

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

15 December 2022

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 Town Hall, The Castle, Bangor on **Wednesday, 21 December 2022 commencing 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 November 2022 (Report attached)
6. Minutes of Council meeting dated 30 November 2022 (Report attached)
7. Minutes of Committees
  - 7.1. Minutes of Planning Committee dated 6 December 2022 (Copy attached)
  - 7.2. Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee dated 7 December 2022 (Copy attached)
  - 7.3. Minutes of Meeting of Regeneration and Development Committee dated 8 December 2022 (Copy attached)
  - 7.4. Minutes of Meeting of Corporate Services Committee dated 13 December 2022 (Copy attached)  
  
**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***
    - 7.4.1 Matter Arising - Item 7: Equality Consultative Panel
  - 7.5. Minutes of Meeting of Community and Wellbeing Committee dated 14 December 2022 (Copy attached)

## 8. Consultation Documents

- 8.1 DfC Consultation documents – Advance Notice of Listing – ‘Former First Trust Bank, 74 High Street, Holywood’. Consultation closes 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023. (Correspondence and report attached)

## 9. Commonwealth Day 2023 (Report attached)

10. Request to light up Council buildings for “Dry January, Feel Good February” campaign (Report attached)
11. Place and Prosperity and Corporate Services Committee – Terms of Reference (Report attached)
12. Sealing Documents
13. Removed
14. Conferences

### 14.1 Local Government Conference 2023 (Report attached)

## 15. Notice of Motion Status Report (Report attached)

## 16. Notices of Motion

### 16.1. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Woods & Dunlop

That this Council notes its declaration of a climate emergency in 2018 and the passage of the Climate Change Act 2022; agrees the need to reduce emissions to ensure happy and healthy communities and engages with community and government partners with the aim of piloting ‘car free’ days in our City, towns and villages.

### 16.2. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Thompson & Adair

That Council task officers to bring forward a report on options and potential funding opportunities to enhance and improve Council Football Pitches at Abbey Road Millisle to ensure they can be used and enjoyed by the local sporting clubs and community of Millisle,

### 16.3. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Douglas & Walker

That this Council adopts the White Ribbon Pledge to ‘*Never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and girls*’, agrees to sign the Pledge, and tasks Officers to bring back a report outlining how we can amalgamate existing relevant policies, undertake the Listen, Learn, Lead programme within the Council,

and identify effective routes to encourage other agencies and organisations in our Borough to engage with the White Ribbon Project.

#### 16.4. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Cathcart and MacArthur

That this Council expresses concern with the number of residential and commercial bins left on public footways in the Borough long after the bin collection date. Bins left on public footways are not only unsightly, they can lead to hygiene and contamination issues, as well as safety concerns, forcing pedestrians onto the road due to the blocking of a footway. This Council notes its own lack of enforcement powers to tackle this issue and expresses concern at the Department for Infrastructure's reluctance to use its own enforcement powers. Accordingly, this Council agrees to write to the Department for Infrastructure asking the Department to engage with Councils with the aim of creating appropriate enforcement powers to tackle this issue. Council Officers, will in the meantime, bring back a report to the appropriate committee detailing action that the Council can take under current powers to try address the issue of bins left on public footways.

#### 16.5. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors S Irvine & Cooper

That this council supports all NHS staff who provide unstinting and unwavering service and will write to all trusts in Northern Ireland assuring them of our support for their industrial action and their objectives of safe staffing levels and adequate remuneration in the current cost of living crisis, in line with other government and council employees.

#### Circulated for Information:

- a) December Housing Council Bulletin & November Housing Council Minutes (Correspondence attached)
- b) Independent Reporting Commission Fifth Report (report attached)

#### **\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

#### 7.4.1 Matter Arising - Item 7: Equality Consultative Panel

17. Labour Market Partnership Tenders (Report attached)
18. Tender soccer pitch renovation works for summer 2023 and Floral Containers for 2023 (Report attached)
19. Tender Extension Report – Insurance Services (Report attached)

20. Black Light Adventure Zone (Report attached)
21. Request to Consider Leisure Contract Extension (Report attached)
22. Call-in Rescinding Motion on Office Rationalisation (Report attached)

