

September 21st, 2023

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Wednesday, 27th September 2023** at **7:00 pm** in **City Hall, Bangor.**

Agenda

Agenda

(Attached)

📎 *C 27.09.2023 Agenda.pdf*

Page 1

1. **Prayer**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Mayor's Business**
5. **Mayor and Deputy Mayor Engagements for the Month of September 2023**
6. **Minutes of Council Meeting held dated 20 August 2023**

(Copy attached)

📎 *C 30.08.2023 Minutes.pdf*

Not included

7 **Minutes of Committees**

7.1 **Planning Committee dated 5 September 2023**

(Copy attached)

📎 *Minutes PC.05.09.23.pdf*

Not included

📎 *Minutes PC.05.09.23 PM.pdf*

Not included

7.2 **Environment Committee dated 6 September 2023**

(Copy attached)

📎 *230906 EC Minutes.pdf*

Not included

📎 *230906 EC MinutesPM.pdf*

Not included

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

7.2.1 Matter Arising - Governance Arrangement for Management of Council Harbours Appointment of 'Duty Holder'

7.3 Place and Prosperity Committee dated 7 September 2023

(Copy attached)

📄 *PP 07.09.2023 Minutes.pdf*

Not included

📄 *PP 07.09.2023 Minutes PM.pdf*

Page 5

7.4 Corporate Services Committee dated 12 September 2023

(Copy attached)

📄 *CS 12.09.2023 Minutes.pdf*

Not included

📄 *CS 12.09.2023 Minutes PM.pdf*

Not included

7.4.1 Matter Arising - Report on the Consultation Response to Northern Ireland's 2030 and 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets and First Three Carbon Budgets and Seeking views on Climate Change Committee (CCC) Advice Report: The Path to Net Zero Northern Ireland

(Report attached)

📄 *Item 7.4.1-Matter Arising-Report on the Consultation response to Northern Irelands 2030 - 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets and First Three Carbon Budgets a.pdf*

Not included

📄 *Item 7.4.1 - Matter Arising - Appendix 1 - Carbon Budget Consultation Document.pdf*

Not included

📄 *Item 7.4.1 - Matter Arising - Appendix 2 - Draft consultation response revised Full council.pdf*

Not included

7.5 Community and Wellbeing Committee dated 13 September 2023

(To follow)

7.5.1 Matter Arising - Report on the Funding Offer from Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) for Capacity and Capability Building Programme in Northern Ireland: Non-Good Products 2023/24

(Report attached)

- 📎 **7.5.1 Matter Arising Funding Offer from BEIS Capacity & Capability Building Programme.pdf** *Not included*

7.6 Audit Committee dated 18 September 2023

(To follow)

8. Requests for Deputation

8.1 Re-Gen

(Copy attached)

- 📎 **8.1 Request for Presentation - Re-Gen.pdf** *Not included*
- 📎 **8.1 Appendix 1 - Letter from Re-Gen.pdf** *Not included*

9. Nomination to East Border Region Members Forum

(Report attached)

- 📎 **9. Nomination to East Border Region Forum.pdf** *Not included*

10. NILGA Accredited Provision for Elected Member Development 2023/2024

(Report attached)

- 📎 **10. NILGA Accredited Provision for Elected Member Development 23 24.pdf** *Not included*
- 📎 **10. Appendix 1 - NILGA Accredited Provision Nominations LetterANDAug2023.pdf** *Not included*
- 📎 **10. Appendix 2 - NILGA Local Development Planning Leadership Programme 2023-24 Promotion.pdf** *Not included*
- 📎 **10. Appendix 3 - NILGA Leadership Development Programme 2023 -24 Promotion August 2023.pdf** *Not included*
- 📎 **10. Appendix 4 - NILGA Accredited Learning Provision Indicative Costs (2023-24).pdf** *Not included*

11. Implementation of New HRC Access Booking System Update

(To follow)

12. Nomination to Outside Bodies

(Report attached)

📎 *12. Nominations to Outside Bodies.pdf*

Not included

13. Sealing Documents

14. Transfer of Rights of Burial

15. Notice of Motion Status Report

(Report attached)

📎 *15. NOM Status Report.pdf*

Not included

📎 *15. NOM TRACKER LIVE.pdf*

Not included

16. Notices of Motion

16.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Moore and Councillor Creighton

This Council believes:

education should be accessible to all who seek it and embedding a culture of lifelong learning in our society is essential to enabling people to realise their potential.

part-time flexible learning is crucial to meeting the skills needed to build a modern, inclusive and green economy.

part-time students are a unique demographic, they are more likely to have disabilities, come from disadvantaged backgrounds, having caring responsibilities, such as children or elderly relatives, and in general, be part of a 'hard to reach' group who missed out on full-time study.

lifelong learning, including non-formal education, addresses social issues, strengthens communities and builds civic engagement. It is the most effective tool for meeting social policy objectives and creating positive social change.

recognises that lifelong learning must become a meaningful and developed policy area with tangible actions and outcomes, underpinned by the wealth of best practice and innovation from across the UK and Ireland.

This Council therefore resolves to:

work with the Lifelong Learning Alliance to develop a Lifelong Learning campaign, to inform and raise public awareness of how lifelong learning transforms lives and communities.

Engage with MLAs and MPs to prioritise funding for formal and informal part-time education when the

Executive is formed.

Encourage MLAs to form an All- Party Group on Lifelong Learning to support an evidence and best-practice informed approach to policy making, in collaboration with adult education bodies to form a voice for Lifelong Learning in the Assembly when an Executive is formed.

16.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Woods and Councillor McKee

That this Council, recognising its commitment as a responsible employer, and that staff are paid the current Living Wage, tasks officers to explore becoming 'Living Wage' accredited with the UK Living Wage Foundation, as well as ensuring any regularly contracted employees and workers, including those who are employed externally to deliver Council services, are paid the living wage hourly rate. It also explores also becoming Living Hours and Living Pensions accredited too.





16.3 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Adair and Councillor Douglas

That Council notes the increasing complaints regarding the poor condition and appearance of our cemeteries across the Borough and tasks officers to bring back a report on options to improve the maintenance of our cemeteries which are places of special significance to those who have lost loved ones.

***** IN CONFIDENCE *****




17. Disposal of Kinnegar Logistics Base Update

(Report attached)

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
|  17. Disposal of Kinnegar Logistics Base -update.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |
|  17. Appendix 1 - Letter from Cleaver Fulton Rankin.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |
|  17. Appendix 1 - Legal Opinion.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |
|  17. Appendix 2 - Letter from Joe ONeil Belfast Harbour to Stephen Reid.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |

18. NIE Request for Use of Land Castle Place Car Park, Newtownards

(Report attached)

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
|  18. Request for a lease to NIE - Kennel Lane Carpark Newtownards.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |
|  18. Appendix 1 - location map - request from NIE.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |
|  18. Appendix 2 - substation drawing - request from NIE.png | <i>Not included</i> |

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

20 September 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a hybrid Meeting (in person and via Zoom) of Ards and North Down Borough Council which will be held at the City Hall, The Castle, Bangor on **Wednesday, 27 September 2023 at 7.00pm.**

Yours faithfully

Stephen Reid
Chief Executive
Ards and North Down Borough Council

A G E N D A

1. Prayer
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Mayor's Business
5. Mayor and Deputy Mayor Engagements for the month of September 2023
6. Minutes of Council meeting dated 30 August 2023 (Copy attached)
7. Minutes of Committees
 - 7.1. Minutes of Planning Committee dated 5 September 2023 (Copy attached)
 - 7.2. Minutes of Environment Committee dated 6 September 2023 (Copy attached)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

- 7.2.1 Matter Arising – Governance Arrangement for Management of Council Harbours Appointment of 'Duty Holder'
 - 7.3. Minutes of Place and Prosperity Committee dated 7 September 2023 (Copy attached)

- 7.4 Minutes of Corporate Services Committee dated 12 September 2023 (Copy attached)
 - 7.4.1 Matter Arising – Report on the Consultation response to Northern Ireland’s 2030 and 2040 Emissions Reduction Targets and First Three Carbon Budgets and Seeking views on Climate Change Committee (CCC) Advice Report: The path to Net Zero Northern Ireland (Report attached)
- 7.5 Minutes of Community and Wellbeing Committee dated 13 September 2023 (Copy to follow)
 - 7.5.1 Matter Arising – Report on the Funding Offer from Department of Business Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) for Capacity & Capability Building Programme in Northern Ireland: Non-Food Products 2023/24 (Report attached)
- 7.6 Minutes of Audit Committee dated 18 September 2023 (Copy to follow)
8. Requests for Deputation
 - 8.1 Re-Gen (Report attached)
9. Nomination to East Border Region Members Forum (Report attached)
10. NILGA Accredited Provision for Elected Member Development 2023/2024 (Report attached)
11. Implementation of New HRC Access Booking System Update (Report to follow)
12. Nomination to Outside Bodies (Report attached)
13. Sealing Documents
14. Transfer of Rights of Burial
15. Notice of Motion Status Report (Report attached)
16. Notices of Motion
 - 16.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Moore and Councillor Creighton

This Council believes:

- education should be accessible to all who seek it and embedding a culture of lifelong learning in our society is essential to enabling people to realise their potential.
- part-time flexible learning is crucial to meeting the skills needed to build a modern, inclusive and green economy.
- part-time students are a unique demographic, they are more likely to have disabilities, come from disadvantaged backgrounds, have caring

responsibilities, such as children or elderly relatives, and in general, be part of a 'hard to reach' group who missed out on full-time study.¹

- lifelong learning, including non-formal education, addresses social issues, strengthens communities and builds civic engagement. It is the most effective tool for meeting social policy objectives and creating positive social change.
- recognises that lifelong learning must become a meaningful and developed policy area with tangible actions and outcomes, underpinned by the wealth of best practice and innovation from across the UK and Ireland.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- To work with the Lifelong Learning Alliance to develop a Lifelong Learning campaign, to inform and raise public awareness of how lifelong learning transforms lives and communities.
- Engage with MLAs and MPs to prioritise funding for formal and informal part-time education when the Executive is formed.
- Encourage MLAs to form an All-Party Group on Lifelong Learning to support an evidence and best-practice informed approach to policy making, in collaboration with adult education bodies to form a voice for Lifelong Learning in the Assembly when an Executive is formed.

