

**Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee of Mid Ulster District Council
held on Tuesday 13 April 2021 in Council Offices, Circular Road, Dungannon
and by virtual means**

Members Present	Councillor S McGuigan, Chair Councillors Brown*, Buchanan*, Burton*, Cuthbertson, Glasgow*, Graham*, N McAleer*, S McAleer*, McFlynn*, B McGuigan*, McNamee*, Milne*, O'Neill*, Totten*, Wilson*
Officers in Attendance	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	Agenda Item 4 - Mr Hania – Chairperson – The Low Country Native Irish Honeybee Association*** Agenda Item 26 - Mr Dunne – WISE*** Councillor Kerr***

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

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm

The Chair, Councillor 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.

E091/21 Apologies

None.

E092/21 Declarations of Interest

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

Councillors Burton and McFlynn declared an interest in agenda item 7 – Ageing Well – Age Friendly Network.

Councillor Graham declared an interest in agenda item 9 – Proposal for the acceptance of agricultural plastics at Tullyvar Recycling Centre.

E093/21 Chair's Business

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan advised that in addition to the presentation on the Native Irish Honeybee there would be a further presentation relating to agenda item 26 – Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan and that this presentation should help to inform Member's discussion later in the meeting.

Councillor Wilson raised concern in relation to the Cemetery at Forthill Cookstown with regard to newly dug graves being dug up by dogs off the lead and stated that this is causing upset to those who have just buried loved ones. In addition, Councillor Wilson stated that there have also been a number of thefts of flowers/ornaments from graves over the past number of months. The Councillor stated he was not criticising staff as they work hard to combat such incidents but he was appealing for the public to keep their dogs on a lead in the Cemetery and to look out for any suspicious activity.

The Head of Property Services stated that similar issues have been raised before and that these concerns have been discussed with on site staff at the Cemetery. The officer advised that staff are aware of the issues and are vigilant but that the matter can be highlighted with them again.

E094/21 Deputation - The Low Country Native Irish Honeybee Association

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan welcomed Mr Hania, Chairperson of The Low Country Native Irish Honeybee Association to the meeting and invited him to make his presentation.

Mr Hania provided presentation (Appendix 1) which introduced the different types of bees and more specifically the honeybee. Mr Hania explained that the ambition of the Low Country Native Irish Honeybee Association is to encourage the Native Irish Honeybee through breeding and conservation. Mr Hania also outlined the problem with importing bees and the risk of importing pests and diseases such as the small hive beetle which can cause devastation to a hive. Mr Hania advised that since the 1st January 2021 a new regulation restricts the free movement of bees from EU to GB and that large honeybee importers are looking to use the NI Protocol to import Italian honeybees through NI into the UK. Mr Hania stated that the small hive beetle is established in Italy and that there was a potential risk of importing such a pest. Mr Hania asked for Council support in preventing the importation of the Italian honeybee through NI into UK and in so doing preventing the possibility of bringing in the small hive beetle. Mr Hania also asked for support in conserving the Native Irish Honeybee. Mr Hania explained the importance of having good habitats in place for honeybees and invited Council to work with the Association to preserve the Native Irish Honeybee and its habitats.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan thanked Mr Hania for his presentation and stated that a point of contact within Council would be the Biodiversity Officer who could provide support.

Councillor Brown referred to the concerns expressed regarding the importation of the Italian honeybee and asked what conversations have taken place between governments to prevent such importation. Councillor Brown stated that he was

aware of others who have similar fears in relation to the importation of bees and the possibility of destroying the honeybee population in Northern Ireland.

Mr Hania advised that bee keeping associations are actively campaigning against the importation of the Italian honeybee apart from those with a vested interest. Mr Hania stated conversations were taking place at a Council level and that Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council have voiced their concerns against the importation of the Italian honeybee. Mr Hania stated he would come back to Councillor Brown on what was happening in relation to the matter being raised at Stormont.

Councillor Kerr thanked Mr Hania for the presentation and advised that Derry City and Strabane District Council have passed a motion calling on governments to stop the importation of Italian honeybees into the UK via Northern Ireland and that a similar motion was coming before Fermanagh and Omagh District Council tonight. Councillor Kerr referred to his previous discussions with Mr Hania in relation to working with Council regarding wildflowers and grass verges and asked for more information on this as he was aware of other councils in England who carry out biodiversity projects in conjunction with local groups.