#### MEMBERSHIP OF ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter	Councillor Edmund
Alderman Carson	Councillor Gilmour
Alderman Gibson	Councillor Greer
Alderman Girvan	Councillor Irvine
Alderman Irvine	Councillor Irwin
Alderman Keery	Councillor Johnson
Alderman McDowell	Councillor Kennedy
Alderman McIlveen	Councillor MacArthur
Alderman Smith	Councillor McAlpine
Alderman Wilson	Councillor McClean
Councillor Adair	Councillor McKee
Councillor Blaney ( <b>Deputy Mayor</b> )	Councillor McKimm
Councillor Boyle	Councillor McRandal
Councillor Brooks	Councillor Moore
Councillor Cathcart	Councillor Smart
Councillor Chambers	Councillor P Smith
Councillor Cooper	Councillor T Smith
Councillor Cummings	Councillor Thompson
Councillor Douglas ( <b>Mayor</b> )	Councillor Walker
Councillor S Dunlop	Councillor Woods

**LIST OF MAYOR'S/DEPUTY MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS  
FOR DECEMBER 2022**

**Thursday 1 December**

- 10:30 hours Judge Christmas Card Competition – Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Bangor  
 11:00 hours Meeting with SEHSCT – Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Bangor  
 19:00 hours Ballywalter Lights Switch On – Ballywalter Village Hall

**Friday 2 December**

- 10:00 hours Photo Opportunity – Tesco National Foodbank Promotion – Castlebawn, Newtownards  
 18:00 hours Donaghadee Christmas Event – Donaghadee Harbour

**Saturday 3 December**

- 16:30 hours Ballygowan Christmas Lights Switch On – Village Hall, Ballygowan  
 16:50 hours **Deputy Mayor** – Conlig Christmas Lights Switch On – Main Street, Conlig

**Sunday 4 December**

- 13:00 hours Advent Fair – Holywood Steiner School, Croft Road, Holywood  
 18:00 hours Community Carol Service and Switch On – First Presbyterian Church, High Street, Donaghadee

**Monday 5 December**

- 13:00 hours APG on Homelessness – Long Gallery, Stormont, Belfast  
 19:00 hours Ballyhalbert Lights Switch On – Ballyhalbert Primary School

**Tuesday 6 December**

- 10:45 hours AMH Promote Pantomime – 6 Enterprise Road, Bangor  
 14:30 hours Afternoon Tea with Lady Rose – Mount Stewart, Newtownards  
 18:00 hours **Deputy Mayor** – British-Irish Intergovernmental Secretariat Christmas Reception 2022 – Stormont, Belfast  
 19:00 hours Kircubbin Christmas Lights Switch On – Credit Union, Main Street, Kircubbin

**Wednesday 7 December**

- 14:00 hours Over 50s Christmas Tea Dance – Queen's Hall, Newtownards  
 15:20 hours The St Anne's Trust 'Carolfest' – Parish Church of St Philip and St James, Church Road, Holywood  
 18:00 hours Reception for Rhys McClenaghan – Town Hall, Bangor

19:00 hours      **Deputy Mayor** – Cloughey Christmas Lights Switch On – Main Road, Cloughey

#### Thursday 8 December

10:00 hours      Meeting with Tahnee McCorry – White Ribbon NI – Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Bangor  
 11:30 hours      Visit to Storehouse North Down – Balloo Avenue, Bangor  
 13:00 hours      Lunch for Simon Community's Local Team – Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Bangor  
 18:00 hours      T:buc Celebration Event with Bangor Alternatives – Kirkistown Castle Golf Club – Main Road, Cloughey

#### Friday 9 December

10:45 hours      Community and Wellbeing Staff Christmas Breakfast Event – Queen's Hall, Newtownards  
 11:45 hours      Regeneration, Development and Planning staff Christmas Event – Signal, Balloo Road, Bangor  
 15:30 hours      Reception for Christmas Card Winners – Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Bangor  
 19:30 hours      Kind Light Concert in Support of RNLI – Bangor Abbey

#### Saturday 10 December

10:00 hours      Passenger Ride in a Rally Car – Kirkistown Racing Circuit  
 13:00 hours      Unveiling of Community Art – Clanmil / NI Alternatives – Weavers Grange, Newtownards  
 19:00 hours      Ards Suicide Awareness Group – Christmas Carols – Conway Square, Newtownards

#### Sunday 11 December

11:30 hours      Christmas Art & Craft Fair – The Courthouse, Bangor  
 12:00 hours      Ladies Football Tournament for Homeless Awareness Week – St Columbanus College – Ballymacconnell Road, Bangor  
 16:00 hours      Cultural Christmas Celebrations – St Comgall's Parish Centre – Brunswick Road, Bangor

#### Monday 12 December

10:30 hours      **Deputy Mayor** – Launch of 'Engines Off No Idling' Schools Campaign – Wallace High School Preparatory Department – Lisburn

#### Tuesday 13 December

14:00 hours      Meeting with SERC – Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall, Bangor