16.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Woods and Councillor McKee

That this Council, recognising its commitment as a responsible employer, and that staff are paid the current Living Wage, tasks officers to explore becoming 'Living Wage' accredited with the UK Living Wage Foundation, as well as ensuring any regularly contracted employees and workers, including those who are employed externally to deliver Council services, are paid the living wage hourly rate. It also explores also becoming Living Hours and Living Pensions accredited too.

16.3 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Adair and Councillor Douglas, Alderman McIlveen

That Council notes the increasing complaints regarding the poor condition and appearance of our cemeteries across the Borough and tasks officers to bring back a report on options to improve the maintenance of our cemeteries which are places of special significance to those who have lost loved ones.

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

17 Disposal of Kinnegar Logistics Base Update (Report attached)

18 NIE request for Use of Land Castle Place car park, Newtownards (Report attached)

MEMBERSHIP OF ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Alderman Adair	Councillor Hollywood
Alderman Armstrong-Cotter	Councillor S Irvine
Alderman Brooks	Councillor W Irvine
Alderman Cummings	Councillor Irwin (Deputy Mayor)
	Councillor Kennedy
Alderman Graham	Councillor Kerr
Alderman McAlpine	Councillor MacArthur
Alderman McDowell	Councillor Martin
Alderman McIlveen	Councillor McCollum
Alderman Smith	Councillor McCracken
Councillor Ashe	Councillor McKee
Councillor Blaney	Councillor McKimm
Councillor Boyle	Councillor McLaren
Councillor Cathcart	Councillor McRandal
Councillor Chambers	Councillor Moore
Councillor Creighton	Councillor Morgan
Councillor Cochrane	Councillor Rossiter
Councillor Douglas	Councillor Smart
Councillor Edmund	Councillor Woods
Councillor Gilmour (Mayor)	Councillor Wray

ITEM 7.3

5

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A hybrid meeting (in person and via Zoom) of the Place & Prosperity Committee was held at the Council Chamber, Church Street, Newtownards on Thursday 7 September 2023 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor Blaney

Aldermen: Adair
Armstrong-Cotter
McDowell (Zoom, 8pm)

Councillors: Gilmour (Zoom) McCollum
Hollywood Rossiter
McCracken Smart

In Attendance: Director of Place (S McCullough), Director of Prosperity (A McCullough), Head of Regeneration (B Dorrian), Head of Economic Development (C McGill) and Democratic Services Officer (R King)

Also in attendance: James Hennessey of the Paul Hogarth Company, and Kevin Baird of Boatfolk

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for inability to attend was received from Councillors Ashe and McLaren. An apology for lateness was received from Alderman McDowell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were submitted:

Alderman Adair – Item 7 - Visit Belfast 12 Month Overview 2022/23 and Item 12 - Urban Regeneration Projects

Councillor MacArthur – Item 11 - Small Settlements Regeneration Programme – Greyabbey Community Park and Viewing Platform

**3. DRAFT URBAN MASTERPLAN REVIEW: PRESENTATION BY JAMES HENNESSEY, PAUL HOGARTH AND CO (FILE RDP43)
(Appendix I - VI)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place, outlined as follows:

Background

As previously reported the Paul Hogarth Company had been appointed to review the Town and City Masterplans with a view to create a more focussed, achievable and measurable 'Place' plans to assist in the delivery of realisable regeneration projects for each Town/City.

Process

Prior to the appointment, the Council facilitated a Town/City 'Conversation' giving the residents and businesses an opportunity to exchange information on their aspirations for the Town/City Centres. A significant number of surveys were completed and this information was shared with each Advisory Group and subsequently used as the backdrop for the work carried out by Hogarth's.

Since the conversations, Hogarth's had been engaging with statutory bodies, had internal workshops across the Council Departments and also re-engaged with the public by hosting a number of public engagements sessions. These not only analysed the existing Masterplans, but also looked at the direction of travel for any new Place plans. There had also been several key meetings with the TAGs/CAG to analyse findings and present new proposals going forward.

As this process was now concluding, the Paul Hogarth Company would present the draft new plans as a culmination of all the consultations to date. The new plans would be the basis to develop new achievable projects, as well as outlining how to monitor and review the plans and outcomes going forward. The new plans would also help inform the strategic direction for regeneration in the Town/City Centres and inform the Regeneration Service Plan for the future.

RECOMMENDED that Council approves the new Town/City Centre Masterplans as presented by the Paul Hogarth Company.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Hennessey to the meeting who undertook the attached PowerPoint presentation, summarised as follows:

The assignment undertaken by the Paul Hogarth Company had included the following tasks:

- Revisit each vision in agreement with the stakeholders (Town Advisory Groups)
- Pull together historic factors/demographics, arising from previous consultation's and augment them with any fresh consultation deemed appropriate
- Where appropriate, advise on how to maximise the new public realm schemes with a view to enhancing the usage and dwell time in the Town/ City, through various interventions including revitalising the night-time economy
- Advise on connectivity within the core to help the Towns/ City function to capacity, maximising opportunities for retail, hospitality, and leisure activities

- Develop options for project removal and addition by critically analysing the projects that have been identified in the Masterplans
- Develop a compelling case to extend the existing NISRA boundaries through the Local Development Plan
- Meet stakeholders regularly throughout the process to ensure the integration of the various strategies for the areas
- Make recommendations on the strategies to be implemented
- Identify paths to funding for the implementation of the plans
- Set out detailed action plans with a clear identification of who is responsible
- Advise on the method of securing the necessary funds to implement the plans.

He presented a timeline of the process which had commenced in September 2022 with a Council organised public consultation exercise. This had been followed up with a series of workshops including the Town Centre Action Groups (TAGs) / City Centre Action Group for Bangor (CAGs), internal officers and members.

Emerging priorities identified throughout that process were presented in January 2023. A further workshop took place in February 2023 for the CAG and TAGs to agree priorities.

Those agreed priorities were tested through a further public consultation in March 2023 resulting priorities were then refined and actions developed at a client workshop throughout May and June 2023. Final priorities were then agreed with internal officers and TAGs / CAG in August 2023.

The outcomes of that process were summarised by Mr Hennessey as follows:

Bangor

Develop and deliver the waterfront, tackle vacancy, make the streets people friendly, connect with the centre and development of the existing brand to reflect city status.

Donaghadee

Parks for all, heritage and visitor experience, destination Donaghadee and reawakening the harbour.

Newtownards

Grow the influence of the square, tackle hotspots, a connected town, streets for all and town centre citizens hub.

Comber Town Centre

Walkable Comber, making the most of valuable space, activating the square and connect to the Lough.

Hollywood Town Centre

Hands on Hollywood, Queen's Hall, Hollywood on sea, walk, bike, bus and rail, and Innovation hub.

Mr Hennessey went on to list some of the transport priorities that had been identified as part of the Department for Infrastructure's Eastern Transport Plan and he felt it would be useful for Members to see how the Masterplans aligned with those priorities.

A project dashboard had been developed to look at each proposal and it would enable Members, along with other stakeholders, to monitor progress.

In closing, Mr Hennessey explained the performance indicators and how important they were in the delivery of each Masterplan along with funding and the need to allow for consistent review with the advisory groups on emerging opportunities.

The Chair thanked Mr Hennessey and invited questions from Members.

Councillor Smart asked what the next steps were and how the themes would be worked into the existing projects within the Masterplans.

The Head of Regeneration explained the process would begin with identifying, through the Towns and City Advisory Groups, the appropriate statutory and community sector partners required along with funding requirements and other factors needed to progress the projects.

Councillor MacArthur felt that some of the earlier projects in the Masterplans were no longer deemed appropriate and she wondered to what extent projects would be revisited and new projects considered. Parks for All, for example, in Donaghadee, was not considered in the earlier Masterplan but it was now considered a priority and she asked what weight would be given to those. She also welcomed that the Masterplans were working documents and could be adapted towards changing needs.

Mr Hennessey advised that the current priorities had been identified as part of the consultations he referred to earlier and those would be in place for the next eight years but the Council needed to be alive to the fact that those priorities could change and new opportunities could arise. That had been allowed for, to enable the advisory groups to pick up on those.

Councillor McCracken understood that commercial growth in Bangor had been half of the Northern Ireland average and many business sectors were in decline with the loss of jobs. He felt that the best way to address that was by having more people living in town and city centres and he asked Mr Hennessey what his thoughts were on that.

While firmly agreeing, Mr Hennessey said that the call was made to prioritise investment in the public realm and areas within public control to make them more

appealing for residential use and to attract more commercial investment. The intention was for Council to do what it could within its control.

