

Minutes of Meeting of the Development Committee of Mid Ulster District Council held on Thursday 15 May 2025 in the Council Offices, Burn Road, Cookstown and by Virtual means

Members Present

Councillor Black, Chair

Councillors Bell, W Buchanan, F Burton, Corry, Gildernew, McLernon*, McNamee, McQuade*, Milne, Molloy, Monteith*, Quinn*, Wilson

Officers in Attendance

Mr Black, Strategic Director of Communities & Place (SD: C&P)
Mr Gordon, Assistant Director of Health, Leisure and Wellbeing (AD: HL&W)
Ms Linney, Assistant Director of Development (AD: DEV)**
Ms McCartney, Strategic Programme Development Manager (SPDM)
Mr McCreedy, Strategic Programmes Service Manager (SPSM)
Ms McKeown, Tourism Service Manager (TSM)
Ms Spence, Economic Regeneration Service Manager (ERSM)
Miss Thompson, Committee and Member Services Officer

* 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 Black welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the meeting through the Live Broadcast. Councillor Black in introducing the meeting detailed the operational arrangements for transacting the business of the committee by referring to Annex A to this minute.

D075/25 Notice of Recording

This meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's You Tube site.

D076/25 Apologies

Councillors Clarke and Forde.

D077/25 Declaration of Interests

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

Councillor Gildernew declared an interest in the Community Grant Awards.

Councillor Molloy declared an interest in agenda item 12 – Economic Development – OBFD and specifically Sub-Regional Economic Plan – Local Economic Partnership (LEP) Update.

D078/25 Chair's Business

Councillor F Burton expressed thanks and appreciation to the firefighters for their recent work over several days due to wildfires in the Clogher and Fivemiletown area. The Councillor thanked St Johns Church, Kiltiernan for allowing use of their car park and Clogher Valley Free Presbyterian Church for also allowing use of their car park and facilities. Councillor F Burton stated it was a scary time for those living close to the fire and that a lot of acreage has been destroyed and left in ashes. The Councillor stated there has been an increase in these types of fires during times of hot weather and felt it would be timely for Council to issue a message on social media regarding the careful disposal of litter, cigarettes, bbqs from countryside/forestry areas.

The Chair, Councillor Black stated the points were well made and it is important to recognise the efforts of firefighters. Councillor Black stated Councillor Burton made a good suggestion and that officers will arrange for a message to go out on social media regarding fire safety in the countryside.

Matters for Decision

D079/25 SHHP Bellaghy Bawn Writers Residency Project - OBFD

The Strategic Programme Development Manager (SPDM) presented previously circulated report which sought approval of the Bellaghy Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan.

Councillor Milne declared an interest in this item as a Board member.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Corry and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to approve the Draft Bellaghy Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan as set out at appendix 1 of the report.

D080/25 Development Report

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: DEV) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for the following –

- John Hewitt Society Bursary
- Tradfest Bursary
- Tyrone Guthrie Bursary
- Development Department -Update

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Gildernew and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to –
- I. Agree financial contribution of £550 to the John Hewitt Literary Bursary award.
 - II. Agree financial contribution of £500 to the Tradfest Music Bursary award.
 - III. Agree financial contribution of €490 to the Tyrone Guthrie Literary/Visual Arts Bursary award.
 - IV. Note the Development Department -Update

Councillor Monteith advised that he had been approached by Cappagh Regeneration Group to seek an update in relation to bringing the project forward in that area as it seemed to have run into a dead end and looked like there was no opportunity in place to progress. The Councillor asked that a report be brought to next month's meeting as to a potential way forward due to the dire need for regeneration in the Cappagh area and also requested that officers re-engage in the previous multi-agency approach with Cappagh Regeneration Group to progress a way forward.

D081/25 Community Grant Aid Awards

The Assistant Director of Development (AD: DEV) presented previously circulated report which sought approval for Community Grant Allocations.

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the Community Grant awards as set out at appendix 1 of report.

Councillor Quinn noting 12% reduction in awards enquired if this was something that could be replaced throughout the year as it would be likely that there would be queries.

The AD: DEV advised that this was a TEO funded programme, and they have allocated Council £115k which was based on allocation up to the maximum amount.