**Wednesday 14 December**

- 10:00 hours Photo Opportunity – Walled Garden Volunteers – Town Hall, Bangor
- 19:15 hours Bangor Rotary Club Christmas Dinner – Bangor Golf Club

**Thursday 15 December**

- 10:00 hours Staff Christmas Event – Balloo, Bangor
- 10:30 hours Photoshoot – Warm Welcome – YMCA, High Street, Bangor
- 11:20 hours Photoshoot – Chatty Bench Initiative – Walled Garden, Bangor
- 11:45 hours Photoshoot – Here2Help App – Walled Garden, Bangor
- 12:00 hours Allsorts: Good Relations and Equality – Microsoft Teams
- 19:00 hours **Deputy Mayor** – Gala Dinner to Celebrate Winter Graduations  
Opening of the Final Phase of Ulster University's Belfast Campus – York Street, Belfast
- 18:30 hours Movilla High School Christmas Fair – Donaghadee Road, Newtownards
- 19:30 hours Music at Christmas Charity Event – Town Hall, Bangor

**Friday 16 December**

- 10:00 hours Arts and Heritage Panel Festive Visit to Seacourt Print Workshop, Bangor
- 10:30 hours Town Hall Christmas Party – Council Chamber, Bangor
- 14:00 hours Cancer Research Christmas Colouring in Competition – Londonderry Park, Newtownards

**Tuesday 20 December**

- 14:00 hours A Celebration of World Music – Marine Court Hotel, Bangor

**Wednesday 21 December**

- 09:45 hours **Deputy Mayor** – Annual Prize Day – Ballymaconnell Road, Bangor

**Saturday 24 December**

- 21:30 hours Christmas Eve Service (in support of Mayor's Charities) – Bangor Abbey

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A hybrid meeting of the Ards and North Down Borough Council was held at the Town Hall, The Castle, Bangor and via Zoom, on Wednesday, 30 November 2022 commencing at 7.00pm.

**In the Chair:** The Mayor (Councillor Douglas)

**Aldermen:**

Carson	McIlveen
Gibson	M Smith
Irvine	Wilson
McDowell	

**Councillors:**

Adair	Kennedy
Blaney	MacArthur
Boyle	McAlpine
Brooks	McClellan
Cathcart	McKee
Chambers	McKimm
Cooper (7.08pm)	McRandal
Cummings	Moore
Edmund	Smart
Gilmour	P Smith
Greer	T Smith
Irvine	Thompson
Irwin	Walker
Johnson	Woods

**Officers:** Chief Executive (S Reid), Director of Organisational Development and Administration (W Swanston), Director of Finance and Performance (S Christie), Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning (S McCullough), Director of Environment (D Lindsay), Director of Community & Wellbeing (G Bannister), Corporate Communications Manager (C Jackson) and Democratic Services Officers (P Foster & R King)

### **1. PRAYER**

The Mayor (Councillor Douglas) welcomed everyone to the meeting and commenced with the Chief Executive reading the Council prayer.

**NOTED.**



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## **2. APOLOGIES**

The Mayor sought apologies.

Apologies were received from Alderman Keery.

**NOTED.**

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Mayor asked for any Declarations of Interest and the following were made:

Councillors Irwin and Woods – Item 10 - Deputation Request from Holywood Football Club

Councillor Cathcart – Item 24 - Call-In Rescinding Motion on Office Rationalisation

**NOTED.**

## **4. MAYOR'S BUSINESS**

Firstly, the Mayor expressed her delight to welcome colleagues back to the Chamber after more than two years of virtual meetings. She noted it had been many months of work, but tonight was the beginning of hybrid Council meetings, with Committee meetings in December to follow.

She stated that members would also be aware of the Civic Reception which would be held in the Chamber that Friday, 2 December 2022, which would feature the presentation of the Letters Patent to confer City Status on Bangor. She stated this would be a special and unique event, which she was sure many members were looking forward to.

She referred to Rhys McClenaghan's recent achievement of winning a gold medal and becoming World Champion at the World Gymnastics Championships held at Liverpool. She added that it would be her intention to host Rhys at a celebratory event in the Mayor's Parlour.

At this stage Councillor Cathcart took a few moments to acknowledge Peter Weir becoming a peer within the House of Lords and to be known as Lord Weir of Ballyholme. He paid tribute to Mr Weir adding that he would be an asset to the House of Lords and asked that the Mayor send him a letter of congratulations

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that the Mayor's comments be noted.**

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## 5. MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ENGAGEMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2022

(Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor Engagements for the month of October 2022.

