll out of vaccines across the district at leisure centres a request from the Northern Trust to use the Meadowbank facility had also been accommodated.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Colvin declared an interest in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust as a member of the Southern Trust Commissioning Group.

C257/21 Deputation Northern & Southern Health & Social Services Trusts

The Chair, Councillor McLean welcomed representatives from both the Northern and Southern Health and Social Care Trust to the meeting and referred to the paper Council had previously submitted to them which highlighted areas of concern.

Representatives from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust delivered presentation at appendix A which highlighted response to the areas of concern expressed by Council.

Councillor Quinn left the meeting at 7.26pm returning at 7.30pm

Ms Magwood thanked her colleagues in the Northern Trust for the presentation which addresses similar issues in the Southern Trust area apart from a number of nuances such as COVID occupancy in the Southern area was slightly higher and reinforced the booster programme which was essential in the fight against COVID. She appealed to Members to encourage people to avail of the booster. She referred to a number of the questions in relation to primary care and advised she had forwarded a paper immediately prior to the meeting which would be shared with Members in due course. Ms Magwood advised many primary care issues were within the remit of the Health and Social Care Board and moving forward it may be beneficial to bring community partners to such meetings.

The Chair, Councillor McLean thanked both Trusts for their contribution and advised Members that the approach taken by Council in submitting areas of concern had been beneficial cognisance of which should be taken moving forward. He invited questions.

Councillor Corry thanked the Trusts for the informative presentation and their work in difficult times. She requested that the graphics regarding vaccine clinics be forwarded to Council to promote them. She requested an update on the response to the recruitment drive and asked had there been much uptake in the Northern Trust area.

In response, Mr Harkin said that once the graphics were completed regarding vaccine clinics they would be shared with Council and requested that Members encourage people to book vaccine slots which made the roll out easier.

Mr Hamill said he did not have the up to date figures regarding recruitment drive but that he could advise that in Cookstown there were 18 vacancies for homecare services and 12 in Magherafelt. He said they hoped to fill these posts from the recent recruitment drive and also to compile waiting lists to ensure a ready flow of staff in the future. He indicated that as the waiting list depleted further recruitment exercises would take place.

The Chair, Councillor McLean asked that Council be kept informed of the issues

Councillor Burton shared that many low risk mums had expressed disappointment in the removal of the birthing pool at the Craigavon Hospital site and sought clarity as to whether the pool had been moved to storage. She requested a timeline for its reinstallation saying that other hospital sites were providing the facility and concluded it would be her hope that 2022-23 would be a less stressful time than the past year.

Ms Magwood said there was plans to replace the birthing pool but there continued to be provision for water births as she herself had availed of same. She advised there are single rooms with large bath tubs as en-suites but it was hoped to reinstate the birthing pool as soon as possible.

Councillor McAleer highlighted the Firs Care Home in Ballygawley an 8 bedded unit with 7 day care places which is marked for closure due to retirement of the owners. She said this is a terrible blow to domiciliary care services and asked was there any discussions regarding a takeover. She said she lived in the same cul-de- sac and it was heart breaking for all concerned.

Ms Magwood said she was aware of the issue, that discussions were underway and said she would provide a written response in relation to the matter.

Mr Beattie clarified that the Trust did not run nursing homes but concurred that they would endeavour to provide further detail.

Councillor Kerr referred to the Mental Health Strategy and asked what services would be delivered in Mid Ulster stating that current services were under severe pressure which was ever increasing.

Councillor Kerr in relation to poverty asked what practical steps was being taken in relation to waiting lists which was known toacerbate poverty.

Ms Magwood said poverty and dealing with health inequalities was more than just a health issue with many compounding factors contributing not least the impact Covid. She said they were working through an integrated planning framework at HSC level which was based on a population model to further target approach to commissioning services.

In relation to questions regarding mental health she said that if specifics were provided she would be happy to follow up if it was within the Southern Trust area.

The Chair, Councillor McLean said Councillor Kerr would follow up with specifics.

Councillor Monteith referred to the new build scheme for Dungannon Medical Hub and also Oakridge. He acknowledged that it was reported as a priority capital project and asked where it was now and when would it be known if the money for its provision would be allocated in the incoming year.