The Head of Regeneration added that Council officers had met with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive which had confirmed Bangor as one of the areas of greatest housing need. There was an intention to work with the NIHE to identify specific land and housing needs and the Masterplans were live documents which allowed for any housing opportunities to be included.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor McCracken, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hennessey for attending who then withdrew from the meeting.

4. PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE – PRESENTATION BY K BAIRD, BOATFOLK

The Chairman welcomed Mr Baird to the meeting who undertook the attached PowerPoint presentation, as summarised below:

The Port Marine Safety Code was thought of as the Highway Code for harbours and had been implemented following the 1996 Sea Empress disaster in Milford Haven. Introduced in 2000, all port and harbour authorities were expected to comply with the PMSC, which was thought of as the most important code in terms of port / harbour safety.

The Sea Empress went aground on the 'Middle Channel'. Onboard was 130,000 tonnes of light crude oil and 72,000 tonnes of that was spilled across beaches around South Wales.

What followed was a five year clean up operation costing an estimated £60million. The reputation of Milford Haven suffered in the full glare of publicity.

An investigation followed, led by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch which was a UK government agency, authorised to investigate all maritime accidents in UK waters and accidents involving UK registered ships worldwide.

Published in July 1997, the findings highlighted fault with ports and marine operations including pilotage, training, command & control, hazard & risk not being identified and reviewed regularly and deficiencies with emergency response.

Mr Baird explained some of the safety measures and processes that had been introduced, referring to a Marine Safety Management System (MSMS) which included Hazard identification; Marine Risk Assessment; defined powers; competent persons.

Ports and Harbours were required to submit a 'statement of compliance' to MCA every three years. MCA was the enforcement authority.

The PMSC offered a national standard for port safety in the UK with the aim to "improve safety for those who used or worked in ports, their ships, passengers, and cargoes, and the environment".

Although voluntary, the Code was regulated by the MCA and compliance statements were required every three years. Eight health checks were required per year.

Mr Baird went on to highlight the following requirements of the Code:

- The Duty Holder needed to be clearly identified
- The Designated Person (DP) needed to be clearly identified
- Legislation - the harbour required to review the legislation under which it operated
- Duties & Powers
- A harbour needed to review its duties and powers and seek additional powers if necessary
- Risk Assessments – a harbour must identify all hazards and risks, assess them and apply controls to reduce risk to as low as reasonably practicable.
- The harbour must employ appropriately qualified and competent people in key roles e.g. Harbour Master, Pilots, VTS Officers etc.
- The harbour must produce and publish a Marine Safety Plan and measure its performance against this plan.
- The harbour must review its aids to navigation (buoys, lights, beacons, marks) in line with General Lighthouse Authorities (C.I.L.) requirements and send in appropriate returns.

Continuing, Mr Baird explained the Marine Safety Management System defined safe marine operations and identified and risk assessed hazards. It established controls to minimise risks and identified how and who was responsible for doing so. It established planning and review cycles which included audits and implementation of lessons learnt.

This also defined roles and responsibilities for the Duty Holder (owner), the Designated Person (Agent) and the Harbour Master (Captain).

The Duty Holder was ultimately responsible for the safe management of marine operations and ultimately held accountability for compliance with the Code.

He outlined the findings of an MCA Health Check undertaken on 23 February 2023 where there was one non-conformity and six observations.

The report stated that 'consideration should be given to the establishment of a distinct Harbour Committee to take on the DH's responsibilities this will improve understanding of the safety implications. The DH should visit the harbour.'

The Chair thanked Mr Baird for his presentation and invited questions from Members.

Councillor McCollum asked if it would be possible to receive a copy of the slides and Mr Baird advised he would forward these for circulation to members.

Councillor Edmund asked what the main risks and hazards were in harbours and marinas and for clarification on the tonnage limitations for each.

Mr Baird explained that collisions were the biggest hazards, pointing to poor piloting and control. He confirmed that 80 tonnes would be the maximum tonnage permitted in a marina whereas the harbour could accommodate more than 500 tonnes.

There were no further questions and Mr Baird thanked the Committee for allowing him the opportunity to make his presentation and extended an open invitation for Members to visit Bangor Marina. He withdrew from the meeting.

5. ARDS AND BANGOR BUSINESS AWARDS (FILE 160094)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Prosperity outlined as follows:

Background

Following the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022 saw the return of the Bangor Business Awards which was welcomed by the business community. Ards Business Awards, due to unforeseen circumstances and resources were unable to be held.

Detail

This year both Ards and Bangor Chambers of Commerce would revive their respective annual event. The Bangor Business Awards launched on 25 August 2023 and the Bangor Awards ceremony would take place on Thursday 12 October at Clandeboye Lodge Hotel, Bangor. Ards Chamber has yet to finalise its plans, but it was also anticipated that the event would take place in Autumn 2023. Further updates on the Ards Business Awards would be brought to Council when available.

Members would be aware that Council officers had been working closely with the Chambers of Commerce in the city and each of the towns to engage, develop the business capacity of the chambers, and to support their efforts to revitalise and promote local businesses.

Within the business plans submitted to the Regeneration Unit and Council each year, each Chamber included within the action plan a Business Awards event to celebrate the work, resilience and successes of local businesses in the area.

Due to budget constraints this year, it was proposed that Council would be a supporting sponsor of the Bangor Business Awards at a cost of £2,500; this was possible due to underspend in another area. As part of the package, five complimentary tickets were being made available to Council. The Mayor and the Chief Executive would be invited separately as guests of the Chamber.

RECOMMENDED that Council approves budgetary support for the Awards and nominates a maximum of five Members to attend the Bangor Business Awards on 12 October 2023.

Councillor Smart proposed, seconded by Councillor McCracken that the recommendation be adopted.

The proposer welcomed the development and spoke of the economic benefits and importance that the awards brought to the Borough.

Councillor McCracken added that the awards provided an important way to recognise local businesses but felt that confirmation of the funding had come very late in the year and felt it would be useful to have notification much earlier in future.

He suggested that all Bangor Central DEA members attend with the exclusion of his Alliance Party colleague Alderman Douglas who was due to resign from the Council. This would still allow for Alliance representation so he felt that five attendees would ensure cross party representation at the awards ceremony.

Councillor Smart was content with that approach and included the nomination of the five Bangor Central DEA members within his original proposal.

The Mayor, Councillor Gilmour, welcomed the development, adding that the Bangor Business Awards provided a great opportunity for teams and individuals to be recognised for going 'above and beyond' or even just coming together in celebration.

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter queried if the Mayor would be attending as a matter of right and this was confirmed by the Director of Prosperity.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor McCracken, that the recommendation be adopted and that Councillors Blaney, Cathcart, W Irvine, McCracken and McKimm attend the Bangor Business Awards on 12 October 2023.

6. TNI MARKET LED PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME DELIVERY REVIEW (FILE TD100)

(Appendix VII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Prosperity detailed as follows:

Background

In December 2022, the Tourism Service Unit was successful in securing £27,130 from the Tourism NI Market-Led Product Development Programme 2023. The 100% grant was to deliver pilot tourism projects in ANDBC, with the aim of the programme to ascertain if new 'tourism offerings' could form part of the businesses or organisations' tourism portfolios, on a longer-term basis.

The Council's programme was entitled "Spring into AND" and consisted of a series of unique events curated and operated, during the month of March 2023, by borough tourism providers celebrating the spring season's awakening. Pilot tours, workshops, open days and experiences, incorporating locally produced food and drink, were presented under two themes, "Awakening the Walled Gardens" and "Sustainable Spring".

Awakening the Walled Gardens

This programme celebrated the borough's varied walled gardens blooming into life at spring, with a series of five events promoted within this theme. Participants (non-council) included Mount Stewart House and Gardens, Ballywalter Estate, The Walled Garden Helen's Bay and Clondeboye Estate.

Bangor Castle Walled Garden was an event jointly delivered by the Council's Tourism and Parks services. It celebrated the beginning of spring with two days of free family events (12noon-4pm each day) and a ticketed BBQ on the Saturday evening. A programme of live music, tours, garden games, crafts, horticulture activities and other free fun activities for children were provided. The weekend was a success with over 4000 people attending, many who had never been to the garden before and were from outside the borough. Guests at the evening BBQ enjoyed local food from local providers, 'The Griddle' (Angus farm shop), Greyabbey and Lightfoot Kitchen, Bangor. Guests had a choice of a meat or vegan main accompanied by locally produced cordial from Papas Mineral Company. Live music accompanied the meal.

Sustainable Spring

A collection of four sustainable experiences was delivered by members of the "AND Sustainable Giants" – Green Tourism Network. They covered a range of themes including food, activity and craft related activity (See Appendix 1).

Outcomes

In addition to the footfall that was delivered into the borough during the shoulder season, 78% of all ticketed events were sold generating circa £7800 sales. The programme had also successfully enabled the following;

- Bangor Castle Walled Garden – the "Chilli Fest" weekend in September would expand upon last year's event by incorporating activity trialled over the March 23 weekend. This would include the evening BBQ and use of equipment purchased from the Fund.
- The Walled Garden Helen's Bay – the food event would be repeated in March 2024. Equipment purchased via the Fund was being used regularly for other experiences. The Willow Making had been particularly successful with sessions selling out.
- Strangford Lough Activity Centre - the E-bikes tour developed via the Fund was now part of its normal experience portfolio.
- Tracey's Farmhouse Kitchen – equipment purchased had enabled repeat sessions and adapted experiences to become part of the day-to-day product.
- Clondeboye Estate – there was a plan to develop its product offering by operating the tours as part of a longer-term open day's programme.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the content of this report and attachment.