The Mayor also took the opportunity express her thanks to the Royal British Legion and local community groups who had been involved with the organisation of the Remembrance Services which had taken place across the Borough. She stated that it was important for all to remember those who had made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms everyone enjoyed in present times.

Continuing the Mayor stated that it had been great to be able to join the public in several public consultations in respect of the City and Towns Masterplans and PeacePlus funding opportunities.

At this stage the Mayor referred to several visits she had made to local businesses across the Borough which were continuing to face challenges in the current economic climate and as such the message very much remained for everyone to shop local where possible.

The Mayor then reported on several meetings recently held with local charities throughout the month adding that she wished to express her thanks to all for their support and for the services which they continued to offer across the entire community.

Finally, she stated that it had been a joy to join Santa for the start of the Christmas Light Switch Ons and again she expressed her thanks to all those in the local community and Council officers all of whom had been working so hard to make those family fun events so special. She added that following the recent Mayor's Charity Pub Quiz a total of approximately £2,000 had been raised for the Mayor's three chosen charities and she expressed her thanks to all involved and to those who had attended.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor McClean, that the information be noted.**

## 6. MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26 OCTOBER 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the minutes be adopted.**

## **7. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

### **7.1 Planning Committee dated 1 November 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the minutes be adopted.**

### **7.2. Environment Committee dated 2 November 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

Alderman McDowell proposed, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the minutes be adopted.

Alderman Smith commented that she had attended the meeting but had not been marked as being present.

#### **NOTED.**

#### **Item 11 - Follow Up Report - Regulation of HRC Use**

Councillor Woods referred to the new permit system which was being introduced for use at HRC's and asked if any further information would be provided to residents on this. She also asked if there were any proposals to reduce the number of landfill skips at HRC's.

(Councillor McClean left the Chamber at this stage – 7.16pm)

In response, the Director of Environment confirmed that a resident could apply for a permit for which they could then nominate a supplier to act on their behalf.

Councillor Woods asked if any further information on the new arrangements would be circulated to residents of the Borough.

The Director of Environment replied stating that the information provided in the leaflet already circulated to residents was technically correct.

In response to a query from Councillor T Smith about householders having to accompany their nominated supplier, the Director reiterated that the householder just had to nominate someone to act on their behalf. He added that multiple runs could be undertaken by the same supplier in the same vehicle as long as they had permits for those.

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Alderman Wilson queried whether such a system could be open to abuse, to which the Director reminded members that that very concern had been debated at length by the committee. After consideration by members, it was agreed the proposals put forward closed off any potential for that to take place. It was noted items for disposal would need to be itemised on the permit.

**NOTED.**

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McDowell, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the minutes be adopted.**

### **7.3. Regeneration and Development Committee dated 3 November 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

Councillor Cummings proposed, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the minutes be adopted.

#### **Item 4 - Rural Signage Scheme Update**

Councillor Boyle noted that a number of signs had been subject to criminal damage, and he asked if any associated costs with that would be recoverable by the Council.

In response, the Director of Regeneration, Development & Planning indicated that she was not too sure if that would be possible and would check with officers and report back to the member in due course.

**NOTED.**

#### **Item 8 – Queen's Parade Update**

Councillor Cathcart indicated that he wished to raise this item which was considered 'In Committee'.

**NOTED.**

#### **Item 4 - Rural Signage Scheme Update**

Councillor Thompson welcomed the update particularly as they had been the subject of his earlier Notice of Motion and with the assistance of the Ards Peninsula Village Partnerships this had now come to fruition. Continuing he noted there had been some issues with the positioning of a number of the signs but welcomed that those where such issues had subsequently been resolved.

**NOTED.**

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the minutes be adopted.**

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#### **7.4. Corporate Services Committee dated 8 November 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

Councillor P Smith proposed, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the minutes be adopted.

##### Item 5 – City Status Update

Councillor T Smith referred to the proposals to name a place or building in Bangor in Her Majesty The Queen's honour and suggested that this was something which should be considered across the entire Borough, given the huge affection with which she was held. He encouraged officers to consult with local communities on this matter.

At this stage Councillor Cathcart reminded members that it was Bangor town which had been granted 'city status', rather than the Borough in its entirety.

**NOTED.**

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor P Smith, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the minutes be adopted.**

#### **7.5. Community and Wellbeing Committee dated 9 November 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

Councillor Edmund proposed, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the minutes be adopted.

