

THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD TUESDAY 7 JANUARY 2025

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No.	Item	Decision	<i>Estimated Timescale for completion</i>
	Suspension of Standing Orders	<i>That Council suspends Standing Orders. That Council holds the 7 January 2025 Council Meeting in hybrid format.</i>	
1.	Apologies	<i>Councillors Kennedy, McShane, Wallace</i>	
2.	The Mayors' Business	<i>Received</i>	
3.	Declaration of Members' Interests	<i>Alderman Hunter, Councillor Storey, Chief Executive</i>	
4.	Deputation – Professor Paul Bartholomew, Vice-Chancellor, Ulster University	<i>Received</i>	
5.	Minutes of the Reconvened Council Meeting held Tuesday 3 December 2024 (adjourned from 5 November 2024)	<i>Confirmed as a correct record</i>	
6.	Minutes of The Council Meeting held Tuesday 3 December 2024 immediately following the Reconvened Meeting	<i>Confirmed as a correct record</i>	

7.	Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting held Wednesday 27 November 2024	Received and Noted	
8.	Minutes of Environmental Services Committee meeting held Tuesday 10 December 2024		
	Matters Arising		
8.1	Ballintoy Variable Message Signage (VMS) (Item 14)	For discussion 'In Committee'	
8.2	Adoption of the Minutes	Adopted and recommendations therein approved	
9.	Minutes of Audit Committee meeting held Wednesday 11 December 2024	Adopted and recommendations therein approved	
10.	Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting held Thursday 12 December 2024	Adopted and recommendations therein approved	
11.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 December 2024		
	Matters Arising		
11.1	CCG Local Economic Partnership (Item 7)	Amendment That Item 7 be referred back to the Leisure and Development Committee.	
11.2	Coastal Repairs Waterfoot Beach (Item 15)	For discussion 'In Committee'	
11.3	Adoption of the Minutes	Adopted and recommendations therein approved, including the resolution at Item 11.1 above	
12.	Matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel	That the matter of funding for a Veterinary School at Ulster University be referred to the Partnership Panel.	

13.	Conferences	Noted	
14.	Correspondence		
(i)	Alison Allen, Chief Executive, NILGA, NILGA Leadership Development Programme for Councillors 2025	Noted	
(ii)	Minerals and Petroleum Branch, Department for the Economy, dated 6 December 2024		
(iii)	Susie McCullough, Chief Executive, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Nappy Collection Scheme		
(iv)	Marie Ward, Chief Executive, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Gender Based Violence Against Women		
15.	Consultation Schedule	Noted	
16.	Seal Documents		
(i)	Grave Registry Certificates, No's 5890 to 5911 inclusive;	Seal Affixed (Items i – iii)	
(ii)	Conveyance of Possessory Title DFI to CCGBC dated 7 th November 2024 Dervock Road Off Street Car Park Ballymoney (Retrospective);		
(iii)	Conveyance of Possessory Title DFI to CCGBC dated 7 th November 2024 Millburn Road Off Street Car Park Coleraine (Retrospective)		
17.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Anderson, seconded by Councillor Stirling (abbrev Christmas experience in Coleraine)	Referred to Leisure and Development Committee	
18.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Stirling (abbrev funding pot for guardians of Automated External Defibrillators)	Referred to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee	

19.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor N Archibald, seconded by Councillor Peacock (abbrev implementation of the Strategy to End Violence Against Women and Girls)	<i>Referred to Leisure and Development Committee</i>	
20.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Kyle, seconded Councillor Jonathan McAuley (abbrev leisure membership concession for senior citizens)	<i>Referred to Leisure and Development Committee</i>	
21.	Notice of Motion proposed by Alderman S McKillop, seconded by Alderman Fielding (abbrev changes to employers' National Insurance contributions)	<i>Referred to Leisure and Development Committee</i>	
	<i>'IN COMMITTEE' (Item 22-23 inclusive)</i>		
22.	Minutes of Environmental Services Committee meeting held Tuesday 10 December 2024 ' <i>In Committee</i> '		
	Matters Arising		
22.1	Ballintoy Variable Message Signage (VMS) (Item 14)	<i>Information</i>	
23.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 December 2024 ' <i>In Committee</i> '		
	Matters Arising		
23.1	Coastal Repairs Waterfoot Beach (Item 15)	<i>Information</i>	

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
AND VIA MS TEAMS ON
TUESDAY 7 JANUARY 2025 AT 7.03PM**

