

Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Monday 2 December in Council Offices, Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt and by virtual means

Members Present

Councillor McAleer, Chair

Councillors J Burton, Cahoon, Cuthbertson, Kelly, Groogan, Johnston*, Martin, Milne, Mullin*, McElvogue*, McGuigan, McNamee, Robinson, Varsani*

Officers in Attendance

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

Mr Conlon, Head of Technical Services (HoTS)

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

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

Mr Kelso, ICT

Mrs Grogan, Committee and Member Services Officer

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

** Denotes Officers present by remote means

*** Denotes others present by remote means

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm

The Chair, Councillor McAleer welcomed everyone to the meeting. Councillor McAleer 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.

E258/24 Notice of Recording

Members noted that due to technical issues the meeting could not be webcast for live on the Council's You Tube site. It would however be recorded and subsequently broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

E259/24 Apologies

Councillors J Buchanan.

E260/24 Declarations of Interest

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

E261/24 Chair's Business

The Chair advised that he had received notification from some members who wished to raise matters under Chair's Business.

Councillor J Burton referred to cleaning of Dungannon public realm which had been highlighted to him and enquired if anything could be done to clean it more frequently. He referred to report which had been brought to committee regarding the machine for cleaning the pavements of chewing gum and enquired how often it was being utilised in our towns and villages.

Councillor McNamee also referred to the same matter and said that this was the same situation in Cookstown. The member said that he was not aware of the pavements being cleaned from before last summer in Cookstown which was discouraging as the granite gets dirty and when it was done the street looks amazing.

The Assistant Director of Environmental Services (AD: ES) confirmed that the streets alluded to have all been cleaned and that the machine was being utilised for the cleaning of chewing gum. The AD: ES advised that external funding had been obtained in previous years to carry out the cleaning but had been done in-house this year.

Councillor J Burton enquired how often the machine was being utilised in Market Square, Church Street, Scotch Street etc in Dungannon as this was a busy time for traders. The member said that it was important that the town is looking good as soon as possible. The member also referred to work which needed carried out going forward on our parks and recreational spaces.

The AD: ES advised that he hadn't the relevant information to hand tonight but was certain that street cleansing had taken place quite recently. He stated that the main towns were cleaned twice a year.

Matters for Decision

E262/24 Household Waste Recycling Collaborative Change Programme

The Assistant Director of Environmental Health (AD: Env) presented previously circulated report on the successful funding application to the Household Waste Recycling Collaborative Change Programme.

Councillor Cuthbertson stated that he had no problem with sourcing grants externally as it was useful but would be somewhat concerned about the spend on this proposal. The member referred to £27k to supply livery panels on lorries, stickers and electronic noticeboards etc and felt that it was a lot of money and enquired if this funding was within budget or would it be a pressure on the rates for next year.

The AD: ES advised that this project was to replace and update signage on lorries and recycling centres as it had become very tired and embarrassing. He stated that there was a need to have these refreshed and could be met from this year's revenue budget.

Councillor J Burton referred to £11k for design work, communication and officer support and enquired if this work was being done internally or externally.

The AD: ES confirmed that the work was being carried out internally by Council Officers.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor McGuigan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the acceptance of £27k HWRCCP funding.

E263/24 Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) Support for 2025/26

The Assistant Director of Environmental Health (AD: Env) presented previously circulated report and sought approval to continue providing financial support to Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) for 2025/26.

Councillor Cuthbertson said that although he was happy with the proposal, wondered how the Community Development review was coming along in relation to grants as it may be worthwhile considering running the programme in-house. The member advised that he would be happy to support the proposal this year but would like to see £21k coming back.

The Chair said that it would be useful for a report to be brought back on proposal for next year.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Councillor Groogan and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council that approval be granted to continue providing financial support to Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) for delivery of the Eco Schools Programme and Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme in 2025/26 at a total cost of £23,975.

E264/24 Bus Shelters Update

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

Councillor J Burton advised that he had been approached by a community group in Moy regarding the Tourist Information Board beside the War Memorial. The member said that the Perspex had faded and enquired if this could be added to the programme of works to get it modernised.

It was agreed that Officers would liaise with member to provide an update.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Councillor Varsani and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council that –
Bus shelter applications listed under 3.7 are recommended for approval: 2NR
- 2024-004 – Ardboe Parish Hall Carpark
 - 2022-007 – Slatmore Road, Clogher
 - Officers to provide update to member on modernisation of Tourist Board at War Memorial in Moy.

E265/24 Pagabo Public Procurement Framework

The Head of Technical Services (HoTS) presented previously circulated report and sought approval to use established public procurement frameworks to support Council service delivery, namely the Pagabo framework.