Ms Magwood advised that Oakridge was a Southern Trust Priority one project alongside Craigavon's redevelopment. Dungannon Community Care programme is

a priority although Newry is currently the top priority scheme and once completed Dungannon will then move to number one. In terms of when the finance would be forthcoming she said she could not provide clarity as Members would be aware from the media that the capital environment is constrained within the Executive. She concluded that business cases were submitted but the answers in relation to finance would have to be asked of the Department of Health.

Councillor Wilson stated that Council should do all it can to promote vaccines and the booster.

Councillor Wilson raised the issue of the Cookstown Health Hub as part of the Mid South West Growth Deal and thanked the Trusts for their work to date. He said there was an absolute need for adult day care facilities and said there was an opportunity for Mid Ulster to lead the way in how this can be provided in rural communities and requested that Ms Welsh take this on board. Councillor Wilson said that Mid Ulster lacked supported living facilities for adults with learning difficulties and many were suffering the consequences of the deficit. He stated that the Bengoa Report had highlighted the provision of modern supported living as a priority and stated that both Trusts should strategically progress the issue. He sought clarification as to whether there had been movement and where such projects were at.

Mr Martin explained that the Trust had a new ICT equipment and microphones were currently problematic at this point in the meeting, inhibiting the Northern Trust Chief Executive from responding.

In response Councillor Wilson said he would accept a written response.

Councillor Ashton sought clarity from both Trusts in relation to the Mental Health Strategy, detailing that within the briefing papers the Southern Trust had been brief whilst the Northern Trust had been more comprehensive. She said that the Southern Trust had highlighted that the strategy was driven by the Public Health Agency whilst the Northern Trust had indicated they had taken the lead on the programme. Councillor Ashton said she had been impressed by the programmes presented by the Northern Trust and asked if said programmes would be rolled out across the Southern area also. She acknowledged the input by the voluntary sector and the reliance upon same which was well known by Council also. Councillor Ashton stated greater investment was needed and sought clarity as to what Council should lobby for. Councillor Ashton asked how many GPs were offering counselling services across both Trust areas and the time frame of delivery. She reiterated earlier comments that Covid was intensifying the mental health crisis.

Councillor Ashton stated she would be happy to receive written responses and emphasised that mental health must be at the top of the agenda.

The Chair Councillor McLean requested written responses to the questions.

Ms Magwood said that the provision of counselling services from GP surgeries was not managed by the Trust but by the Health Care Board. She referred to the correspondence forwarded to Council earlier in the evening but acknowledged it did

not provide clarity on the questions asked but said that whilst she would not have the detail she would endeavour to seek clarity.

Councillor Ashton said she appreciated the efforts but stressed that the mental Health strategy currently was not a one stop shop and people who need signposting don't know where to go.

Ms Magwood said there was a full consultation on the issue and efforts were being made to move to a one stop shop. In relation to boundaries she said there was a move to provide one mental health service and more detail was provided on the website.

Councillor McKinney thanked all involved in the health service for the work they do acknowledging that they are more often criticised than thanked. He spoke in relation to out of hours services moving to larger sites and the apprehension this brings as people feel they will be in a worse position.

He reiterated the comments of Councillor Wilson in promotion of vaccinations and proposed that Council through its media platforms including press release should encourage staff and the public to get vaccinated.

The Chair, Councillor McLean said that the proposal was not necessary as Council already had the matter on hand but he did appreciate the Members comments.

Ms Magowan referred to the urgent care satellite centres and said whilst they don't provide them she was aware Antrim and Ballymena had consolidated out of hours provision. She said that this was a symptom of Covid as it was difficult to get GP out of hours shifts covered. Ms Magowan said they worked closely with the service and it was felt that consolidating the services ensured better provision than numerous smaller sites but reiterated that they did not provide the out of hours service.

Councillor S McGuigan spoke of the chronic shortage of GPs in Mid Ulster in Dungannon and Clogher Valley in particular. He said he was aware that in recent years effort was being made to address the problem but training takes time. He asked if they were any closer in addressing the problem and if any incentives were put in place to attract GPs to the area.