In the Chair : The Mayor, Councillor McQuillan (C)

Present : Alderman Boyle (C), Callan (R), Coyle (R), Fielding (C), John McAuley (C), Knight-McQuillan (C), S McKillop (C), Scott (C), Stewart (C)

Councillors Anderson (C), C Archibald (C), N Archibald (C), Bateson (R), Callaghan (R), Holmes (C), Huggins (C), Hunter (R), Kane (C), Kyle (C), Mairs (C), Jonathan McAuley (C), McCully (C), McGlinchey (R), McGurk (C), MA McKillop (R), Nicholl (R), Peacock (C), Schenning (R), Stirling (C), Storey (C), Watson (C), Watton (C), Wilson (C), Wisener (C)

Officers Present : D Jackson, Chief Executive (C)
M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services (C)
A McPeake, Director of Environmental Services (C)
P Mulvenna, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
D Wright, Chief Finance Officer (R)
M Jones, Council Solicitor (R)
U Harper, Committee and Member Services Officer (C)

In attendance : P Bartholomew, Vice Chancellor, Ulster University (C)

A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer
M Kennedy, ICT Technical Support Officer

Press 5 no. (R), Public 1 no. (R)

Key: (C) Attended in the Chamber
(R) Attended Remotely

The Mayor advised Council of its obligations and protocol whilst the meeting was being audio recorded.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

The Mayor advised that due to the unforeseen weather conditions, Council needed to suspend Standing Orders to allow a hybrid meeting to take place.

The Chief Executive put the suspension of Standing Orders to the Vote.

25 Members voted For, 0 Members voted Against, 0 Members abstained.

RESOLVED – That Council suspends Standing Orders.

The Chief Executive put to Council that the 7 January 2025 Council Meeting be held in hybrid format to the Vote.

25 Members voted For, 0 Members voted Against, 0 Members abstained.

RESOLVED – That Council hold the 7 January 2025 Council Meeting in hybrid format.

The Chief Executive undertook a roll call.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for Councillor Kennedy, Councillor McShane, and Councillor Wallace.

* **Alderman Callan joined the meeting remotely at 7.08pm.**

2. THE MAYOR'S BUSINESS

The Mayor stated:

I would like to welcome you all back to Chamber and hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year. As we reflect on last month, it was a privilege to have had the opportunity to highlight the remarkable talents of our young people. We celebrated Larissa Fleck, a national title holder in both Festival Irish dancing and Irish Harp. Additionally, we congratulated the under-13 Ballymoney girls football team for their impressive victory in the Foyle Cup at their age group. We were also fortunate to attend Sandelford School, for Katelynn Marie's exceptional Christmas performance. It was equally important last month to show our support for the Donate for Dáithí campaign and raise awareness of Organ Donation Discussion Day about the critical significance of organ donation.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Deputy Mayor for her continued support and for stepping in during my absence when I was unwell. Furthermore, I was deeply moved by the Samaritans Christmas vigil, where I had the privilege of speaking with their dedicated volunteers. I encourage anyone in need of assistance to reach out, as help is always available.

Councillor McGurk advised Members that a previous councillor, Councillor Tony McCaul, had died over the Christmas period, and she sent condolences to his family and colleagues.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chief Executive declared an Interest in Item 4 and advised that the Director of Corporate Services would take over from him during this Item. Having declared an Interest, the Chief Executive left the Chamber during discussion of this Item.

Alderman Hunter declared an Interest in Item 11, Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 17 December 2024, in respect of Item 19.1, AORB – Merrow Hotel and Spa, as a Member of the Planning Committee. Having declared an Interest, Alderman Hunter did not disconnect from the meeting during discussion of this Item.

During discussion of Item 14(ii), Correspondence – Minerals and Petroleum Branch, Department for the Economy, dated 6 December 2024, Councillor Storey declared an Interest as a Member of the Planning Committee. Having declared an Interest, Councillor Storey did not leave the Chamber during discussion of this Item.

* **The Chief Executive left the Chamber at 7.10pm.**

4. DEPUTATION – PROFESSOR PAUL BARTHOLOMEW, VICE-CHANCELLOR, ULSTER UNIVERSITY

The Mayor welcomed Professor Paul Bartholomew to the meeting.