Councillor Monteith referred to individuals representing their Country i.e. athletes representing Ireland and advised that a number of other Councils offer reduced or sometimes off-peak free access to training facilities for individual sports. The Councillor asked for a report to be brought back to a future meeting on what support was being given by other Councils and also how this Council could support individual athletes in their future endeavours.

The Chair, Councillor Black stated that a report would be brought back for consideration.

The Chair, Councillor Black said he wished to make a point regarding grant award in relation to pitches and recreational strategy and said that he had no issue of funding

going toward a club, but some comments had been made last month around the process. He said that if an application was submitted under the wrong criteria and reassessed under another one, he asked Members going forward to keep this in mind in the interest of fairness and transparency in Council processes if a similar situation arose again.

D082/25 The Food Standards Agency’s consultation on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland)

The Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which outlined response to the Food Standards Agency’s consultation on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland).

Proposed by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Molloy and

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to agree the draft response to the FSA’s consultation on proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland) as set out at appendix 2 of report.

D083/25 Revocation of Air Quality Management Area in Magherafelt

The Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which sought approval to revoke the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at Church Street / King Street, Magherafelt in accordance with Article 12(4), Part III of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002.

Councillor Wilson proposed the recommendation and enquired what papers the Order would be published in.

The AD: HL&W advised that he did not have the names of the five papers in front of him tonight but was aware from Corporate Marketing and Comms team that there was an agreed Council approach to use five papers within the district. The Order requires Council to place the advertisement in the Belfast Telegraph along with the five pre-agreed papers within the district. The AD: HL&W advised that he would come back and provide the relevant details to Members.

The Chair, Councillor Black seconded Councillor Wilson’s proposal.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council to make an “Order” to revoke the Church Street / King Street AQMA in Magherafelt and that said Order is stamped with the Council seal.

D084/25 Regional Public Analyst Contract for Environmental Health

The Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which advised that the contract to provide Public Analyst services to the 11 District Councils has been awarded to Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd.

Councillor McNamee referred to the report and said that there seemed to be no financial cost to Council.

The AD: HL&W advised that there was no fixed cost to Council as it was unknown how many samples would need to be sent away on an annual basis. He confirmed that each year costings were factored into rate estimates and were always within budget.

Proposed by Councillor Molloy
Seconded by Councillor McNamee and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council -
- To enter into an individual contract with Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd for the provision of Public Analyst services to Council.
 - To appoint the individuals named in section 3.5 of the report as Public Analysts to the Council, under Article 27(1) of the Food Safety (Northern Ireland) Order 1991, with effect from the 1st April 2025.

D085/25 Extension of the Service Level Agreement with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

The Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing (AD: HL&W) presented previously circulated report which sought continued approval for the renewal of Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (ABC) for the provision of Tobacco Control work for the period April 2025 – March 2026.

Proposed by Councillor Buchanan
Seconded by Councillor Milne and

- Resolved** That it be recommended to Council to approve the signing of the renewed Service Level Agreement with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council for the provision of Tobacco Control work for the period April 2025 – March 2026.

D086/25 Economic Development - OBFD

The Strategic Programmes Service Manager (SPSM) presented previously circulated report which provided update on –

- Maghera Town Centre Brand Identity Project
- Sponsorship Request from Dungannon and South Tyrone Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Hidden Heritage Tours 2025
- Sub-Regional Economic Plan – Local Economic Partnership (LEP) Update

- Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Projects Action Plan 2025/26

Councillor Corry commended the good work being carried out and said that it was good to see funding coming to rural areas. The member referred to Maghera Town Centre Brand Identity Project and said that it would be important to ensure that bi-lingual branding was included. Councillor Corry proposed the recommendations.

Councillor Gildernew seconded Councillor Corry's proposal.

Councillor Wilson said that he had been approached about a walking tour of Cookstown and asked if this could be investigated to see if it was possible. Councillor Wilson also passed on his thanks to all the staff who worked tirelessly at the Continental Market over the weekend as it was a fantastic success.

The Chair, Councillor Black agreed with Councillor Wilson and said that the event was very well supported and a tremendous success.

Councillor McNamee also concurred with previous comments and said that the event seemed to be getting better each year.