##### Item 3 – Victoria Primary School Play Area – Response to Notice of Motion

Councillor Adair proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that Council note Ballyhalbert Sports Clubs no longer avail of facilities at Glastry College (due to facilities being closed to the public in winter months). Further that Council express concerns at lack of lighting and proper footway link connecting the village to Glastry College and write to the Department for Infrastructure requesting the upgrade of existing footway on Victoria Road to include widening curbing along with lighting to promote a safer route to school and connecting the village to Glastry College via a safe and assessable footway. The possibility for a project fronting Victoria Primary Ballyhalbert could potentially be added to the list of projects being put forward for Peace Plus funding and considered by the Peace Plus Partnership and progressed through the process outlined above in the report. Consideration should also be given to the other sites identified in the Play Strategy for older children provision as part of the Peace Plus process that could be delivered on Council land.

Furthermore, that officers bring back a report to Council following the conclusion of the Peace Plus consultation advising members of any council applications going forward to deliver facilities for children and young people across the Borough.

The proposer, Councillor Adair, welcomed the report and its outcomes however he did have concerns in respect of the facilities at Ballyhalbert, where currently there was no safe footway link to enable pedestrians to access the facility. He welcomed the consultation which had been undertaken by Peace Plus adding that he would look forward to the outcome of that. In summing up he suggested there may be additional funding available from Rural Development funding sources and encouraged members to support his amendment.

Concurring with those comments, the seconder, Councillor Edmund agreed that it was unfortunate that currently there was no suitable walkway or lighting in place to enable pedestrians to safely access the facility in question.

Commenting in support, Councillor Boyle indicated that he had previously supported reports on this matter and added that Ballyhalbert was a growing village and as such those most in need should be supported.

Councillor McAlpine reported that she had been in contact with representatives from the Education Authority about this especially given the current situation which saw a very expensive facility sited on the outskirts of the village which could not be properly accessed. She thanked the proposer and seconder for bringing forward their proposal to Council.

## **AGREED.**

### Item 18 – Community Development Grants Assessment 2023-2024

Councillor Cathcart welcomed the report and expressed his thanks to all of those who had been involved in it. Continuing, he noted there was no external funding available for running costs and asked what the Council was doing to offer assistance to community groups.

In response, the Director of Community and Wellbeing confirmed that officers had access to 'Grant Finder' which highlighted those areas where external funding could be applied for.

Thanking Councillor Cathcart for his comments, Councillor MacArthur sought further information on the 'warm spaces' initiative.

The Director confirmed this initiative was still in the very early stages but was one which any Group could offer the use of its space for that purpose.

Councillor MacArthur commented on the difficulties faced by faith groups in obtaining grant funding for such initiatives and as such she asked if there were any plans to get in touch with them to discuss any requirements they may have for funding.

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In response, the Director indicated that was not the approach which had been adopted to date and instead they would be encouraged to get in touch with the Council directly.

**NOTED.**

#### Item 8 – Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2022-2032

Councillor McKee welcomed the proposed consultation on the Biodiversity Action Plan which demonstrated the Council's commitment to environmental progress. He asked if any dates had yet been confirmed for the commencement of the public consultation.

By way of response the Director indicated that currently there were no specific dates for that yet, however following ratification of the Council minutes the next steps to commence the consultation process could be undertaken.

**NOTED.**

#### Item 21 – Ards Peninsula 3G Multi Use-Pitch

At this stage Councillor Adair, referred to the MUGA at Portavogie commenting that this would be the second week Portavogie Football Club would be without pitch lights. He stated that was something which had been promised by the Council and despite sending several emails to Council officers about this he had yet to receive a response.

The Director of Community and Wellbeing commented stating that as far as he was aware the matter had been responded to by his colleague, the Director of Environment.

Councillor Adair stated that it was something which needed to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

**NOTED.**

**RESOLVED**, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, the minutes be adopted subject to the following amendment that Council notes Ballyhalbert Sports Clubs no longer avail of facilities at Glastry College (due to facilities being closed to the public in winter months). That Council expresses concerns at lack of lighting and proper footway link connecting the village to Glastry College and writes to the Department for Infrastructure requesting the upgrade of existing footway on Victoria Road to include the widening of curbing along with lighting to promote a safer route to school and connecting the village to Glastry College via a safe and accessible footway. The possibility for a project fronting Victoria Primary, Ballyhalbert could potentially be added to the list of projects being put forward for Peace Plus and considered by the Peace Plus Partnership and progressed through the process outlined above in the report. Consideration should also be given

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to the other sites identified in the Play Strategy for older children provision as part of the Peace Plus process that could be delivered on Council land.

Furthermore, that officers bring back a report to Council following the conclusion of the Peace Plus consultation advising members of any council applications going forward to deliver facilities for children and young people across our Borough.