Ms Magwood said there are currently 25 GP practises in the area and there were many challenges. She said that part of the aim moving forward was to provide multi-disciplinary teams such as mental health and physiotherapists together. She said some practices were providing training support and it was encouraging that there were 15 places currently in the area. She said there may be more data in relation to this in the submission provided by the Health Care Board.

The Chair, Councillor McLean ended the question session and reiterated appreciation to both the Northern and Southern Trusts. He said this was not a blame game all acknowledged that there was major challenges and that Council wished to work alongside the Trusts and its doors were always open.

He concluded wishing the Trust teams a Happy Christmas and Blessed New Year.

Matters for Decision

C258 /21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Council Meeting held on Thursday 25 November 2021

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Hughes and

Councillor S McAleer requested that an apology be recorded for her at the November meeting. Councillor Hughes requested an amendment to Amendment to minute page 9 4th paragraph Councillor Kearney to read Councillor Hughes.

Resolved That the Minutes of the Council held on Thursday 25 November 2021 (C225/21 – C240/21 and C251/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, subject to the foregoing, were considered and adopted.

C259/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 2 December 2021

Proposed by Councillor Cuddy
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 2 December 2021 (PR225/21 – PR237/21 and P246/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted

C260/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Environment Committee Meeting held on 6 December 2021

Proposed by Councillor B McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Environment Committee held on 6 December 2021 (E287/21 – E309/21 and E320/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

C261/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Planning Committee Meeting held on 7 December 2021

Councillor McKinney drew attention to the response from DEARA regarding planning applications in relation to agriculture and proposed that Council write to the Minister to speed up the process. He said there was applications in double figures awaiting response.

Councillor Glasgow seconded the proposal.

Councillor Cuthbertson said he thought Members had received notification of a scheduled meeting with the Minister which was in the near future.

Councillor Mallaghan said that a meeting was scheduled for 25 January 2022 and he felt it would be better to have the discussion in person with the Minister as opposed to sending a letter.

The Chair, Councillor McLean suggested sending a letter in advance of the meeting to say Council would like to discuss the matter.

Councillor Mallaghan said the point was already an item on the agenda.

Proposed by Councillor Black
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 7 December 2021 (P161/21 – P168/21 and P176/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

C262/21 Receive and Consider Minutes of matters transacted in “Open Business” at the Development Committee Meeting held on 8 December 2021

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

Resolved That the Minutes of the Development Committee held on 8 December 2021 (D211/21 – D230/21 and D232/21) transacted in Open Business having been printed and circulated, were considered and adopted.

C263/21 Conferences, Seminars & Training

The AD: ODSP sought approval for the previously circulated report on conferences, training and seminars.

Proposed by Councillor Kerr
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That approval be given to submitted requests for conferences, seminars and training as outlined in the appendix to the report.

C264/21 Civic Recognition Nominations

The AD: ODSP sought approval for the previously circulated report on civic recognition requests from Members, in line with the stated Council Policy, and as detailed within the report at appendix A.

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That approval be given to submitted requests for civic recognition as outlined in the report.

C265/21 Standing Order Amendments

The Chief Executive presented the previously circulated report to consider an amendment to the Standing Orders on the regulation of meetings in light of Council being made aware of a judgement made following a Judicial Review formally published on 2nd November 2021.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor B McGuigan and

Resolved That Standing Orders be amended as outlined in the report.

Matters for Information

C266/21 Correspondence to Council

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

Councillor Cuthbertson drew attention to the letter received from the Veterans Commissioner and proposed that the group be invited to make a presentation.

The Chief Executive said such a presentation would be made to the relevant committee.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor Brown and

Resolved That the Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner be invited to make presentation to relevant committee of Council.

C267/21 Consultations Notified to Mid Ulster District Council

Members considered previously circulated report on consultations notified to Mid Ulster District Council for comment.

Councillor Quinn drew attention to the Department for Infrastructure's Strategic Rail Review Consultation and said that as Council would like to see the network extended it should submit a response.

The AD: ODSP stated that an extension would have to be sought as the closing date to the consultation was 21 January prior to Council meeting or alternatively delegated authority to the Development Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Monteith
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That Council submit a response to DfI Strategic Rail Review Consultation. Given the closing date Council seek an extension which if not provided delegated authority be issued to Development Committee to agree submission

Councillor McFlynn drew attention to the NI Ambulance Service: Consultation on Principle of Introducing Body Worn Video for the Purposes of Violence Prevention & Reduction Against Staff. Councillor McFlynn said Members had already heard about attacks on health care workers and proposed that Council support this consultation.