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter proposed, seconded by Alderman Adair, that the recommendation be adopted.

The proposer was aware of good feedback from the events that had taken place at Bangor Castle Walled Garden and welcomed there would be more to follow.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, seconded by Alderman Adair, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Alderman Adair left the meeting having a declared an interest in Item 7 – 7.45pm)

7. VISIT BELFAST 12 MONTH OVERVIEW 2022/23 (FILE 170871)
(Appendix VIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Prosperity detailing the undernoted:

Background

Ards and North Down BC had an annual partnership Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place with Visit Belfast (VB).

The purpose of the partnership was twofold:

- to facilitate communication between the partnership councils (Ards and North Down, Lisburn and Castlereagh, Belfast) with regards to tourism development; and
- for VB to create effective marketing communications and visitor servicing platforms that are efficient and represent value for money for each of the council areas.

An annual review report was provided at the end of each financial year with detailed breakdown of activity.

The attached Appendix 1 was an overview of visual examples of the 2022/23 SLA.

Since 2015, Ards and North Down Borough Council and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council had remained as local authority partners gaining year on year from dedicated promotional focus under the banner Belfast Plus. The cost per annum for local authority membership had remained at £30,000 since 2015.

The Regional Tourism Partnership (RTP) ensured dedicated promotion for Ards and North Down, promoting key tourism experiences, things to do, itineraries, and events reaching a large and engaged visitor audience. A high level of coverage for AND had been maintained throughout the 2022/23 SLA period, across a wide mix of digital and traditional promotional channels.

Key benefits of the SLA

The SLA ensured prominent 24/7 year-round promotion, showcasing campaigns and Borough tourism activity, combined with strong visitor servicing support across all the main international visitor arrival points. These included the Visit Belfast Welcome Centre (VBWC) opposite Belfast City Hall and both main NI airports. It enabled ANDBC tourism to leverage the reach and visibility of AND to a much wider audience than Council resource alone could achieve.

VB worked in collaboration with the ANDBC Tourism team to amplify the promotion of AND as an appealing tourism destination through the strong reach of its robust trade network and large consumer databases, promotional channels, and visitor welcome touch points. It ensured that the Borough was promoted as part of the Belfast region under the Belfast Plus brand (along with Lisburn Castlereagh) which was a key strength for the continued promotion as an appealing visitor destination.

It was worth noting that as one of only two local authority members in this partnership (other than Belfast City Council) AND was at a significant advantage in presenting the Borough to these visitors. The partnership was particularly critical as the country continued through post covid recovery over the coming years, as it enabled ANDBC to leverage Visit Belfast's strong position with tourism trade and consumer audiences, and to showcase the Borough's key strength of offering relaxing short breaks all within an hour of Belfast.

Summary of SLA 2022/23 activity

Digital - Web, Social, Email Marketing

AND capitalised on a significant upscaling of presence across VB's digital channels. Content was featured on belfastplus.com dedicated web pages including experiences and What's On information.

visitbelfast.com included 20 Ards and North Down location listings and 51 events. The Borough was also prominently featured in 44 blogs (an increase of 10% on prior year) including staycation guides, day trips, virtual visits, things to do, road trips, walks, and foodie inspiration during the period. Visit Belfast's web traffic is 2 million visits per annum.

41k Consumer database mail marketing reach

AND was strongly presented in Visit Belfast's What's On e-zines with over 175k emails sent to 41k subscribers with 26 Ards and North Down features (up 84% on prior period).

Leveraging VB's large social audience reach

AND was promoted to VB's large social media audience (combined following over 422k, 30 million+ impressions/ opportunities to see per year, and 2.8 million+ engagements / actions per year) throughout the SLA period.

VB region promotional literature

AND was featured in four print publications Summer '22, Autumn/ Winter '22, Spring '23, and Student edition, as well as in a Belfast region map with a combined print run of 110k. Literature was promoted with PR and distributed digitally via social media and email promotion. VB's main digital Visitor Guide also includes a city and region

approach featuring AND. Plus, an additional 31k pieces of literature featuring AND racked across Visit Belfast sites throughout the SLA Period (up 20% on prior year).

Promotional presence in Visit Belfast Welcome Centre (VBWC) and NI airports
AND was featured on 16-screen video wall and information desks and prominently on self-serve screens. AND tourism campaigns were promoted throughout the year, plus eight weeks of promotion for six campaigns were featured on the VBWC Event Island.

AND was also prominently displayed in a Belfast Plus promotional campaign with advertising on a large back-lit screen at the arrivals area in George Best Belfast City Airport, and in welcome areas in both NI airports and the Belfast Cruise Hub.

Industry engagement

- The Council's Tourism Development team presented the Borough's tourism offering at quarterly industry briefing events and was featured in 40 concierge trade e-zines.
- A familiarisation trip to Ards and North Down in March 2023 was attended by 28 industry tourism delegates with 100% of survey respondents confirming that they would recommend the trip.
- VB team presented Ards and North Down as an RTP partner at 28 key industry events in the UK, Rol, and Germany, and Council's Tourism Development team attended Holiday World Dublin January 23 with the Visit Belfast Team.

Visitor Servicing

The SLA ensured the provision of a daily gateway visitor information and travel advisory services available seven days a week via telephone, email web and social media enquiry, and in person in VBWC. VB handled 578k enquiries across all platforms, up 134% on prior period, reflecting rebounding travel during the Covid recovery period. 18k enquiries about the Borough were handled across welcome centres and visitor entry points during the SLA period (up 12% on prior period).

Value of Investment - Membership cost and other contributions

A review of the annual membership agreement (£30,000) at the end of the last annual membership period (end March 2023) established that if the Council were to purchase the promotional benefits independently from VB Marketing Opportunities (as opposed to through this SLA), the total annual cost would be £60,000 - £65,000. The reach of VB's significantly larger visitor audience (through its visitor centres and all other channels) was not something the Council could match alone, at this time, through alternative marketing investment and trade programmes. The exposure gained through this ongoing partnership with VB was critically important during the post-covid recovery to ensure strong visibility of the Borough to an international audience.

In addition to the RTP membership, the Tourism Service Unit secured primary promotional space in the Belfast Welcome Centre at a cost of £6,000 per annum. This was a destination display desk with dedicated racking, headline imagery and a profile of AND. When these sums were combined with the annual membership, the Council was leveraging incremental promotional activity valued at least £30,000 per annum.

Conclusion

Throughout 2022/23 Visit Belfast had proven to be a critical tourism partner for ANDBC, providing vital visitor servicing support and year-round enhanced promotional exposure for the Borough's tourism offering. VB's audience size was growing, the level of promotion for Ards and North Down BC was increasing across digital and traditional channels, plus the number of AND enquiries handled by VB had significantly increased.

Through the successful delivery of this SLA, ANDBC capitalises on a full range of benefits to a wider consumer and trade audience which the Council could not achieve on its own. The value of benefit attributed to the current membership was higher than the contribution, presenting good value for money. The strong partnership approach ensured that AND destination campaigns and event programme promotion reached a large international visitor audience, which was critical to continue to keep AND 'front of mind' as international competition for visitors continued to increase during pandemic recovery.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the above report, and further approves the renewal of the Visit Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership Service Level Agreement for 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years at £30,000 per annum, subject to the Rates setting process.

Councillor Holywood proposed, seconded by Councillor McCracken, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Rossiter asked if the £30,000 fee paid to Visit Belfast had ever been re-negotiated and the Director of Prosperity advised that the fee had not risen since 2015 and it was felt that it represented good value for the vast coverage it provided for the Borough.

Councillor McCracken referred to digital marketing opportunities and asked how those were balanced within the marketing strategy. It was advised that Council had a dedicated Communications Officer for tourism alongside plans to take forward a digitalisation strategy which would cover many aspects. A digital champion had also been appointed within the Council's Economic Development unit to assess its projects.

Councillor McArthur believed that social media provided great opportunity for marketing and asked if there was facility to analyse the impacts it had in terms of visitor numbers. The Director advised that there was a desire to capture this type of data in the future but some aspects of data were currently reported through the Visit Belfast partnership, particularly around cruise passengers which was an example of the good value the arrangement with Visit Belfast provided.

Councillor MacArthur felt it was vital for the Borough to capitalise on the number of cruise ship visitors coming to Northern Ireland, noting that the majority headed towards the north of the country.

The Director explained the work that officers undertook to promote the Borough as a tourist draw for cruise ship passengers and that included officers attending industry specific exhibitions where they could promote what the Borough had to offer.

Councillor Kennedy asked if there were any plans for Council to appoint a 'travel trade manager' to solely engage with industry professionals including travel agents, as he was aware of the benefits the role had brought for other regions. He was advised that this was incorporated into the Tourism Manager's role who was always seeking to maximise the Borough's assets on a national and international stage. The Director said she was confident that the Council was currently doing everything it could to achieve this.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Holywood, seconded by Councillor McCracken, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Alderman Adair returned to the meeting – 7.54pm)

8. ITEM WITHDRAWN

The Chair advised that Item 8 had been withdrawn from the agenda.