Professor Bartholomew thanked the Mayor for the opportunity to present to Council and noted that some Members had recently participated in a tour of Coleraine campus. He then delivered a presentation to Council, on Coleraine Campus Student Numbers and Future Campus Enhancements, the key points of which were:

- The current Coleraine on-campus student number is 3294. There is also about 1000 distance learners attached to programmes there.
- There has been some growth on the previous year, consistent with the aspirations for the campus, with about 200 more students on campus.
- There are currently about 99 programmes offered at Coleraine.
- Veterinary Nursing is new for next year.
- Adventure Sport and Sport and Exercise Nutrition have been new additions.
- Applications for 2025 across the Coleraine programmes are buoyant.

- The Coleraine Campus focus is one of enhancement with a small amount of growth, and enhancement of the campus estate.
- Ulster University is a unitary institution.
- The People, Place and Partnership strategy has 9 commitments, one of which is around a better campus balance. This is about a shift of emphasis in the student numbers away from Belfast and onto other campuses.
- The Taskforce report emphasises additionality at Derry-Londonderry, but also emphasises protectiveness of the existing provision across the region. It is not zero-sum; rather, it is about giving more opportunities to young people for growth.
- He then provided an overview of planned campus enhancements: Project 1 – External Enhancements and Project 2 – Internal Enhancements.

The Mayor thanked Professor Bartholomew for his presentation and invited Members to ask questions.

- * **Alderman John McAuley joined the meeting in the Chamber at 7.30pm.**
- * **Councillor Schenning joined the meeting remotely at 7.30pm.**

Councillor Storey referred to a presentation from the Vice Chancellor's predecessor in 2018, in which promises were made for the Coleraine campus of a Veterinary School and a post-primary secondary school. He stated that there is a politically motivated concentration on Magee, whereas the investment plans for Coleraine do not add additional students to the campus. He said that it was previously stated that psychology would be consolidated at Coleraine, but he was concerned that it may be moving to Magee.

The Vice Chancellor stated that psychology is not moving from Coleraine, but that consideration is being given to duplication at Magee. He stated that there are more applicants than can be accommodated so there is an opportunity to run it in more than one place to respond to demand and to provide more opportunities for people. He emphasised the importance of the university having a dynamic response to demand. He emphasised that Ulster University is a unitary institution rather than the campuses being seen as separate entities.

Councillor Storey stated that the university is the largest employer in the area and an economic driver here. He expressed concern that substantial growth at the Magee campus could affect the Northern Regional College. He stated that the City and Growth Deal is putting £20 million into Ulster University but the planned works will not increase student numbers.

The Vice Chancellor clarified that none of the City and Growth Deals are linked to student numbers and that the funding would contribute to a drug discovery and food innovation centre.

Councillor McCully noted that, anecdotally, it seems that the squeezing of student finance has had an affect on student life on the north coast, which has affected his DEA, particularly Portstewart. The Vice Chancellor acknowledged that the phenomenon exists and that cost of living expenses changes how students engage. He referred to the commitment in the People Place and Partnership strategy to having a vibrant campus-based higher education model. He advised that the review of the funding model for higher education in 2025 may be a good opportunity to address how students are supported in their learning.

Councillor McCully stated that the plans presented for Coleraine campus are a reassuring indication that the university is trying to embrace and develop a social life on campus.

In response to a query from Councillor Wisener about the £16.3 million investment allocated to ethical artificial intelligence, the Vice Chancellor clarified that the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre is distributed across the whole of the university, and that Queen's University is also a partner. He advised that undergraduate artificial intelligence programmes are offered at Magee, but that the investment will be spread across multiple institutions.

Alderman Callan asked what the university's ambitions are for growth at Coleraine over the next five years, and asked about the cost of the capital works at Coleraine campus and the timeframe for the completion of these. The Vice Chancellor advised that the estimated cost is £15million and that the work will be carried out over a number of years, as the campus will remain in use throughout. In respect of growth of student numbers, the Vice Chancellor advised that NI and ROI student numbers are capped here and that there is more demand than supply due to the constrains of the funding model here, which is much more constrained than the rest of the UK, even Scotland.

In response to a query from Alderman Callan regarding a veterinary school, the Vice Chancellor advised that a decision on this is in the hands of the NI Executive. He stated that Ulster University would bid to host a veterinary school at Coleraine if funding were proposed, and that the new Veterinary Nursing programme is intended to put Ulster University in the best position for that, but there is no sign that such funding is pending. He further advised that another projected capital investment could be in a hotel at the campus, allowing the university to run a hospitality programme, if funding for such a venture were provided.