#### **7.6. Special Corporate Services Committee dated 17 November 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

Councillor P Smith proposed, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the minutes be adopted.

#### **Page 19 – Item 6 - Estimates 2023/24 UPDATE 2**

Councillor McKimm indicated that he wished to raise a matter under this item of discussion 'In Committee'.

**NOTED.**

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor P Smith, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the minutes be adopted.**

(Councillor Chambers left the meeting at this stage – 7.55pm)

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

### **8.1 Waterways Ireland is consulting on its Draft Equality Action Plan 2023-2025 and Draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2025**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Consultation document available at [Waterways Ireland | About Us | Public Consultations](#), Consultation closes 10 January 2023 at 4.00pm

**RESOLVED, that the Consultation be noted.**

### **8.2 The Draft Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 Consultation.**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Consultation documents available at <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/draft-planning-fees-deemed-planning-applications-and-appeal-amendment-regulations-ni-2022>. Consultation closes 20 December 2022 at 23:59.

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning stating that the Planning Appeals Commission, often referred to as the PAC was an independent appellate body which dealt with a wide range of land use planning issues and related matters. The



Commission's functions fell into two broad categories arising from decisions of local Council planning departments and decisions or proposals of Northern Ireland Assembly Departments: • Decisions on Appeals - the Commission makes decisions on appeals against Council decisions on a wide range of planning and environmental matters; • Hearing and Reporting on Public Inquiries/Hearings/Examinations - the Commission makes recommendations on a wide range of cases referred to it by government Departments or arising from decisions of Departments. The final decision in those matters was taken by the relevant Department.

The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service (NICTS) had responsibility for the administration of PAC, and Department of Justice had the power to create Regulations that prescribe its procedure. The Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 ("the Regulations") prescribe the fees to be charged for planning appeals and deemed planning applications from 1 April 2015. The Regulations only affect the work of PAC and not the Council as local planning authority. The Department of Justice had issued a consultation dated 25 October 2022 seeking views on the proposed increase to the fees charged for submitting an appeal to the PAC. Whilst the Department for Infrastructure had increased planning fees once since 2015, the PAC had not had the benefit of any increase in that time, and the increased proposed were minor in relation to the 2015 rates. The increase in fees did not in any way benefit the Council, and therefore it was not considered that the Council should have any objection to the proposed revision to the Regulations relating to the PAC. Officers therefore recommended responding to the consultation to set out that the Council was supportive of the proposed increase.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report and the attached consultation and approves the Head of Planning to respond to the consultation setting out that the Council is supportive of the proposed Regulations.

**RESOLVED, that the Consultation be noted.**

### **8.3. Dfl – Public Consultation on Miscarriage Leave and Pay**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Consultation document <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/dfe/miscarriage-leave-and-pay-consultation/> Consultation closes 19 December 2022 at 5pm.

**RESOLVED, that the Consultation be noted.**

### **8.4. NIPB Corporate Plan 2023**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Consultation document [Corporate Plan 2023-25 Consultation | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/corporate-plan-2023-25-consultation) Consultation closes 16 January 2023 at noon.

**RESOLVED, that the Consultation be noted.**

**8.5. DEARA Consultation on Proposed Introduction of Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Herd Restrictions**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Consultation document <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/BVD-herd-restrictions> Consultation closes 20 December 2022

**RESOLVED**, that the Consultation be noted.

**8.6. DoJ - Call for Evidence on the abuse of position of trust offences as contained within the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- [Abuse of Position of Trust Offences: Extension of the Law – A Call for Evidence | Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/Abuse-of-Position-of-Trust-Offences-Extension-of-the-Law-A-Call-for-Evidence) Consultation closes on 22 December 2022 at 12pm

**RESOLVED**, that the Consultation be noted.

**8.7. DoH -Launch of Public Consultation on Proposed Closure of Muckamore Abbey Hospital**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- [Public consultation on future of Muckamore Abbey Hospital | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/Public-consultation-on-future-of-Muckamore-Abbey-Hospital) Consultation closes on 24 January 2023 (Correspondence attached)

**RESOLVED**, that the Consultation be noted.

**8.8. The Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland (BCNI) - Revised proposals for Parliamentary constituencies in Northern Ireland**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- [www.boundarycommission.org.uk/2023-review-parliamentary-constituencies](https://www.boundarycommission.org.uk/2023-review-parliamentary-constituencies) Consultation closes on 15 December 2022

**RESOLVED**, that the Consultation be noted.

**9. DEPUTATION REQUEST FROM ARDS AND NORTH DOWN DANCE SCHOOL (Appendix II)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Chief Executive stating that a request to make a deputation had been received from Sam Barbour of Ards and North Down Dance Club, to inform Council of its proposals regarding Age Friendly Dancing for Senior Citizens.