9. TOURISM GROWTH EVENTS FUND AND BID FOR EVENTS FUND (FILE TO/EG68)

(Appendix IX)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Prosperity outlined below:

Background

In November 2020, Council approved the Borough Events Strategic Direction 2021-2026 (BESD). The BESD outlined a vision for a more sustainable, successful, and impactful portfolio of events that delivered a range of cultural, social and economic outcomes for the Borough. Two requirements to make this happen were recommended within the BESD as follows.

1. The Council reviewed and developed actions across four key strategic areas:
 - Events Delivery
 - Capacity Development
 - **Grant Schemes and Funding Models**
 - **Event Bid for Model** and
2. the Council rebalanced its financial resource for event delivery and event industry support to underpin current growth and success and attracted new ideas and organisers.

To date, the Council had developed a new AND Events and Festivals Fund (currently in Year 1 of implementation and under review), completed two cohorts of OCN Level 2 in Event Management with SERC, developed an online Events Toolkit for event organisers (online resource) and set up the Events Festivals Forum which was used to facilitate shared learning and bespoke training for local event organisers (see Support Services below). It had also funded one event via a limited 'Bid For' Event Fund in 2021 and 2022.

Below was outlined an Events Growth Multi-Year Fund which aimed to deliver on a key recommendation within the BESD, which was to develop an event support programme of sustained funding and closer partnership working. This would help the Borough develop its range of Growth/Signature events (four by Year 3 of the action plan and six by the end of the plan). The key output being that, with the ability to support Growth and Signature events /festivals through longer funding arrangements (proposed multi-annual funding – over 3 years), and assistance with business planning, the Council would be able to link each event's key performance indicators to our strategic outcomes. Once the Growth Event Fund (GEF) is developed the Council would be further along in developing a 3-tier model of capacity development.

'Bid For' Event Fund

It was also proposed that a 'Bid For' Event Fund was reestablished in 2024.

An approach had recently been made to Council by Ballyholme Yacht Club, for general assistance and support in delivering an international event. The Club had secured the European International Laser Class Association "ILCA" Youth Europeans from 27 July to 3 August 2024. This was an international youth event for 10–16 year-olds, attracting approximately 300 competitors. It was anticipated that 85% would be from outside NI and over 50% outside Great Britain and Ireland. Support numbers were estimated at 500-600 people. Once officers received all support information, a further report would be brought back to Council for approval of any financial support. The 'Bid For' Event Fund would be allocated on a 'need basis' centred on the provision of a Business Case by the event organiser, which would be assessed by a panel of council officers.

Aim of the Growth Event Fund (GEF)

The aim was to support large events or festivals, which could best meet the strategic requirements of Council to increase the number of events 'distinctive to place' within the Borough, by providing a grant for Year 1 and committing to a maximum of two further years to encourage events to become Growth or Signature events. See Appendix 1 for Event Definition Categories.

Objectives of an AND Growth Event

1. Grow our local economy
 - Increase overnight stays and visitor spend within the Borough
 - Increase local attendee spend
 - Increase investment in local businesses
2. Grow our visitor experience and destination
 - Deliver stand out sustainable destination event/s
 - Increase awareness of AND by marketing nationally and internationally
3. Grow the potential of our local community and place
 - Support and invest in local people
 - Support and invest in local businesses, venues and assets

Funding and Level of Grant Award

Applicants could submit an application for either a two year or three year 'rolling' grant i.e. a maximum of three years, subject to the annual Rate setting process. This would be further subject to an annual evaluation and assessment of continuing need going forward. The applicant would also have the right to declare a withdrawal from any requirement for funding beyond the first year.

The level of grant awarded would be subject to a Panel assessment of funding 'need' based on the provision of a business case application process and subject to the level of annual Council approved budget. Grants would be available from £15,000 upwards.

The number and size of grants approved in Year 1 of the Fund (2024) would determine whether the GEF would reopen in Years 2 or 3.

Budget

To ensure that the Fund could deliver the aim and strategic objectives of the proposed GEF, officers were recommending a budget of £150,000 for 2024, with the same budget planned for 2025 and 2026, subject to the relevant annual Rates setting process. Members should be aware that this represents an increase in the budget from £105k.

GEF Event Criteria

To apply to the Fund applicants needed to be able to demonstrate how the event met the criteria as set out below:

- Provide evidence of event growth to date and/or a robust plan for growth over a number of areas i.e. increase in ability to bring additional revenue into local economy, social sustainability (use of volunteers with availability of training and an increase in local business partnerships), increase in attendees (includes participants), increase in duration of event and/or venues used.
- provide evidence of the event previously bringing at least 20% of attendees (and/or participants) from out-of-the Borough, and an evidence-based plan to continue to grow this percentage OR a structured business plan detailing how the event will attract at least this percentage.
- provide a detailed marketing plan which includes Out of Borough (OoB) promotion, and a plan to increase this going forward in Year 2 and 3 (as applicable)
- Must take place within the Borough and showcase its assets
- Must take place over a maximum of an 8-week period and have a distinctive theme
- Minimum eligible expenditure threshold £50,000
- Must demonstrate need for Council's financial support by showing match funding of a minimum of 50% (this could be made up from own funds or other sources of funds/sponsorship/grants)

Who can apply to the GEF

Applications could be accepted from organisations with charitable status, not-for-profit organisations including constituted groups and Limited Companies (subject to being able to demonstrate that they are not able to draw or share out profits).

Any surplus accrued in the first or second year of the grant award may, by agreement with the Council, be rolled over to support the event the following year. A limit of 10% of the total event budget will apply but must be declared as income within the event budget in the second or third-year review. Each event will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

Applications would be accepted for two or three years support.

Timeline

Currently the AND Events and Festival Fund was advertised annually in October/November, to allow event organisers sufficient lead-in time to organise their events/festivals the following year. The formal awards were made once the budget was confirmed after the Rates setting process. It was proposed that the GEF would run alongside the current AND Events and Festivals Fund.

Support Services

In addition to financial support from the GEF, the Tourism Events Team would offer the following additional support alongside any GEF award:

- A dedicated Case Officer who would offer advice on completion of risk assessments, apply for use of Council land (if applicable) licencing etc., and provide additional advice on how to run and promote the respective event.
- Event Management Toolkit to ensure all event organisers were equipped with skills/knowledge to run their event safely, the Council had established an online toolkit, which was a valuable resource for all event organisers, irrespective of the size of the event.
- Festivals Forum - Following discussions with local festival organisers, officers had established an AND Events and Festivals Forum specifically for event organisers and venues that hosted events. It met up to four times annually, featuring guest speakers, case studies, training and practical advice. Each event organiser who was successful in receiving funding would be invited to become a member of the Festivals Forum.

Ongoing advice and assistance would be available for event organisers to help run their events safely and for those who ran events that had the capacity to grow, in line with the recommendations of the BESD.

The first year of implementation of the GEF will be monitored by the Events Manager and the Fund will be subject to review.

RECOMMENDED that Council approves the following:

- a) The Growth Event Fund application process and criteria as outlined in the report.
- b) A budget of £150,000 for the Growth Event Fund subject to the annual Rates setting process.
- c) The re-establishment of the 'Bid For' Event Fund and associated budget of £25,000 for 2024/25 subject to the Rates setting process.

Councillor McCracken proposed, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the recommendation be adopted.

In the context of widespread budget cuts across the sector, Councillor McCracken voiced his support for the additional funding and hoped it would successfully pass through the rate setting process. He provided an example of severe funding cuts locally to Bangor Court House where he understood it had seen cuts of £30,000. This proposal was important therefore and while extremely welcome he wondered if the funding would go far enough. Councillor Smart expressed the same view and queried if the programme would fund existing events rather than new ones, and if the scoring matrix would have any weight on locations, to ensure a balanced geographical spread across the Borough.

The Director of Prosperity confirmed that this would be for funding of growth events which would apply to the bigger events, and that would include Comber Earlies for example where the event was able to expand to include wrap around entertainment.

New events would be required to apply through the existing Events and Festivals fund and if they became successful it was then possible for those to develop through this programme in the future. While officers would try to achieve geographical balance across the Borough this would be determined by where the applications came from.

Councillor MacArthur asked if that response meant that officers had already identified growth areas and asked for clarity on that. Referring to a growth strategy, the Director explained that five areas had been identified on the Council's tourism and events side, and pointed to the Open House SLA which was coming to an end. This growth fund would enable a multi-year approach to that project.

Councillor MacArthur asked for an idea on when an event would be deemed suitable for this programme, pointing to an established group in Groomsport with aspirations for growth. She queried the eight-week maximum period stipulation included in the report and was also cautious that some of the larger events could swallow up a lot of this fund, raising concern about a potential lack of geographical spread.

The Director advised that the fund would be for those events that the Council wanted to draw in and see how they delivered on set specific themes of a wider strategy. It was envisaged that the fund would apply to an event running over a longer period of time, and not for example, an event that was delivered every weekend.

Councillor Rossiter queried the additional £45,000 and if it was subject to approval in the rate setting process. The Director clarified that the SLA with Open House was for

£90,000 plus £15,000 for the Seaside Revival event. That agreement was coming to an end and Council would need to bid for the total of £105,000 again. It was felt though that the extra £45,000 for this fund would still be required and she confirmed it would be subject to agreement in the rate setting process.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor McCracken, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the recommendation be adopted.

10. PROJECT 24 – INFRASTRUCTURE (FILE 141973)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place detailed as follows:

1. Background

Project 24 was a temporary revitalisation project located on Queen's Parade, Bangor funded by the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Council. It utilised 12 bespoke artist pods. The area around the pods was landscaped with seating, a community garden, and an event space called 'The Hub'.