Resolved That Council submit a response to the NI Ambulance Service: Consultation in support of the Principle of Introducing Body Worn Video for the purposes of violence prevention and reduction against staff

C268/21 Notice of Motion

Councillor Clarke speaking on the motion drew attention to the fact that £40m had been wiped out of the road surfacing budget and the loss was not good for Mid Ulster. He said many roads were already in an unacceptable condition and this loss would exacerbate the matter further. Councillor Clarke highlighted that Mid Ulster was a largely rural population with a large road network, the state of the roads was causing damage to vehicles and whilst the local DfI depots were doing their best to deliver services and maintain the network they had inadequate resources to do so.

Councillor Clarke proposed the motion

‘That this Council acknowledges the unacceptable condition of our road network; notes that the allocations from the Finance Minister allowed for the structural maintenance budget to be £120 million this year; regrets that resurfacing contracts have now been delayed until next year in this Council area due to a legal challenge; is frustrated that badly needed investment for our roads is now delayed until next year and that this area has missed out on a year of proper investment in resurfacing; and calls for badly needed investment to be forthcoming for our roads as a matter of urgency and as soon as possible.’

Councillor B McGuigan said he was happy to second the motion given the dangerous state of rural road network. He said that DfI Roads receive £120m and that the £40m allocated to resurfacing would be lost given that there was only three months left in the current financial year and projects might not even commence. He said that many roads across all District Electoral Areas had been impacted and roads were now not fit for purpose which was impacting service delivery for rural businesses and tourism.

Councillor Wilson proposed the undernoted amendment:

That this Council acknowledges the unacceptable condition of our road network; notes that the allocations from the Finance Minister allowed for the

structural maintenance budget to be £120 million this year; regrets that resurfacing contracts have now been delayed until next year in this Council area due to a legal challenge; is frustrated that badly needed investment for our roads is now delayed until next year and that this area has missed out on a year of proper investment in resurfacing; calls for badly needed investment to be forthcoming for our roads as a matter of urgency and as soon as possible; and calls on the Minister to make good the lost expenditure when contracts were not in place so that the state of roads in the region would not fall behind other regions.

A copy of the amendment was distributed and displayed.

Councillor Cuddy seconded the amendment.

Councillor Wilson said the amendment served to strengthen the motion. He further said the losses was in the capital budget which deals with resurfacing, bridges and new roads. He concurred with Councillor Clarke in saying given the court case there would be no resurfacing in the current year. He said that it was imperative that Council does not sit back and watch the roads disintegrate.

The Chair, Councillor McLean asked if Councillor Clarke accepted the amendment.

Councillor Clarke said he was happy to accept it as it added to the motion.

Councillor Cuthbertson reflected on DfI comments at the recent Environment Committee in that they had indicated if work had commenced the money would carry over but with no resurfacing at the moment he would fear the matter would carry into the new financial year. He said that once legal issues were resolved the contractors would be in high demand and the bigger jobs would take priority. He said he was happy that council write to the Minister.

Councillor Quinn said he would like to outline background on the circumstance and said, the legal challenge outlined in the motion is in relation to the Surface Maintenance Contract Award Process in 2015. It doesn't stop all the work on the roads of course, but this was granted in 2015 when I think Danny Kennedy was the Minister. If we go back to this timeframe, and the awarding of these contracts, which the court of appeal found in April 2021 that there had been major errors, and I would ask councillors to read the Northstone judgement, because it outlines how appalling the process was. Decisions made in procurement that have been ruled, by the courts, to be in favour of one of the companies involved at the expense of all the other companies tendering. The scoring for and awarding of the contract were not in accordance with EU legal rules and were not permitted by competition rules. Councillor Quinn said 2015 seen the NI Executive in crisis. Danny Kennedy resigned as Minister for Regional Development, Mike Nesbitt as UUP leader refused to re-nominate a replacement within the 7-day deadline and the ministerial seat moved to the DUP under D'Hondt where Peter Robinson played musical chairs by nominating Michelle McIlveen, only for her to resign her seat and re-nominate within the 7 day deadline to retain their ministries following which it was left to Civil Servants to run the department.