Mr Hania advised of the Grass Verges England group who carry out good campaigns and stated that there is so much possibility with supporting habitats such as having pollinator friendly areas not only for bees but also butterflies and other insects. Mr Hania stated that not cutting grass verges as often was another option as was planting hedges. Mr Hania stated there was room for education in Mid Ulster on whether grass and hedge cutting was needed as frequently and he would like to work with Council on this, he felt that it is also good for the public to have an eye catching biodiversity project. Mr Hania stated that he was from Holland and has also kept bees in Ardee in the Republic of Ireland and that the habitats in Mid Ulster are as good as any other place which is not often realised and that he is passionate to keep it this way and make improvements on habitats.

Councillor Wilson stated that there are a number of bee associations within Mid Ulster and asked Mr Hania if he is in contact with these groups.

Mr Hania stated that the Chair of the Mid Ulster Beekeepers Association is a member of the Low Country Native Irish Honeybee Association and that there is connection with the other associations in the area.

Councillor S McAleer referred to individual bee keepers and asked if there is contact with such individuals. Councillor S McAleer asked if there was a specific period of time when grass verges and hedges should not be cut as often which will benefit bees.

Mr Hania stated that a good hedge and a wild grass verge would give different forages during the season such as ivy which is an autumn crop and a super food for the winter. Mr Hania accepted that hedges and verges needed to be managed but it was difficult to answer on what should be done when but that he would come back to the Councillor on this issue. Mr Hania stated that most bee keepers should be associated with a bee keepers organisation. Mr Hania stated it was also for insurance purposes that every bee keeper should be a member of a bee keepers organisation and through those organisations contact can be made with individual

bee keepers. Mr Hania stated that more groups were starting up who are promoting, breeding and conserving the native bee.

Councillor O'Neill asked if the Association needed any help with funding from Council.

Mr Hania stated that the Association have accessed funding through Council in the past and are looking at additional funding in the next funding round. Mr Hania stated that as the Association grows then more funding will be required but at the moment funding was adequate.

Councillor Burton stated that nature should be embraced and looked after and that as stated previously the Council's Biodiversity Officer would be able to provide a good support to the Association. Councillor Burton also referred to the Ulster in Bloom competition and that there are a large number of organisations throughout Mid Ulster who are involved in this competition and one of the things they are encouraged to do is use less weedkiller. Councillor Burton stated that Members are often lobbied in relation to keeping hedges and grass verges up to standard and well trimmed back and stated that she would assume that it would be Spring/Summer that cutting should take place at a minimum rather than the maximum. Councillor Burton also referred to the limited period of time in which farmers can spread slurry as asked if this was an issue. Councillor Burton referred to group in Castlecaulfield who sowed a meadow completely in Dandelions for wildlife purposes and also provided a background story to this initiative and felt this is a good way of educating children and getting them involved. The Councillor stated that people on that group now also work with schools and felt that this would be a good way of the Association providing education on bees.

Mr Hania stated that Dandelion is a superfood for bees so he was pleased to hear of the initiative in Castlecaulfield. In relation to grass verges and when these should be cut, Mr Hania stated that he would seek to provide more information to Council as he felt there is a balance to be struck. Mr Hania stated that it was not for him to dictate on the spreading of slurry and when this can be done but highlighted that clover in grassland is an important crop for bees. Mr Hania stated that there were ways of supporting wildlife and bees by limiting hedge cutting on farms and other places.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan thanked Mr Hania for this presentation and that the range of commentary from the question and answer session showed a positive feeling towards the work of the Association and that it is important that the Association ties in with Council for help.

Mr Hania left the meeting at 7.41 pm.

Matters for Decision

E095/21 Bus Shelters Update

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

Councillor O'Neill referred to bus shelter at Clonoe Crossroads and asked when this will be erected as he was aware of some issues regarding walls at this location. Councillor O'Neill also referred to bus shelter proposed close to old dog track on Derrytresk Road and stated that he had been advised that the landowner has given permission for this to go ahead but that it has not come forward within the report.