Councillor McGuigan said that he would be happy to propose the recommendation. The member stated that when the framework was going for a while it would be beneficial to hear feedback on how it was working out for the Council team. He was aware that other Councils utilise this company and felt that it was a good proposal which could be beneficial for Officers.

Proposed by Councillor McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to note the content of the report and grant approval to use both current and future Pagabo Frameworks where Council needs can be met, subject to satisfactory performance. Through signing up to this framework, Council departments will have direct access to local specialised consultants that will enable efficient service delivery and completion of specialised projects and tasks.

E266/24 Street Naming and Property Numbering

The Assistant Director of Property Services (AD: PS) presented previously circulated report which considered the naming of a Business Park within Mid Ulster District Council –

- **Request 1 – Site off Bellshill Road, Castledawson**

Options submitted:

- Bellshill Business Park
- Bellshill Industrial Park

Proposed by Councillor McGuigan
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to name Business Park - Site off Bellshill Road, Castledawson as Bellshill Business Park.

Matters for Information

E267/24 Environment Committee minutes of meeting held on 12 November 2024

Members noted minutes of Environment Committee held on 12 November 2024.

Councillor Cuthbertson referred to E234/24 and enquired if there was any feedback on response regarding trees on the A29 – Moy Road, Dungannon.

The Assistant Director of Environment Services (AD: ES) advised that the A29 – Moy Road had been relooked at and that a branch had been removed today.

E268/24 Environmental Services – Christmas Working Arrangements

Members noted previously circulated report which advised of working arrangements in respect of refuse/recycling collection and operation of Recycling Centres and Cemeteries during the Christmas holiday period.

E269/24 Building Control Workload

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

E270/24 Dual Language Signage Survey Outcomes

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

E271/24 Dual Language Signage Requests

Members noted previously circulated report which advised of requests for Dual Language Signage from residents on the streets/roads in question.

Councillor McNamee referred to article by Brendan Hughes from BBC regarding vandalism of Irish language and bilingual street signage which cost Councils £60k. He stated that Mid Ulster nearly acquired two-thirds of the incidents which recorded 209 incidents of criminal damage from 2020. The member said that this in the long run was a cost to rate payers and felt that there was a need to sit down with the PSNI in the New Year to see if anyone was ever arrested or charged as he was not aware of anyone being held accountable. The member stated that this was an orchestrated campaign within the Mid Ulster area.

Councillor Cuthbertson said that he was aware of the headline but did not read the article. The member enquired whether this had taken into account the one in five

roads with broken name plates in rural areas and whether this was also classed as criminal damage etc. He stated that it was that bad around the Clogher Valley and Dungannon areas, that name plates were not being replaced anymore, when originally there were two nameplates now it was fortunate if there is only one being propped up.

Councillor Robinson said that he had noticed on the road from Portrush that signage was being criminally damaged. The member referred to signage for Londonderry where London was painted over and said that he hoped that Councillor McNamee also supported that as criminal damage.

Councillor Varsani said that no-one agreed with any signage being damaged in Mid Ulster and that it was a shame for all of us. The member stated that there was an onus on everyone to speak up and encourage people to own up. If signage was damaged by traffic accidents etc then that was understandable but today there is a specific campaign targeting signage with saws, hacksaws, paint etc and up to people to speak up and have pride in our Mid Ulster area.

Councillor J Burton made reference to the cost to the public purse and stated that not everyone within the community welcomed these signs. The member felt that public spending could be spent on better things like our recycling centres, grass cutting etc which were not being carried out due to cost constraints.

The Chair said that he would categorically disagree with the comment about being a waste of money. He referred to a local person in Ardboe who was a passionate Irish speaker and wished to see the Irish language nameplates on his roads.

In response to Councillor Robinson's comment, it was stated that these were DfI road signs and if there was a wish to change them, then this was up to DfI to change their policies.

Councillor McElvogue said that this was a case of people going out looking to criminally damage these signs. The member referred to sinister graffiti portraying UVF and other paramilitary groups painted on the signage especially around the Clogher Valley area which was shocking and costly for Council to replace and fix.

E272/24 Entertainment Licensing Applications

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

Live broadcast ended at 7.25 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 - Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Groogan 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 E273/24 to E278/24.

Matters for Decision

- E273/24 Contract for Supply of Summer Bedding Plants
- E274/24 Contract for Provision of Grass Sports Pitch Maintenance Services
- E275/24 Lough Fea Bridge Replacement Tender Report

Matters for Information

- E276/24 Environment Committee Confidential Minutes of meeting held on 12 November 2024

- E277/24 Capital Framework – ICT Contracts Update
- E278/24 Capital Framework – IST Contracts Update

E279/24 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7.00 pm and ended at 7.40 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.