So with all that going on, decisions were being taken, what were these decisions. We don't know why because these meetings do not have minute records. The culture of poor governance is not solely demonstrated by the RHI debacle. It's clearly on display here! But that's the ruling from the court, we may not like it, we may regret it but we cannot ignore it, and the Northstone judgement is absolutely damning and we have to find a way around it, but it does put a pause on these contracts. It sadly does stop large scale resurfacing contracts but it doesn't stop any of the other work going on our roads. The Minister brought this issue to Stormont in June, She has been open and transparent to all our MLAs, said that she had launched a full independent investigation into this and what had happened since 2015 onwards, and that she would work with the Department for Finance and Minister Murphy to work an interim policy for procurement, a policy we know has been finalised. We know that it has been broken into 6 different areas, 4 different lots and that this work starts in early 2022. This is not a situation that we want but those are the facts and that's where we find ourselves. We can chose to complain about it or we can try and find ways around it and it is clear that Minister Mallon has worked to find ways around it.

The motion talks about the unacceptable condition of our roads network, and that can't be denied, it's something I have spoken about in this council before, numerous times in fact, but as I have said before and I will say it again, we do not properly resource our infrastructure or roads network in Northern Ireland. The Barton report was published in 2017, when Chris Hazzard was the Minister just before things collapsed, at the time our MLAs where talking about how its findings needed to be implemented, but over the course of Stormont collapsing, Covid and everything else, we have managed to implement zero.

The report states that we needed £143 million a year just to maintain our roads network. We can talk about £120 million additional, but that is simply a drop in the ocean of what is needed. In 2017 we were already £311 million behind where we should be, and that is building every year, the deficit we had in 2017 was £1.2 Billion. The only way we are going to address these issues is if we work on a cross party, cross departmental basis, stop making one year budgets, and I know we are discussing that at the minute for the next incoming executive but those are the decisions we are going to have to make. There is no point in us waiting for the next Infrastructure Minister, and starting this whole argument again, pointing out every pothole in the road and blaming every other political party who happens to hold the ministry.

The simple fact is there will be more potholes, there will be more defects because the department is underfunded, as confirmed by the Barton report, which calls the investment in infrastructure appalling. Look at the monitoring round in June and October, DfI was the lowest awarded department. Even the Executive Office received more money than DfI, and I won't argue with the latest round that has seen money going to health because that is what is needed.

So I agree with the sentiments of the motion but we cannot simply complain that we are frustrated with the process, we need to go further. We cannot challenge the legal rite of the court, the tender process had to be correct, it was far from it, there was favouritism shown, court of appeal have made that ruling. What we can do is call for proper investment, be it from Department of Finance coming to the department or

going to the treasury with cap in hand, we must politically support that in the North so that we can properly resource our infrastructure network. I do support the sentiment of the motion but as I said we need to do more, something should come out of the motion. We can let the world know that we are all frustrated, we can acknowledge that money from DoF, which as I said is a drop in the ocean, we can acknowledge that the Minister has put in place interim measures, but I would like to add an amendment, 'That we acknowledge the work undertaken by the Minister for infrastructure to develop an interim procurement policy and we write to the Minister to clarify the timeline for delivery of these schemes through this new policy.' That's the question we will be asked by constituents on the ground, that's the information they want to know. If that's accepted then we are happy to support the motion."

The Chair, Councillor McLean said that he may not be popular but he would like Council to be Council and not to try to be a Northern Ireland Assembly. He said he had listened to many debates in recent months reading out notes from what appeared to be ministerial special advisers' notes again and again. He said that Councillor McKinney had asked that Council write to the DEARA Minister which was in the ministerial portfolio of the DUP but he had not objected because although it may be a DUP Minister people in Mid Ulster deserved to be represented. He said Members needed to stop playing politics but as local Councillors lever what effort they could into delivering change. He asked Members to take cognisance of this going forward, he said everyone was mature he said there was nothing in the motion other than the facts on the ground that could not be denied.

The Chair, Councillor McLean invited Councillor Glasgow to speak asking that he be gracious.