The project ran successfully for ten years, opening in April 2013 and closing in March 2023. In anticipation of the Queen's Parade development commencing, the Department for Communities took back control of the site on Thursday 15 June 2023.

2. Project 24 Infrastructure

A condition of the Contract for Funding for the project was to ensure the infrastructure within Project 24 was reclaimable and where possible to ensure its future use for regeneration and/or economic benefit.

The infrastructure that was deemed reclaimable consisted of:

- 12 shipping containers (the pods)
- 1 event space structure (the hub)
- 4 picnic benches
- 4 wooden benches
- 3 large architecturally structured trees

The Council's Assets and Property Section has confirmed the picnic and wooden benches would be relocated within the Borough. The 3 large architecturally structured trees had been replanted at Ballymenoch Park, Holywood.

As members would be aware a number of services within the Council expressed an interest in reusing the pods and hub, however Council in June 2023 requested that officers explore with DfC the option to dispose of the pods and hub to external bodies, with the matter coming back to Place and Prosperity Committee for further consideration.

3. Potential future external use

Council had received a significant number of requests from a range of organisations who were interested in obtaining one of more of the pods. DfC had now confirmed

they were happy for the Council to dispose of the pods to external bodies.

3.1 The Proposal

In line with the Council decision it was proposed to put out an Expression of Interest to potential end users as per the process outlined below. It should be noted that no budget was currently available within Council to transport the pods/hub to a new location or to cover planning and/or installation costs. It was therefore assumed that the new owner/s of the pods/hub would cover these costs. However, it was assumed that Council will not charge for the actual pods/hub.

It was proposed that the Council:

1. Promoted the opportunity via the Council's communication platforms including, emails to our database of groups/businesses, via the Council website, and via the CAG/TAGs and Village Groups. An advert would also be placed in the local press.
2. Offer up to 2 shipping containers per organisation.
3. Interested parties would be asked to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) which would assess applications based on the following criteria:
 - a) The proposed project demonstrated a regeneration and/or economic benefit (e.g., enhance footfall, support evening economy, support employment etc)
 - b) The proposed project was located within the Ards and North Down Borough.
 - c) The applicant had sufficient funds or identified a funding stream to cover all costs of transportation, statutory approvals and/or installation.
 - d) The applicant would provide the Council with all statutory approvals prior to the pods being made available.

It was proposed the Expression of Interest would be open from Monday 02 October 2023 for a period of 4 weeks.

An assessment panel consisting of regeneration and community development officers would assess the Expression of Interests received. If the Council agreed to proceed with this proposal, a report would be brought back to Council detailing the outcome of the Expression of Interest exercise and a recommendation for allocation of the 12 shipping containers and hub. The report would also include the outcome of the internal Expression of Interest exercise for members consideration as well.

RECOMMENDED that the Council agrees to the proposal to offer the 12 shipping containers and the hub for external use as per the process outlined within the report.

Councillor MacArthur proposed, seconded by Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur queried the application process and if groups would have a chance to view the pods. She asked for clarity on what a hub was.

The Head of Regeneration advised that anyone would be welcome to view the containers and clarified the criteria which was ultimately to ensure they were used for a community based/not for profit purpose. Applicants would be assessed on available space and their commitment to servicing the containers and their ability to provide them with a permanent base. He confirmed that the hub was a larger structure of 45ft x 30ft with canvas roof and sides. Once erected it was in a permanent position.

Responding to a further query from Councillor MacArthur, the Chair believed there could be some uses that may require planning permission and guidance should be sought where appropriate.

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter hoped that there would be a geographical spread in terms of distribution of the containers. It was fantastic that the community would be able to make use of them and this sent a message that the Council was doing what it could to help.

Councillor Hollywood asked for clarity that the external bodies referred to did not include private sector organisations and the Head of Regeneration advised that the containers were available for non-profit use for schemes with regeneration benefits. The applicant would need to demonstrate community-based outcomes.

Responding to a further query from Councillor Smart, the officer advised that containers would be retained by the Council only if it was unable to distribute them as part of the process outlined.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Councillor MacArthur left the meeting having declared an interest in Item 11 – 8.09pm)

11. SMALL SETTLEMENTS REGENERATION PROGRAMME – GREYABBEY COMMUNITY PARK AND VIEWING PLATFORM (FILE RDP236)

(Appendix X)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place stating that following on from the report that was presented to Council in June, the Council had now received a reply from Mr H Montgomery who owned the land that the proposed paths and viewing platform was to be developed on. He had advised that he had spoken to a member of the community who believed there was no community support for this project and therefore had not given permission for the viewing platform to be created. He had also put legal restrictions on the paths through his land, and these did not now meet the funding requirements.

Officers had responded to Mr Montgomery outlining the community consultation responses. Although during the public meeting a number of people spoke against

the proposals, many others confirmed that they were in support of the scheme. Several attendees also spoke to officers after the meeting and confirmed that they were in support of the scheme but felt that they couldn't voice their support during the meeting due to the nature of same. Mr Montgomery was also advised of the findings from the survey which demonstrated support for the scheme. For example specific questions were asked on the proposals through Mr Montgomery's land. A question was asked if there was support for the walkway through the wooded area and 63 people responded with 63% supporting this. In relation to creating the viewing area, 64 responded with 56% supported this.

In light of the response from Mr Montgomery, it was now proposed that the Council proceeded with the elements of the scheme located on its land. If this was agreed, the plans would be reviewed and there may be an opportunity to enhance the suggested proposals. A plan showing the original proposed scheme was attached at Appendix One.

RECOMMENDED that the Council agrees to proceed with the elements of the scheme located on Council land as outlined above.

Alderman Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted and in addition Council officers make contact with the landowner again to make him aware of support of the local community for the scheme.

Alderman Adair explained he was reluctantly proposing the recommendation to ensure that the projects went ahead, but in addition he wanted Council to make contact with the landowner to make him aware of the community support for the project.

He explained that the landowner in question was held in high esteem by the people of Greyabbey who were grateful for the care he provided to the land in the village. Since the scheme came forward though there were claims that the scheme lacked community support and having attended a community consultation meeting, he was made aware afterwards that supporters of the scheme had felt intimidated in expressing their view by some who were opposed to it. He was glad though that the silent majority had been heard.

Having gained further publicity through social media, Alderman Adair was aware of further support for the scheme by people in Greyabbey and he wanted to ensure that their voices were heard and it was backed by a petition which he would be presenting to the relevant Council officers. He said it was clear that the people of Greyabbey wanted the landowner to reconsider and allow the project to go ahead in its entirety.

He spoke of the benefits it would bring for all ages and abilities, providing them with breathtaking views of the beautiful scenery of Strangford Lough, and hoped that landowner would reconsider when he saw the strong community support.

Councillor Edmund added his full support for the proposal. He too recalled that the dissenting voices at the consultation meeting had made more noise but it was clear they had not reflected the majority of views in support of the project.

Summing up, Alderman Adair thanked the Committee for its support and hoped that the landowner would reconsider to allow the scheme to go ahead in its entirety. He felt that the people of Greyabbey wanted to be clear that they were open for investment and new opportunities.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted and that Council officers make contact with the landowner again to make him aware of support of the local community for the scheme.

(Alderman Adair had declared an interest in Item 12 and left the meeting – 8.17pm)

(Councillor MacArthur returned to the meeting – 8.17pm)

12. URBAN REGENERATION PROJECTS (FILE REG12)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place as detailed below:

Background

As members would be aware as part of the rate setting process the Urban Regeneration Section successfully bid for £100K to work up projects to a point where the Council could potentially take advantage of future funding opportunities from April 2024. This included professional fees, design work and planning applications where appropriate.

Update

As the town/city masterplans had been reviewed a number of common themes had emerged. These were detailed at 1 & 2 below, with further proposals for consideration detailed at 3 & 4, which also supported the regeneration vision within the Masterplans and ITDRS.

1. Dereliction/vacancy scheme – Given the proliferation on derelict/vacant sites and the limited scope Council currently had to deal with these, a new innovative approach was required to deliver a solution. This may have included grant aid and other interventions that tackle the decay and vacancy in our towns/city built environment. The proposal also fitted with the recent notice of motion to encourage the re-use or redevelopment of local derelict buildings to provide business opportunities or homes. Consideration would also be given to what powers may have been available to Council and/or key statutory partners to place requirements on public and private property owners stop their buildings falling into decay. A partnership approach to this would be essential and an appropriate working group would be created.
2. Wayfinding – was another common area that had been highlighted by the Masterplan reviews. A wayfinding project which would be distinct and bespoke to each town/city was proposed. This may have included reference

to heritage, tourism, leisure and attractions. This would require an element of design and planning and would allow visitors and residents alike to safely navigate to areas of interest and reflect the unique heritage of each town/city.

3. An issue that was also prominent in our town/city centres was the current poor parking signage that was not particularly informative and badly located. With the removal of parking due to the Queen's Parade development, the issue was likely to be further exasperated within the city and a pilot feasibility plan was therefore proposed for Bangor City Centre. This would look at digital solutions for signage, as well as the potential to integrate parking apps and communication messages to end users. It was anticipated the solutions would then be rolled out to Bangor and the other four towns within the Borough, subject to securing capital funding to do so.
4. The Council recently agreed to pilot a heritage led regeneration project, expressions of interest have now closed, with 3 applications received. The projects will be 50% matched funded by Council (limited to a maximum of £15K) the assessment had now been completed and the following projects meet the criteria and therefore have been deemed successful:
 - Kilcooley Womens Group – Repurposing the old Market House in Bangor to expand the delivery of culture and arts programming for the centre of Bangor
 - Newtownards Masonic Hall and Community Hub – Develop heritage initiatives around the rich historic building and the role it had played in the community over a significant period.
 - Boom Studios – Feasibility study to improve the environment and delivery of sustainable energy efficiencies in the current Boom Studios which would enable more financial saving to go towards further programming for this already successful arts offering in Bangor.