Councillor Monteith referred to Hidden Heritage Tours especially around the O'Neill connections and to an article on the news this week regarding a statue of Red Hugh O'Donnell being erected in Lifford and it was his understanding that this would be the second statue with one also in Donegal town. The Councillor stated that in the past there was a great connection between Dungannon area and Donegal around the time of the Return of the Earls 400th anniversary which seems to have fallen away slightly and that it may be beneficial to revisit it. Councillor Monteith felt it may now be an opportunity to investigate erecting a statue of Hugh O'Neill in the town centre or on The Hill of The O'Neill and asked if officers could carry out a scoping exercise to see if there would be potential funding available and to ascertain how Donegal funded their piece. The Member asked that a report be brought forward to a future meeting on the direction of travel on how to proceed forward.

Resolved That it be recommended to Council –

Maghera Town Centre Brand Identity Project

- To approve a budget of circ. £50,000 to develop a new brand identity and associated merchandise for Maghera Town Centre from Councils' existing Economic Development budget.
- To proceed to seek competitive quotes to appoint a creative design company to create a new brand identity for Maghera followed by the procurement and purchase of suitable merchandise to showcase the new brand identity.

Sponsorship Request from Dungannon Chamber

- To provide sponsorship of £500 to Dungannon Chamber for sponsorship towards "The Big Debate: Navigating Global Trends,

Confronting Local Challenges” event at The Junction, Dungannon on 4 June 2025.

- That Dungannon Chamber be notified immediately after the Development Committee in May 2025 to enable event planning, due to the short timeframe between the Council Meeting on 22 May 2025 and the Dungannon Chamber’s Event on 4 June 2025.

Hidden Heritage Tours 2025

- To approve content of the proposed Hidden Heritage Programme 2025 and the associated costs to deliver the following Tours, at an approximate cost of £4,500 to be borne out of the Council’s Tourism Budget 2025/2026.

Hidden Heritage Programme 2025

- Saturday 7th June 2025, The O’Neill & his Connections - Hill of the O’Neill and Ranfurly House, DUNGANNON and Benburb Priory and Castle.
- Friday 20th June 2025, Crosses and Cottages – Ardboe Cross, Coyle’s Cottage and Kinturk Cultural Centre.
- Saturday 5th July 2025, A Presidents Nest – Ulysses Grant’s Homestead
- Saturday 20th September 2025, Literature and Heritage - Church Island, Bellaghy Bawn, Seamus Heaney Grave, and Inishrush.

Sub-Regional Economic Plan – Local Economic Partnership (LEP) Update

- To note content of the report.
- To approve the Mid Ulster Local Enterprise Partnership Terms of Reference.

Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Projects Action Plan 2025/26

- To approve projects and indicative costings within the Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Projects Action Plan 2025/26.

Matters for Information

D087/25 Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 April 2025

Members noted Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 April 2025.

D088/25 FSNI proposal to advertise availability of Shooting Rights at Drumcairne Forest

Members noted previously circulated report which provided information on DAERA / Forest Service (FSNI) intention to re-advertise the availability of Shooting Rights at Drumcairne Forest.

D089/25 Economic Development - OBF

Members noted previously circulated report which provided update on the following –

- Coalisland Town Centre Forum – Meeting Minutes 09.10.24
- Cookstown Town Centre Forum – Meeting Minutes 25.09.24
- Coalisland Public Realm Project – Evaluation Report
- A5/N2 Cross Border Committee Minutes 16.12.2024
- Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP)

D090/25 Service Improvement Plan for Chief Executive's Directorate 2025-2026 - Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes Department

Members noted previously circulated report which set out the Departmental Service Improvement Plan for the Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes Service for the 2025-2026 year.

The live broadcast ended at 7.30 pm.

Local Government (NI) Act 2014 – Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor McNamee
Seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved In accordance with Section 42, Part 1 Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 that Members of the public in accordance with Section 42, Part 1 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 D091/25 to D095/25.

Matters for Decision

D091/25 SHHP Bellaghy Bawn Writers Residency Project - Cbfd
D092/25 Expression of Interest for Leasing of Sports Pitches
D093/25 Mid Ulster Business Awards 2025

Matters for Information

D094/25 Confidential Minutes of Development Committee held on 10 April 2025
D095/25 Tobermore Golf Centre Proposal

D096/25 Duration of Meeting

The meeting was called for 7pm and ended at 8.04 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, [Cookstown/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.