Councillor Glasgow said he agreed with the motion and that the people of Mid Ulster were fed up with no investment. He said Council needed to push for the delivery of services for the people and as he had said back in April whatever money comes 'grab it with both hands'. He said forget the politics and try to get roads people won't get their cars wrecked on and spoke of the need to improve current policies.

Councillor Kerr said he had no statement from a special advisor but he would fully support the motion for as a rural councillor he saw what the red tape in delaying contracts was doing on the ground. He concurred with Councillor Glasgow's remark on policy and highlighted that street lights are not even inspected and much needs to be improved.

Councillor McKinney said tar was needed on the roads not waffle and he would support Councillor Wilson's amendment.

Councillor Quinn said he took exception to the comments of the Chair, Councillor McLean and indicated he had taken time off work to research the matter and compile his speech and he did not appreciate the 'crack taken at him.'

The Chair, Councillor McLean said it was imperative that he listen as what he had said was 'over the months.'

The Chair, Councillor McLean said that he felt everyone was in favour of the sentiment of the motion and that as outlined below it was carried unanimously.

“That this Council acknowledges the unacceptable condition of our road network; notes that the allocations from the Finance Minister allowed for the structural maintenance budget to be £120 million this year; regrets that resurfacing contracts have now been delayed until next year in this Council area due to a legal challenge; is frustrated that badly needed investment for our roads is now delayed until next year and that this area has missed out on a year of proper investment in resurfacing; calls for badly needed investment to be forthcoming for our roads as a matter of urgency and as soon as possible; and calls on the Minister to make good the lost expenditure when contracts were not in place so that the state of roads in the region would not fall behind other regions”.

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 8.00 pm

Proposed by Councillor Molloy

Seconded by Councillor Clarke and

Resolved That items C269/21 to C280/21 be taken as confidential business.

Matters for Decision

- (i) Audit Committee minutes of meeting held on 23 November 2021
- (ii) Council Confidential minutes of meeting held on 25 November 2021
- (iii) Policy and Resources Committee Confidential minutes of meeting held on 2 December 2021
- (iv) Environment Committee Confidential minutes of meeting held on 6 December 2021
- (v) Planning Committee Confidential minutes of meeting held on 7 December 2021
- (vi) Development Committee Confidential minutes of meeting held on 8 December 2021
- (vii) Iniscarn Forest
- (viii) Davagh Mountain Bike Trail Project
- (ix) Coalisland - Towns shared Space / Revitalisation Project
- (x) Document for Sealing: Release of Council Charge Folio No 20682
- (xi) Document for Sealing: Draft Contract MUDC and Eurofins: Public Analyst Contract

C281/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 8.55 pm

In closing the meeting the Chair, Councillor Paul McLean extended sympathy to the family of the recent death of the late Councillor Desmond Thompson who had served on the former Magherafelt Council from 1977 to 1982

The Chair Councillor McLean thanked everyone for their help and respect in making the role of Chair as easy as possible wished fellow Members and staff a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Chair _____

Date _____

Annex A - Introductory Remarks from Chairperson

Good evening and welcome to our meeting of Mid Ulster District Council in the Chamber, Dungannon whether you have joined us remotely or in the Chamber.

I specifically welcome the public watching us through the Live Broadcast. The Live Broadcast will run for the period of our Open Business but will end just before we move into Confidential Business. I let you know before this happens.

Just some housekeeping before we commence. Can I remind you:-

- If you have joined the meeting remotely please keep your audio on mute unless invited to speak and then turn it off when finished speaking
- Keep your video on at all times, unless you have bandwidth or internet connection issues, where you are advised to try turning your video off
- If you wish to speak please raise your hand in the meeting or on screen and keep raised until observed by an Officer or myself
- Should we need to take a vote this evening I will ask each member to confirm whether they are for or against the proposal or abstaining
- When invited to speak please introduce yourself by name to the meeting
- For any member attending remotely, if you declare an interest in an item, please turn off your video and keep your audio on mute for the duration of the item
- If referring to a specific report please reference the report, page or slide being referred to
- Lastly, I remind the public and press that taking photographs of proceedings or using any means to enable anyone not present to see or hear proceedings, or making a simultaneous oral report of the proceedings are not permitted

Thank you and we will now move to the first item on the agenda – apologies and then a roll call of members in attendance.