The Head of Technical Services advised that he would follow up on both issues raised.

Councillor Cuthbertson expressed some frustration in relation to bus shelter at Moygashel in that there is no room on the footpath for the shelter to have walls. The Councillor stated that it was his understanding that when styles of bus shelter and supplier were agreed previously that all types could be accommodated however he appreciated the efforts of officers in getting amended designs for the shelter.

Councillor Burton stated it was good to see existing bus shelters getting refreshed and repainted as it is important that these are maintained.

The Head of Technical Services stated that the maintenance of bus shelters falls under the remit of Property Services so thanks should go to this team.

Proposed by Councillor O'Neill
Seconded by Councillor Brown and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to withdraw bus shelter application for the requested shelter at Duffs Corner, Ardboe. Previous "On Hold" shelters from the list below will be re-consulted based on the new procedural guide -
- 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
 - Eglish View, Ballinderry

E096/21 Sustainable NI – Renewal of annual subscription 2021/22

The Head of Technical Services presented previously circulated report which considered Sustainable NI's request for continued Council support for 2021/22 in the form of £5000 annual subscription fee.

Proposed by Councillor B McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to continue to support Sustainable NI and make available a contribution of £5,000 for the subscription for the 2021/22 financial year.

E097/21 Ageing Well – Age Friendly Framework

The Head of Environmental Health presented previously circulated report which provided update on the ongoing work around Age Friendly Communities and associated Networks across the Mid Ulster District Council Area and request for financial support to be associated with the Age Friendly NI award next year if agreed by all 11 Councils.

Councillor Brown felt this is something Council should be encouraging and proposed Council support the award.

Councillor McNamee seconded Councillor Brown's proposal.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to support a future financial contribution (approximately £200) towards the delivery of the Age Friendly Network NI Award if supported by all 11 Councils.

E098/21 Street Naming and Property Numbering

The Head of Building Control presented previously circulated report which considered the naming of new streets within residential Housing Developments within Mid-Ulster.

Site off Benburb Road, Moy

Proposed by Councillor S McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor O'Neill and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to name development off Benburb Road, Moy as Horse Fair Meadows.

Site off Mullaghmore Road, Dungannon

Proposed by Councillor Burton
Seconded by Councillor Brown and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to name development off Mullaghmore Road, Dungannon as Fort View.

E099/21 Proposal for the Acceptance of Agricultural Plastics at Tullyvar Recycling Centre

The Head of Environmental Services presented previously circulated report which considered the options for the acceptance of agricultural plastics at Tullyvar Landfill Site.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan declared an interest in this item as a member of Tullyvar Joint Committee.

Councillor McFlynn stated that the report set out the costs of increasing the number of facilities that can accept agricultural plastics. Councillor McFlynn proposed the

report recommendation as she felt it would take a number of years for Council to recoup its costs if it went ahead with expanding the scheme.

Councillor Burton stated that the report does not set out how much it costs for Council to collect dumped agricultural material and asked if the officer felt this is an issue. Councillor Burton also referred to suggestion of having a collection point for the plastics which can then be transported on to one of the sites which does accept the material.

The Head of Environmental Services stated that the dumping of agricultural wastes has not been a fly tipping issue to date. In relation to having skips for the collection of material, the officer stated there would be licensing issues with this. The Head of Environmental Services highlighted that there is a Farm Waste Compliance Scheme and that he understood that if a farmer is registered with this scheme they are entitled to one free collection of material per year from their property. The officer advised that the registration to this scheme is £35 per year which is a lot less than the fee per tonne being proposed.

Councillor Burton wondered how many people were aware that this service was available if registered to the Scheme.

Councillor S McAleer declared an interest in this item as Chair of Tullyvar Joint Committee. The Councillor stated it was one of the members of the Committee who raised the issue and concern of having to travel a long distance to dispose of the plastics.

Councillor B McGuigan stated that Council needed to be cautious in terms of cost and seconded Councillor McFlynn's proposal. The Councillor stated he would have some concern regarding widening out the acceptance of material to other recycling centres due to the costs involved and putting additional financial pressure on Council.