Alderman Callan stated that Ulster University needs to keep engagement with the local community to provide assurance of its commitment to the Coleraine campus. The Vice Chancellor stated that the university is committed to all of its campuses

and that he would consider having a community open day at the Coleraine campus.

Alderman Boyle noted that Ulster University had been awarded 'University of the Year 2024' by Times Higher Education. In response to her query regarding the Riverside Theatre, the Vice Chancellor advised that the theatre is under review and requires quite a lot of capital infrastructure improvements, so he is not in a position to provide an assurance on its future.

In response to Councillor Anderson, the Vice Chancellor advised that there are no current plans to reinstate the business programme at Coleraine but that if it were sensible and viable for that programme to return to Coleraine, it would be considered.

Councillor N Archibald stated that Ulster University has become a world leader in research. In response to her question about how the university envisages working collaboratively with the regional colleges, the Vice Chancellor advised that the university regards the regional colleges as its partners and that the university's regional partnership managers work with the colleges on opportunities for collaboration, and that the university provides a range of articulation agreements in respect of the foundation degrees offered by the colleges.

Councillor Storey noted that this year marks the 180th anniversary of the opening of Magee and asked if the university planned to mark this. In respect of the renovations at the building, Councillor Storey asked for sensitivity around the five doors being taken away at the front of the university. The Vice Chancellor advised that he was not aware of plans to remove doors and would investigate this, and he reassured Councillor Storey that the plan for the building was to restore its historical grandeur to make the interior more fitting with its external appearance.

There being no further questions, the Mayor thanked the Vice Chancellor for his presentation.

* **The Vice Chancellor of Ulster University left the Chamber at 8.23pm.**

* **The Chief Executive returned to the Chamber at 8.23pm.**

5. MINUTES OF THE RECONVENED COUNCIL MEETING HELD TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2024 (ADJOURNED FROM 5 NOVEMBER 2024)

Copy, previously circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Peacock

Seconded by Councillor Kane and

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Reconvened Council Meeting held Tuesday 3 December 2024 (adjourned from 5 November 2024) were confirmed as a correct record.

6. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2024 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE RECONVENED MEETING

Copy, previously circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Peacock
Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of The Council Meeting held Tuesday 3 December 2024 immediately following the Reconvened Meeting were confirmed as a correct record.

7. MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2024

Copy, previously circulated.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held Wednesday 27 November 2024 were received and noted.

8. MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2024

Copy, previously circulated.

Matters Arising

8.1 Ballintoy Variable Message Signage (VMS) (Item 14)

Alderman Knight-McQuillan stated that she had a question regarding Item 14. As this Item was heard In Committee, it was agreed to defer this until the end of the meeting.

8.2 Adoption of the Minutes

Proposed by Councillor Mairs
Seconded by Councillor Jonathan McAuley and

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held Tuesday 10 December 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

9. MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2024

Copy, previously circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Chivers
Seconded by Councillor McGurk and

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 11 December 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

10. MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER 2024

Copy, previously circulated.

Alderman Scott requested that papers be provided for the workshop to be held on Thursday, as agreed under Item 13 of these minutes. The Chief Executive advised that the Chief Finance Officer intends to circulate the papers first thing in the morning.

Proposed by Councillor Huggins
Seconded by Alderman Scott and

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Thursday 12 December 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved.

11. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2024

Copy, previously circulated.

11.1 CCG Local Economic Partnership (Item 7)

Alderman Callan raised Item 7, CCG Local Economic Partnership (LEP). He stated that the membership of the LEP should include elected Members, as he understood this to be the case in other areas. He proposed that Item 7 be referred back to the Leisure and Development Committee for further discussion. Members indicated that they agreed to support this proposal.

Amendment

Proposed by Alderman Callan

Seconded by Councillor Stirling
- That Item 7 be referred back to the Leisure and Development Committee.

The Mayor put the Amendment to Council.

RESOLVED - That Item 7 be referred back to the Leisure and Development Committee.

11.2 Coastal Repairs Waterfoot Beach (Item 15)

Councillor MA McKillop stated that she had a question regarding Item 15. As this Item was heard In Committee, it was agreed to discuss this at the end of the meeting.

11.3 Adoption of the Minutes

Proposed by Councillor McGurk
Seconded by Councillor Wisener and

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee Meeting held Tuesday 17 December 2024 are adopted and recommendations therein approved, including the resolution at Item 11.1 above.