RECOMMENDED that Council considers the request from Ards and North Down Dance Club.

**RESOLVED**, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that Council agrees to the deputation request, and this be referred to the Community and Wellbeing Committee.

## **10. DEPUTATION REQUEST FROM HOLYWOOD FOOTBALL CLUB** (Appendix III)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Chief Executive stating that request to make a deputation to the Community and Wellbeing Committee had been received from Gordon Donaldson of Hollywood Football Club.

The deputation request stated the following:

"Hollywood Football Club was established in 1983, and from humble beginnings, it has now grown to over 450 playing members, and almost 100 volunteers. Each weekend, there are 20 teams playing in their respective Irish FA affiliated leagues. This consists of 3 Senior Men's teams, 1 Senior Ladies team, 15 Youth Teams and 1 Girls Team."

"Our town has only one football club, and we are proud to be a cross community club. Our strapline of "One Club One Community" is engrained within our culture."

"Although what we do is based around football, the development and support of our members within the Hollywood community is at the forefront of the committee members' minds. This encompasses physical and mental health, and the development of boys and girls to not only "play the right way", but also to "live the right way"."

"Our recent successes on the pitch (for example, all 3 Senior teams gained promotion from their respective leagues last season) and off the pitch (significant increase in members, across the entire club on Seniors, Ladies, Youth boys and girls) – is creating significant challenges for us."

"We spend over £30k per year renting Council pitches for matches and training. This is not sustainable, and we are now living month to month with regards our financial position."

"We are now being forced look outside the borough for cheaper options as to our main facility Spafield 3G does not represent value for money. This was communicated to the Council via a presentation in June 2022."

"At the June presentation to the Council (Leisure Services and Compliance Manager), we also highlighted the fact that we cannot access the countless IFA and government grants available, as we do not own our facilities, nor do we have a long-term lease. We asked the council to consider a lease, as we are the only local sports club using this facility."

"Other short-term challenges, along with opportunities, were presented such as the need for retractable pitch side nets at Spafield."

"Unfortunately, all our requests for Council support fell on deaf ears."

"We are now in a position where not only are we turning away people who want to join due to the lack of 3G facilities, but our Club's survival is now at stake. Other comparable sports clubs do not face the same costs as we do with regards pitch hire."

"We rely on sponsorship from the community businesses to bridge the gap between members fees and running costs. This gap is growing as sponsorship is getting harder to obtain, at a time when costs of pitch hire, referees, kits etc. are all increasing."

"This deputation request is to firstly make the Councillors aware of who we are and what we do, along with our challenges, opportunities and our vision."

RECOMMENDED that Council considers the request from Holywood Football Club.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Johnson that Council agrees to the deputation request, and this be referred to the Community and Wellbeing Committee.**

## **11. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2023 (FILE DS30) (Appendix IV)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration stating that a schedule of meetings for 2023 had been attached.

Members would be aware that there may be a change to the Local Government Elections date currently scheduled for 4 May 2023. Should this date change, Council would review the schedule accordingly.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the attached timetable.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **12. NOMINATION TO NORTHERN IRELAND MUSEUMS COUNCIL (Appendix V)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Chief Executive stating that Northern Ireland Museums Council (NIMC) was an arm's length body that was sponsored by the Department for Communities and was responsible for developing the local museum sector.

Nominations to the board of NIMC occurred on a cyclical basis between the eligible authorities. They were now seeking a nominated representative of Ards and North Down Borough Council to join. The candidate information booklet could be found in the attached appendix.

RECOMMENDED that Council nominates a Member to the Northern Ireland Museums Council Board.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Greer, that the recommendation be adopted and that the Mayor, Councillor Douglas be nominated to the Northern Ireland Museums Council Board.**

### **13. GRANT OF ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE (FILE LR 100 / 90101)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Environment stating that an application had been received for the grant of entertainment licence as follows:

- 1. 19 Coffee House, Blackwood Golf Centre, 150 Crawfordsburn Road, Bangor**

**Applicant:** Mr Dominik Sobowa, Holborn Avenue, Bangor

**Days and Hours:** Monday to Sunday during the permitted hours when alcohol may be served on these premises under the Licensing (NI) Order 1996

**Type of entertainment:** Indoor dancing, singing and music or any other entertainment of a like kind.

The above application had been publicly advertised and no objections had been received.

The PSNI and NIFRS had also advised that they had no objections.