Councillor Glasgow stated he welcomed the report and conversation tonight. The Councillor stated that the reality was that the £225 cost per tonne will not be paid as the farmer can probably get a cheaper price elsewhere. Councillor Glasgow stated that there is an opportunity for some education for farmers in that there is a mechanism that can help with the disposal of agricultural plastics. Councillor Glasgow referred to comments regarding fly tipping of agricultural plastics and that this was not an issue and that he felt this was down to the Farm Quality Assurance Scheme and Red Tractor Scheme to which evidence of how plastics wrappings are disposed of has to be provided otherwise assurance to the Scheme can be lost.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated that it is regrettable that it is costing so much for Council to deal with this type of waste whenever there are so many other incentives in relation to other types of recycling.

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council –
- That the acceptance of agricultural plastics is still restricted to the three main recycling centres in line with other commercial wastes.
 - To undertake some publicity in relation to the Farm Waste Compliance Scheme so that registered members to the Scheme can get one free collection of plastic wrappings from their property each year.

E100/21 DfI Roads Proposal to Mid Ulster District Council - The A6 Toome By-Pass – Stopping-Up of Private Access – Proposed Stopping-Up Order

Members considered previously circulated report which sought agreement in relation to the A6 Toome By-Pass – Stopping-Up of Private Access – Proposed Stopping-Up Order.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to endorse the proposal submitted by Department for Infrastructure Roads in relation to the A6 Toome By-Pass – Stopping-Up of Private Access – Proposed Stopping-Up Order.

E101/21 DfI Roads Proposal to Mid Ulster District Council - Proposed 40MPH Speed Limit – Bush Road, Dungannon

Members considered previously circulated report which sought agreement in relation to proposed 40mph speed limit – Bush Road, Dungannon.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to endorse the proposal submitted by Department for Infrastructure Roads in relation to proposed 40mph speed limit – Bush Road, Dungannon.

E102/21 DfI Roads Proposal to Mid Ulster District Council - Proposed 30MPH Speed Limit – Desertmartin Road, Tullynagee Road and Station Road, Moneymore

Members considered previously circulated report which sought agreement in relation to proposed 30mph speed limit – Desertmartin Road, Tullynagee Road and Station Road, Moneymore.

Councillor McFlynn declared an interest in this item as she had made the request for a reduced speed limit.

Proposed by Councillor Cuthbertson
Seconded by Councillor McFlynn and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to endorse the proposal submitted by Department for Infrastructure Roads in relation to proposed 30mph speed limit – Desertmartin Road, Tullynagee Road and Station Road, Moneymore.

Matters for Information

E103/21 Minutes of Environment Committee held on 9 March 2021

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

Councillor McNamee asked for an update in relation to Dual Language Signage and if visits can be undertaken to the Electoral Office yet. The Councillor also referred to requests in the system and asked if these were now backing up.

The Head of Building Control advised that there are approximately 30 requests sitting in the system at the moment as officers cannot access the Electoral Office due to current restrictions in order to progress the requests. The officer stated that hopefully with the relaxation of restrictions in the coming weeks officers will be able to regain access to the Electoral Office again and will be able to get caught up on the work needed.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to last month's review of policy on Dual Language Signage and that he had proposed that the review be deferred until legal opinion had been sought on the positioning of a second language on signage. The Councillor stated that at that meeting the Director of Public Health and Infrastructure gave a verbal update on legal opinion and that Members decided to move on with the review however he thought that a finalised report would be coming back to Committee with a written legal opinion and that he would like to see this brought forward.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure stated that legal advices was reflected on at the March Council meeting and that the legal advice indicated that Council was operating within the law in terms of the current process for Dual Language Signage and that there was no need to change. The Director advised that in concluding the review process a further report would be brought to the Committee which can reference the relevant advices.

Councillor Cuthbertson proposed that a report be brought back to Committee with the legal opinion in relation to positioning of a second language on Dual Language Signage.

Councillor Buchanan seconded Councillor Cuthbertson's proposal.

Councillor McNamee stated he did not feel it was necessary to bring a report back to Committee as Council already had the legal opinion. Councillor McNamee proposed that a report is not brought back to Committee.