12. MATTERS FOR REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

Alderman Callan proposed that Council refer the matter of funding for a Veterinary School at Ulster University to the Partnership Panel.

Proposed by Alderman Callan
Seconded by Councillor Stirling and

RESOLVED – That the matter of funding for a Veterinary School at Ulster University be referred to the Partnership Panel.

13. CONFERENCES

Report, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chief Executive.

The purpose of the report is to inform Elected Members of conferences and courses they may wish to attend.

The following is listed:

National Association of Councillors - Youth Services, Safeguarding, Radicalisation & Knife Crime

Date: 24th-26th January 2025
Location: The Little Haven Hotel, South Shields, Tyne & Wear
Cost: £350 plus VAT

Extract:

I would like to invite you to our Conference at The Little Haven Hotel, South Shields. The venue has great facilities and it is located on the mouth of the River Tyne. We have used this hotel in the past and it is well recommended.

Youth services exist to provide a sense of belonging, a safe space and the opportunity for some of the most vulnerable young people to enjoy being young. We will be looking at what services are provided for young people in different parts of Great Britain.

We will also look at dangers to young people, Safeguarding, Radicalisation and Knife Crime.

This weekend we have a range of speakers who are heavily involved in working with young people and at risk groups.

We will be discussing how these schemes are working and what the practicalities are. We will also have question and answer sessions.

The conference will be of interest to members and officers from all types of local authority.

Elected Members should contact Committee and Member Services to register their interest.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council consider the Conference report.

Council NOTED the report.

* **The Chief Finance Officer left the meeting remotely at 8.30pm.**

14. CORRESPONDENCE

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Chief Executive.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

The following correspondence has been received:

- (i) **Alison Allen, Chief Executive, NILGA, NILGA Leadership Development Programme for Councillors 2025, dated 12 December 2024** (copy previously circulated)

Extract

NILGA is delivering CPD Standards, 8 Module Accredited Leadership Development Programme for elected members, which aims to develop the practical skills necessary for a strategic understanding of the context within which councillors work (people, place and systems) and the capabilities they need, using relevant models and concepts to help them improve their strategic leadership approach in a local political environment. The Leadership Programme will commence on the 31st January 2025 and will run each month up until the Autumn 2025. NILGA seeks nominations based on your own determinations, which we ask you seek at the earliest possible full council meeting.

Costing estimate

Individual participant cost will be subject to the overall number of the cohort nominated for the Leadership Programme 2023-24; based on a cohort of 20, we can provide an indicative cost of £730 +VAT.

There will be an opportunity for those Councillors who are interested in and committed to achieving CPD accreditation from the CPD Standards Office. This will involve additional costs to the figure provided above - indicative costs at this stage are a further £590 +VAT. Those who wish to register and commit to CPD accreditation will have a deadline within which to do so (typically, at the end of the second module).

The Chief Executive advised Members that the training will commence on 31st January. He stated that there is an opportunity for any Member who wishes to attend to do so. He advised Members that they could propose names for the training at this meeting or forward names to Democratic Services subsequent to the meeting.

- (ii) **Minerals and Petroleum Branch, Department for the Economy, dated 6 December 2024**

Extract

Dear Stakeholder, The Department previously contacted you about the consultation on onshore petroleum licensing policy in Northern Ireland (a link to details was previously circulated).

On 05 December 2024 the Executive endorsed Minister Murphy's final policy position to introduce a temporary moratorium and eventual legislative ban on exploration and production of all forms of onshore oil and gas. A moratorium on the acceptance and processing of petroleum licence applications is now in place and legislation will be brought forward in the coming months to enact a full ban.

A link to the departmental press release was previously circulated.

Councillor Storey drew Member's attention to this correspondence regarding a decision by the NI Executive to introduce a moratorium on oil and gas exploration. He stated that there are also objections to offshore wind farms and other green energy sources. He declared an Interest as a Member of the Planning Committee. He stated that there is an energy crisis and that the energy will have to come from somewhere.