Budget Breakdown

The provisional budget breakdown for the four proposals was outlined below. This was subject to further detailed review.

Project Title	Budget
Dereliction/Vacancy Scheme	£30K
Wayfinding Project	£25K
Parking Signage	£15K
Heritage led Regeneration Initiative X 3	£30K
Total	£100K

It was anticipated that these projects would be completed by March 2024.

RECOMMENDED that Council agrees to progress with the four proposals as outlined.

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter proposed, seconded by Councillor Smart, that that the recommendation be adopted.

Welcoming the progress, Alderman Armstrong-Cotter was pleased to see the details of the direction of the Urban Regeneration Projects programme and the projects that were enhancing the Borough's heritage offer. She looked forward to those developing.

The seconder, Councillor Smart commended officers for being able to find the funding and questioned the tight time frame in terms of funding deadlines. The Head of Regeneration confirmed that funding would need to be spent by 31st March 2024, but advised that the projects already had sufficient structure in place with partners and small working groups ready to take them forward.

The Mayor, Councillor Gilmour, welcomed the aims of the project in addressing dereliction and also the positive urban regeneration opportunities this programme was providing. She queried the Heritage Led Regeneration £30,000 funding, and how that would be distributed – she was aware of the £15,000 match fund limit and was wary if one group was to receive the full £15,000 it would only allow for two of the three groups listed to proceed.

The officer advised that the total ask from applicants had been £27,500 and this fund would meet that request in its entirety allowing all three projects to proceed.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the recommendation be adopted.

(Alderman Adair returned to the meeting – 8.33pm)

13. PLACE DIRECTORATE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT – JUNE 2023 (FILE FIN45)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place detailing that the Place Directorate's Budgetary Control Report covered the 3-month period 1 April to 30 June 2023. The net cost of the Directorate was showing an underspend of £13k (3.6%) – box A on page 3.

Explanation of Variance

The Place Directorate's budget performance was further analysed on page 3 into 3 key areas:

Report	Type	Variance	Page
Report 2	Payroll Expenditure	£18k favourable	3
Report 3	Goods & Services Expenditure	£24k adverse	3
Report 4	Income	£20k favourable	3

Explanation of Variance

The Place Directorate's overall variance could be summarised by the following table (variances over £10k): -

Type	Variance £'000	Comment
Payroll	(18)	Mainly due to vacant posts within Regeneration.
Goods & Services		
Regeneration	24	Rural Development project spend but this is mostly offset by additional grant income (see below).
Income		
Regeneration	(20)	Rural Development project (see above).

REPORT 1 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT						
Period 3 - June 2023						
	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance	Annual Budget	Variance	
	£	£	£	£	%	
Place						
800 Place HQ	109,198	108,700	498	266,400	0.5	
810 Regeneration	160,835	172,300	(11,465)	1,112,000	(6.7)	
820 Strategic Capital Development	87,982	90,400	(2,418)	365,100	(2.7)	
Total	358,014	371,400	A (13,386)	1,743,500	(3.6)	
REPORT 2 PAYROLL REPORT						
	£	£	£	£	%	
Place - Payroll						
800 Place HQ	42,115	42,000	115	167,200	0.3	
810 Regeneration	144,479	160,500	(16,021)	651,700	(10.0)	
820 Strategic Capital Development	87,499	89,700	(2,201)	358,900	(2.5)	
Total	274,093	292,200	B (18,107)	1,177,800	(6.2)	
REPORT 3 GOODS & SERVICES REPORT						
	£	£	£	£	%	
Place - Goods & Services						
800 Place HQ	67,083	66,700	383	99,200	0.6	
810 Regeneration	36,120	11,800	24,320	460,300	206.1	
820 Strategic Capital Development	482	700	(218)	6,200	(31.1)	
Total	103,685	79,200	C 24,485	565,700	30.9	
REPORT 4 INCOME REPORT						
	£	£	£	£	%	
Place - Income						
800 Place HQ	-	-	-	-		
810 Regeneration	(19,764)	-	(19,764)	-		
820 Strategic Capital Development	-	-	-	-		
Totals	(19,764)	-	D (19,764)	-		

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

14. PROSPERITY DIRECTORATE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT – JUNE 2023 (FILE FIN45)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Prosperity stating that the Prosperity Directorate's Budgetary Control Report covered the 3-month period 1

April to 30 June 2023. The net cost of the Directorate was showing an underspend of £47k (6.4%) – box A on page 3.

Explanation of Variance

The Prosperity Directorate's budgetary performance was further analysed on page 3 into 3 key areas:

Report	Type	Variance	Page
Report 2	Payroll Expenditure	£35k favourable	3
Report 3	Goods & Services Expenditure	£2k adverse	3
Report 4	Income	£14k favourable	3

Explanation of Variance

The Prosperity Directorate's overall variance could be summarised by the following table (variances over £10k): -

Type	Variance £'000	Comment
Payroll	(35)	Mainly vacant posts within Economic Development.
Goods & Services	2	
Income		
Tourism	(13)	Tourism Experiences – (£6k). Tourism Events – (£5k).

REPORT 1 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT					
Period 3 - June 2023					
	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance	Annual Budget	Variance
	£	£	£	£	%
Prosperity					
700 Prosperity HQ	36,192	32,800	3,392	132,000	10.3
720 Economic Development	329,367	368,000	(38,633)	1,345,700	(10.5)
740 Tourism	311,227	322,500	(11,273)	1,529,800	(3.5)
Total	676,786	723,300	A (46,514)	3,007,500	(6.4)
REPORT 2 PAYROLL REPORT					
	£	£	£	£	%
Prosperity - Payroll					
700 Prosperity HQ	33,543	30,400	3,143	121,800	10.3
720 Economic Development	183,053	223,500	(40,447)	903,500	(18.1)
740 Tourism	238,086	235,300	2,786	933,800	1.2
Total	454,682	489,200	B (34,518)	1,959,100	(7.1)
REPORT 3 GOODS & SERVICES REPORT					
	£	£	£	£	%
Prosperity - Goods & Services					
700 Prosperity HQ	2,649	2,400	249	10,200	10.4
720 Economic Development	215,961	213,100	2,861	936,700	1.3
740 Tourism	140,397	141,700	(1,303)	683,400	(0.9)
Total	359,007	357,200	C 1,807	1,630,300	0.5
REPORT 4 INCOME REPORT					
	£	£	£	£	%
Prosperity - Income					
700 Prosperity HQ	-	-	-	-	-
720 Economic Development	(69,647)	(68,600)	(1,047)	(494,500)	(1.5)
740 Tourism	(67,256)	(54,500)	(12,756)	(87,400)	(23.4)
Totals	(136,903)	(123,100)	D (13,803)	(581,900)	(11.2)

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the recommendation be adopted.

15. PROPOSED RURAL PROJECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place detailed as follows:

Background

As Members would be aware, a budget of £100,000 was allocated in this year's Regeneration Unit's budgets to work up rural projects to a point where the Council could potentially take advantage of future funding opportunities. This would take the projects to technical design stage and to submit planning applications where required.

Proposed Projects

Following consideration of the village plans and other suggestions received for potential projects, the following were recommended to be taken forward to technical design/planning stage:

1. Millisle Main Street Environmental Improvement Scheme (EIS) – The Council's Urban Designer had developed a concept EIS for Millisle Main Street. This would help increase pedestrian space, provide seating and bike racks, a new resin bound pedestrian pavement surface, new tarmac surfacing, trees, hanging baskets and the replacement of the lighting heads.

The Millisle Village Forum had been consulted and their view was that the concept would greatly enhance the village.

To take this forward a full technical design is required, consultation with the statutory agencies and a planning application is also necessary.

2. Portaferry Marina – Discussions had recently been held with Portaferry Regeneration Ltd about the operation of the marina. From these it was clear that there were some limitations with the marina and substantial work was now required.

At present the marina could only be used for six months of the year due to its current design. Currently there were 50 berths available, 15 for visiting boats and 35 for local residents. The berths for residents were booked annually and there was a waiting list of 47 who would wish to avail of the facility.

From 2018 until October 2022, 1692 boats had used the facilities at Portaferry marina. PRL had taken soundings from traders in the local area and it was believed that the marina did enhance the facilities and bring visitors to Portaferry and the wider Peninsula area, which in turn created footfall and additional spend.

The proposal was that the Council would work in partnership with PRL to undertake a feasibility study to ascertain how the marina could be enhanced, deal with any maintenance issues and see what technical works would be required to make the marina an all-year facility. It was proposed that the Council provided a grant of up to £15K and PRL would at least match this but commit to undertake the technical work outlined.

3. Glastry Clay Pits – Discussions with the National Trust, owner of the site, had commenced. The proposal, in line with the recent NOM, was to undertake a technical design work which would consider the development options for the site in consideration of its environmental sensitivities.

This study would consider potential future capital works such as; formalising the trails, cleaning up the ponds, seating areas, a possible natural play area, fishing stands and facilities for anglers, interpretative signage and improvements to the car park.