Councillor Milne seconded Councillor McNamee's proposal.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan stated that last month Councillor Cuthbertson raised that there was legal opinion being sought in other Councils in relation to Dual Language Signage and that he had requested that the review of Dual Language Signage be deferred until this Council had obtained legal opinion on the matter. The Chair stated that he had suggested that legal opinion could be sought if it was felt there were individual issues however this was not commented on. The Chair stated that the Committee proceeded with the review and the decision taken on the night

was that Council policy on Dual Language Signage should remain as is and this has since been taken through Council.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan stated that there were two proposals before the Committee and asked if Councillor Cuthbertson wanted to proceed to a vote.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated that he felt a vote should be taken as the Director of Public Health and Infrastructure had indicated that the legal opinion could be provided within a report.

The Chair, Councillor S McGuigan stated he had asked last month if there was any legality preventing Members from undertaking the review and that he was advised there wasn't. On that basis the policy was reviewed and it was decided that the policy should remain as it is.

The Director of Public Health and Infrastructure advised that the review process was not yet concluded as such and that a further report would be brought forward.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated he was content with this.

Councillor McNamee stated that Council have already erected over 200 signs and if there was a legal problem then this would have come to light long ago. The Councillor stated that if the Director of Public Health and Infrastructure wanted to bring a final report it was up to him.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to bring forward a final report on the review process in relation to Dual Language Signage.

Councillor Graham stated that she was not listed as being present in the minutes of the March Environment meeting however she had been present at the meeting.

E104/21 Health & Wellbeing Slow Cooker Initiative

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the progress of a Healthy and Wellbeing Slow Cooker and Recipe Book initiative.

E105/21 Air Quality Report 2020

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the current air quality in the Mid Ulster District Council area, and of the ongoing monitoring currently being undertaken in relation to this.

E106/21 Building Control Workload

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

E107/21 Entertainment Licensing Applications

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

E108/21 Bin smART Competition

Members noted previously circulated report which advised of the outcome of the Bin smART recycling competition.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated this looked like a good competition which got a good response however he had received complaints from parents whose children had entered the competition. The Councillor stated that the complainants felt that the judging of the competition was unfair in that winners had been randomly selected. Councillor Cuthbertson proposed that should the competition be run again then a third party judge should be engaged to assess all the entries.

Councillor McFlynn stated that given there was no Eco Speak competition this year the Bin smART competition had been positively received. The Councillor asked how many took part in the competition.

The Head of Environmental Services stated that over 500 entries were received which far exceeded anyone's expectations but made it impossible to judge all entries. The officer stated that the judging process can be reviewed going forward.

Councillor Buchanan seconded Councillor Cuthbertson's proposal.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that the judging process for future Bin smART competitions be reviewed with consideration to be given to engaging a third party judge to assess entries.

E109/21 Bin lifters at Coalisland and Drumcoo Recycling Centres

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on recent modifications to bin lifters at two Recycling Centres.

Councillor O'Neill stated it was good to see some money being spent on Coalisland Recycling Centre.

Live broadcast ended at 8.25 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor O'Neill 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 E110/21 to E121/21.

Matters for Decision

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|---------|---|
| E110/21 | Magherafelt Recycling Centre and Transfer Station Upgrade |
| E111/21 | Cemetery Burial Space Expansion and Improvement Works |

- E112/21 Cemetery Administration & Maintenance of Old Burial Grounds and update on conditions of ruins
- E113/21 Cemetery Memorial Safety Inspection Programme Update
- E114/21 Tender Report for GPS Fleet/Mobile Asset Tracking System and Maintenance Software
- E115/21 Electricity Supplier Variation for 21/22
- E116/21 Clean Neighbourhood Action Plan

Matters for Information

- E117/21 Confidential Minutes of Environment Committee held on 9 March 2021
- E118/21 Capital Framework – ICT Contracts Update
- E119/21 Capital Framework – IST Contracts Update
- E120/21 Capital Projects – Scoping Contracts Update
- E121/21 Council Estate Capital Property Repairs/Maintenance

E122/21 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 10.36 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.