(iii) Susie McCullough, Chief Executive, Ards and North Down Borough Council, Nappy Collection Scheme, dated 13 December 2024 (copy previously circulated)

Extract

At the November Council meeting of Ards and North Down Borough Council, the following Notice of Motion was agreed:

"That this Council notes the 70% recycling target set out in the Climate Change Act 2022 and that the current household recycling average is 50.7%. Further notes the aims and intentions around the consultation on "Rethinking our resources: measures for climate action and a circular economy in NI" includes the reduction in grey bin capacity by either volume of bin or three weekly collections. Further notes that nappy collection scheme was not referred to in Rethinking our resources: measures for climate action and a circular economy in NI" despite around 4% of residual waste being made up of disposable nappies and other absorbent hygiene products. Further notes with concern the impact reduced grey bin capacity will have on those households disposing of nappies and/or other absorbent hygiene products as well as the amount of recyclable materials such products contain.

This Council writes to the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs expressing its view that there is a need for a nappy collection scheme in Northern Ireland in order to meet recycling targets and to support households if grey bin capacity is reduced as a result of any future Departmental strategy and, further, that this Council would be happy to engage with the Department on how to best deliver such a scheme. And that a copy of this motion is sent to other Councils in Northern Ireland to encourage them to write to the Minister on similar terms."

I would be most grateful if your Council could consider writing to DAERA in support of Ards and North Down Borough Council's call for the Department to work towards the establishment of a disposable nappy collection and recycling service in Northern Ireland.

(iv) Marie Ward, Chief Executive, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Gender Based Violence Against Women, dated 16 December 2024 (copy previously circulated)

Extract

Re: Notice of Motion – Gender Based Violence Against Women

At a Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held on 2 December 2024, the following Notice of Motion was agreed:

“That this Council notes the growing concern regarding the epidemic of gender-based violence against women. This concern has been heightened by recent sexual assaults in Derry and the tragic deaths of five women in the past seven weeks in the North.

In response to this, this Council writes to the Justice Minister and the Justice Department, urging them to expand the categories of "significant persons" when applying for a Non-Molestation Order, to include individuals who were in a significant relationship but did not cohabit. This would align with the provisions in the UK, where similar protections are offered, and with the "Safety Order" provisions in the Republic of Ireland.

Additionally, this Council calls on other councils in the North to support this motion, thereby advocating for the extension of similar protections to women in the North, ensuring they are afforded the same legal safeguards as those in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

That Council write to the Lord Chief Justice asking for a review of how male offenders who have offended against women are given bail”.

I have been asked to write to each of the Councils requesting support for this motion and would ask that you give this matter serious consideration. I look forward to your response.

(v) Kelly Cameron, Secretary, Northern Ireland Housing Council, dated 17 December 2024 (copy minutes previously circulated)

Enclosed Housing Council Minutes, meeting held 12th September 2024, 10th October 2024, 14th November 2024 (previously circulated).

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council consider the correspondence.

Council NOTED the correspondence, i - v.

15. CONSULTATION SCHEDULE

Copy, previously circulated, was presented as read by the Chief Executive.

Open Consultations

- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland Draft Corporate Plan submission by 6 February 2025
- Department for Communities Consultation on draft statutory guidance to support the implementation of the McCloud Remedy in the Local Government Pension Scheme (NI) submission by 19 February 2025
- Department of Justice Consultation on proposals for a Victims and Witnesses of Crime Bill submission by 20 February 2025
- Department of Health Consultation on strategy for the sustainable use of medicines submission by 26 February 2025
- Public Health Agency Consultation on the draft PHA Corporate Plan 2025-2030 submission by 28 February 2025
- Northern Ireland Policing Board Corporate Plan for 2025-30 submission by 3 March 2025
- Department for Communities Consultation on a new Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland submission by 6 March 2025
- Department of Health Consultation re: Pathology Blueprint Programme Equality Impact Assessment submission by 18 March 2025
- Department of Health Public consultation on the draft 'Being Open Framework' submission by 21 March 2025

Available to View

- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Quarterly Screening Report 01 July - 30 September 2024
- Armagh City, Banbridge, and Craigavon Borough Council Quarterly Screening Report September - December 2024

Council NOTED the consultation items.

16. SEAL DOCUMENTS

Members were advised of the undernoted items for signing and sealing by Council, approval having been previously granted and all necessary legislative requirements being met.

- (i) Grave Registry Certificates, No's 5890 to 5911 inclusive;
- (ii) Conveyance of Possessory Title DFI to CCGBC dated 7th November 2024 Dervock Road Off Street Car Park Ballymoney (Retrospective);
- (iii) Conveyance of Possessory Title DFI to CCGBC dated 7th November 2024 Millburn Road Off Street Car Park Coleraine (Retrospective).

Proposed by Councillor Mairs

Seconded by Councillor C Archibald and

RESOLVED – that the Sealing of documents, as listed, be approved (Items i-iii).

17. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR ANDERSON, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR STIRLING

That this Council engage in a scoping exercise to establish a magical Christmas experience in Coleraine similar to the successful events of the Yulefest Kilkenny and Enchanted Winter Garden in Antrim, utilising the Market Yard in the town and accessing the Coleraine Town Fund to deliver a Christmas experience for the community.

The Notice of Motion was referred without discussion to the Leisure and Development Committee.

18. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR KENNEDY, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR STIRLING

I call upon this Council to create a funding pot for Community Groups who are Guardians of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in our borough. Community Groups are finding it increasingly difficult to replace and maintain the equipment.

This initiative is designed to address the risk of a defibrillator being out of use due to pads having been used and not replaced due to community groups not having adequate funding to replace the pads.

Our communities must be equipped to respond to emergencies swiftly and effectively. When it comes to life, every second counts.

This funding will undoubtedly save lives.

The Notice of Motion was referred without discussion to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

19. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR N ARCHIBALD, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR PEACOCK

This Council calls for the urgent implementation of the Strategy to End Violence Against Women and Girls, which must address violence at its roots, tackling everyday sexism and misogyny, working with Women's Aid and other community and voluntary organisations and most importantly with those women who are victims and survivors and families of those who have been killed.

This Council supports tackling violence against women and girls being a priority in the new Policing Plan 2025-2030 and calls on the local PCSP to include tackling violence against women and girls in the development of the local PCSP plan and work with the community and voluntary sector and statutory bodies to deliver on this priority.

The Notice of Motion was referred without discussion to the Leisure and Development Committee.

20. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR KYLE, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR JONATHAN MCAULEY

This council reiterates its support towards our senior citizens and their health and wellbeing, and in doing so we instruct our officers to prepare a membership concession proposal for use of our leisure facilities by senior citizens, noting that other councils already offer the facility.

The Notice of Motion was referred without discussion to the Leisure and Development Committee.

21. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY ALDERMAN S MCKILLOP, SECONDED BY ALDERMAN FIELDING

That this Council recognises the need to protect businesses and charities that provide vital frontline services from the destructive impact of the Government's changes to employers' National Insurance contributions; notes concerns voiced by general practitioners, dentists, care homes and a range of other independent providers that this added cost could jeopardise the future of some services and create additional hardship for the most vulnerable in society; further notes the rising challenges facing Executive departments, local councils and the Northern Ireland Civil Service as a result of the hike in employers' National Insurance; believes this deeply flawed policy will make it more expensive for businesses and employers of all sizes to retain and recruit staff, forcing many to choose between cutting jobs or raising prices for already-struggling consumers; urges the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reverse changes to employers' National Insurance in order to protect businesses, farms and vital frontline services; and calls on the Minister of Finance to work with Executive colleagues to ascertain the total additional cost of increased employer national insurance contributions for the public sector, including independent providers; and further calls on the Minister of Finance to lobby the Chancellor of Exchequer for the funding required to meet this shortfall in full, protect jobs and incomes and place the delivery of frontline public services on a stable footing.

The Notice of Motion was referred without discussion to the Leisure and Development Committee.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Councillor Peacock
Seconded by Councillor Watson and

AGREED – to recommend that Council move *'In Committee'*.

* **Press and Public left the meeting at 8.36pm**

The information contained in the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

22. MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2024 'IN COMMITTEE'

Matters Arising

22.1 Ballintoy Variable Message Signage (VMS) (Item 14)

Alderman Knight-McQuillan requested detail on the costing for solar powered signage and expressed concern regarding the environmental aspect of the Committee's recommendation. The Director of Environmental Services detailed the difference in cost between solar-powered and mains-powered signage. Alderman Knight-McQuillan asked that the use of solar-powered signage be considered in future, given the environmental benefits.

23. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2024 'IN COMMITTEE'

Matters Arising

23.1 Coastal Repairs Waterfoot Beach (Item 15)

Councillor MA McKillop requested information about the timeframe for the coastal repairs at Waterfoot beach and queried whether the potholes in the path will be filled in at the same time. The Director of Leisure and Development provided further information and advised that she would need to refer to the Terms of Reference regarding pot holes.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'

Proposed by Councillor N Archibald

Seconded by Councillor C Archibald and

AGREED - to recommend that Council move *'In Public'*.

This being all the business the meeting closed at 8.48pm.

Chair