Budget and Timeline

It was anticipated that these three projects would be completed by March 2024. If the Council agreed to them, costings would now be sought but it was anticipated that they could be undertaken within the budget set.

RECOMMENDED that the Council agrees to progress the proposed rural projects as outlined within the report.

Alderman Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

Commending the Regeneration team, the proposer was delighted to see that the projects were in a position to be taken forward within the existing financial year. In the past he had noted that projects were unable to avail of funding because they were not in a position to advance.

Alderman Adair was particularly pleased to see discussions over the Glastry Clay Pits had commenced and would progress to the next stage under this scheme, having proposed it as a Notice of Motion. He welcomed the other rural projects, referring to economic and jobs benefits for Portaferry Marina along with the concept for Millisle Main Street. He paid tribute to former Councillor Eddie Thompson who had called for the scheme and would be delighted to see this significant step forward.

The seconder, Councillor Edmund welcomed the progress of the proposed rural projects outlined in the report, particularly the Glastry Clay Pits which he had also brought to Council through the Notice of Motion. He recalled that the area had been a very popular outdoor space for visitors during the Covid-19 indoor gathering restrictions.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

16. REDEVELOPMENT OF STEPS AT PRINCETOWN ROAD, BANGOR (FILE RDP14)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place stating that the Council previously agreed the following Notice of Motion:

“That this Council, in liaison with the Department for Infrastructure, will seek permission for and explore a source of funding in order to make an artistic feature of the steps which lead from Princetown Road to Queen’s Parade at Bangor seafront

as part of Bangor Town regeneration, and brings back a report to Council addressing how this can be achieved as a pilot for the Borough."

Council Officers had repeatedly attempted to contact various DfI Officials to progress this project. This had been hampered by a number of officials moving posts and no one responding to the Council's correspondence.

Recently a new Divisional Engineer for the area had been appointed and had been approached regarding the proposal. He had inspected the steps and had responded as follows:

"Following on from our recent conversations, I can confirm that the steps leading from Mount Pleasant to Queens Parade are adopted and maintained by the Department. Unfortunately given the age and condition of the steps I would not be in favour of any works or changes to the existing make-up of the steps.

Although safe and being maintained in line with our guidelines I would not want anything attached to the steps or the adjacent walls, this includes painting of same. My reason for this is for maintenance inspections and not wanting anything that could potentially mask early warning signs should the steps start to deteriorate.

I am happy to discuss further and, in more detail, if required and we will continue to inspect and maintain the steps in line with current policy.

I know this is not the answer you were hoping for and I am sorry I could not be more assistance on this occasion."

In light of this response and as the steps were owned and controlled by DfI there was nothing further the Council could do to deliver this project.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the report.

Councillor Rossiter proposer, seconded by Councillor McCollum, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Rossiter had found it disappointing that Council had contacted DfI multiple times before getting a response which was unacceptable and an attitude that needed to change. His political party grouping would try to arrange a site meeting to keep the matter moving forwards. Councillor McCracken echoed those comments adding that on a recent visit to Cornwall he had seen similar set of steps and the authority responsible there had made them into a feature, calling them a 'Stairway to Heaven'. A similar approach would have worked well in this case and they could have linked into Bangor's waterfront development.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Rossiter, seconded by Councillor McCracken, that the recommendation be adopted.

**17. FOOTPATH PROVISION AT SHORE ROAD, BALLYHALBERT
(FILE RDP14)
(Appendix XI)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place stating that at its meeting in June 2023 Council agreed to respond to the Department for Infrastructure's Permanent Secretary's letter of 24 May 2023, as Members felt the response was unsatisfactory that the Permanent Secretary had downplayed the road safety issues identified and the Council's suggestion of an alternative pedestrian route. It was also agreed that Council officers should investigate the proposal of the alternative route and report back in due course. Work on this would commence in the Autumn, with further reports brought back to Council in due course.

The Permanent Secretary had further responded, and her letter of 10 August was attached. The Permanent Secretary had again highlighted that any works on this stretch of road would have had a significant cost in relation to the benefit. She continued that the Council's proposal for the alternative route was not feasible as it would require land acquisitions and would not be of any benefit to the residents of 2 – 92 Shore Road.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the response.

Alderman Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that Council writes to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure expressing disappointment at the lack of understanding from the Department in the response that despite being a priority need & road safety concern in the village for over 20 Years the construction of a footway link on Shore Road Ballyhalbert remains not a priority for the Department.

Alderman Adair explained that he had brought the alternative proposal because the Council owed it to residents in Ballyhalbert to keep raising the matter. There was a clear lack of understanding here from the Department of Infrastructure and the Permanent Secretary needed to see firsthand the issues that residents were facing. He explained the difficulties and dangers faced by children walking to school and the elderly trying access shops in the village centre.

He clarified that the meeting he was proposing would be for the Permanent Secretary to meet with DEA members and relevant officers.

Councillor Edmund added that there were 1600 homes at St Andrews Point, with more to follow, that were affected and residents including children, the vulnerable and elderly were putting themselves at risk walking in the white line. He called for urgent action before a fatality occurred.

Summing up, Alderman Adair thanked members for their support and felt there was a general lack of understanding by the Permanent Secretary of the Borough's roads and referred to another matter where the Permanent Secretary had failed to accept there was a pothole issue in the Borough. He felt the situation in Ballyhalbert would not be accepted if it had been in Belfast.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that Council writes to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure expressing disappointment at the lack of understanding from the Department in the response that despite being a priority need & road safety concern in the village for over 20 Years the construction of a footway link on Shore Road Ballyhalbert remains not a priority for the Department and invites them to a site meeting with the Peninsula DEA members to view the area and see the road safety issues for themselves.

18. RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION - SAFETY CONCERNS AT KIRCUBBIN HARBOUR (FILE RDP14)
(Appendix XII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Place stating that Council agreed in June 2023 the undernoted Notice of Motion from Alderman Adair and Councillor Armstrong Cotter:

"That this Council recognises the issues and concerns detailed in the letter sent to the Chief Executive by The Kircubbin Harbour Action Group and agrees to write to the Permanent Secretaries of the Departments of Infrastructure and Communities, asking them to provide details of the responsibility they have in ensuring the public safety of the harbour and listing any details of dealings their departments have had with the owner."

The Chief Executive wrote to both Permanent Secretaries as per the Council decision and the attached response was received from the Historic Environment Division of the Department for Communities on behalf of both Departments.

RECOMMENDED that Council note the response received.

Alderman Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that a decision be put back to next month's P&P Committee to allow Kircubbin Harbour Working Group to consider the response.

Alderman Adair explained that the Kircubbin Harbour Working Group was still due to meet for the first time since the response had been received and he had it felt it only right to allow time for the group to consider it.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that a decision be put back to next month's P&P Committee to allow Kircubbin Harbour Working Group to consider the response.

19. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

Alderman Adair explained the importance of the Strangford Lough ferry service for commuters and when it was out of service it added an hour on to people's journey

times. He was aware that a working group had been set up to deal with previous issues but he felt that it should be reestablished following recent technical issues that had caused disruption to the service.

The Head of Regeneration confirmed that the last meeting of the working group had taken place on 9th June 2021 and DfI representatives had been in attendance with the intention of returning for further meetings. However there had been no contact since that meeting. He was also aware of staff changes at the ferry operator which may also explain the break in contact.

Alderman Adair asked if the working group could be reestablished with regular meetings taking place and the Director of Place advised she would put the request to the relevant parties involved.

20. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor McCracken, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted items of confidential business.

21. PICKIE Q1 REPORT – APRIL-JUNE 2023 (FILE 171006)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Option 3: NOT FOR PUBLICATION SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

The report contains information on performance at Pickie for Quarter 1 – April 2023 to June 2023. This report contains information pertaining to financial operating information, visitor numbers, participation, key performance indicators, marketing and PR, customer feedback and technical issues.

22. EXPLORIS Q1 REPORT – APRIL-JUNE 2023 (FILE DEVP3C)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Option 3: NOT FOR PUBLICATION SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO AN INDIVIDUAL(S)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

The report contains information on performance at Exploris for Quarter 1 – April 2023 to June 2023. This report contains information pertaining to financial operating information, visitor numbers, participation, key performance indicators, marketing and PR, customer feedback and technical issues.

23. BANGOR MARINA Q1 REPORT – APRIL-JUNE 2023 (FILE 141671)
(Appendix XIII)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Option 3: NOT FOR PUBLICATION SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

The report contains information on performance at Pickie for Quarter 1 – April 2023 to June 2023. This report contains information pertaining to financial operating information, visitor numbers, participation, key performance indicators, marketing and PR, customer feedback and technical issues.

24. NORTHERN IRELAND ENTERPRISE SUPPORT SERVICE - (NIESS) UPDATE (FILE ED135)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Option 3: NOT FOR PUBLICATION SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

Some of the NIESS tenders under Framework A are still live and Framework B is about to be released. Any information relating to these tenders should not be in the public domain until the process is complete.

25. BELFAST REGION CITY DEAL, BANGOR WATERFRONT UPDATE (FILE RDP22/RDP56)
(Appendix XIV - XV)

*****IN CONFIDENCE*****

Option 3: NOT FOR PUBLICATION SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

The report provides an update on the Belfast Region City Deal and the projects being delivered as part of this, including Bangor Waterfront. This report contains information pertaining to financial information, procurement strategies and operating models.

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 8.55pm.