RECOMMENDED that the Council grants the application

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Alderman Wilson, that the recommendation be adopted.**

### **14. CEMETERY PRICING (FILE PCA57) (Appendix VI)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing stating that Ards and North Down Borough Council was responsible for the management and maintenance of twelve active cemeteries, two closed cemeteries and seven historical cemeteries.

Members may be aware that Council Cemetery pricing was last increased by 2% in April 2022 however there had been no increase in the 2021/22 financial year.

Currently the Cemetery department was operating at an annual deficit of approximately £600,000 excluding utilities, capital costs and general maintenance.

The following report outlined the applicable charges relating to the Cemeteries Service across the Borough. In line with the budget setting process, it was proposed

to apply a 10.00% increase to the cemetery charges for 2023/24, rounded to the nearest £1 for each charge. This was above the 5% already submitted by the service for the estimates process, a 5% is also submitted for information. Members were reminded that the current rate of inflation was 11.1%.

Officers had bench marked the pricing across neighbouring Councils and in several of the pricing categories Ards and North Down were significantly lower in the cost of burial provision.

In addition, officers would suggest that members considered an annual inflationary increase to be applied to the Scale of Charges using a percentage uplift based on the October 'Office of National Statistics Consumer Prices Index (CPI): All Items Index's from 1st January each year.

The table in the Appendix set out the current charges together with the proposed charges for 2022/23.

Income generated by the Cemeteries department for the financial year 2021/2022, was £438,515. An uplift of 5% would bring this income figure to £460,441 or £21,925 additional income. An uplift of 10% would bring this to £482,367 or £43,851 additional income. As members could see with an income uplift of 10% the cemetery department would have a reduced deficit of approximately £555,000.

Members should note that this report was brought to a recent meeting of the Community and Wellbeing Committee but failed to attract a seconder. Therefore, it had been brought to Council for decision.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approves a 10% increase to the cemetery charges for 2023/24 as outlined above and set out in the Appendix, and also approve the annual percentage uplift for subsequent years to be in line with the October Consumer Price Index (CPI) applicable from the start of each year.

Councillor P Smith proposed, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that Council defers this for consideration under the rate setting process.

Councillor Greer while supportive of the proposal, sought clarification that it would be considered as part the overall rates report.

To provide clarification, the Chief Executive confirmed that this matter would not be treated separately but instead would be considered as part the Council's ongoing rates setting process and reported back to Council in due course.

**RESOLVED**, on the proposal of Councillor P Smith, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that Council defers this for consideration under the rate setting process.

**15. DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 5 JANUARY 2023 TO APPROVE LMP TENDERS (FILE RDP47)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development & Planning stating that the Department for Communities (DfC) made funding available for each of the 11 Councils to develop its own Interim Labour Market Partnership (ILMP) with funding being available until the end of March 2022.

Additional funding for an Interim Action Plan for 2022-23, and a further three-year Action Plan for 2023-2026 were planned subject to the Executive's approved funding. The DfC Letter of Offer for the period 2022-23 was received on 10 June 2022.

Due to DfC receiving less funding than anticipated and a slight increase to Administration costs, the Operational Budget had seen a reduction from what was originally offered.

Therefore, the indicative offer of funding by DfC was split as followed:

- Administration Costs: £101,999.21
- Operational Costs: £300,741.59

It was reported in September 2022 that a Letter of Offer Acceptance Form for the Operational Budget was signed by the Council's Chief Executive and returned following Council approval on 30 June 2022.

It was further noted that a Letter of Offer in relation to the Administration Costs (staff and administration resources) was received to allow for the set-up and running of the LMP on 15 April 2022. This funding was guaranteed by the DfC.

However, the Letter of Offer relating to the Operational Costs was indicative and subject to an internal business case being agreed by DfC. Although it was stated in the Letter of Offer that the business case would be agreed by the end of June 2022, the Letter of Offer was only issued on 4 November 2022.

The LMP staff had been preparing the tenders relating to the projects agreed in the LMP action plan, so that they were ready to be issued as soon as the letter of offer was received. However, it now left little time to proceed with the tenders and deliver the projects before the end of the financial year.

It was felt this could be achieved if tenders were issued at the latest on 14 November and the outcome approved at the December 2022 Council meeting.

There was however the potential that should an extension be requested by the tenderers that it would not be possible to present the tender recommendation reports to December Council. It was therefore requested that Council granted delegated authority to the January Regeneration and Development Committee to approve the following tenders, if required:

- Job Focussed Academy to Upskills unemployed people with Disabilities
- Health and Social Care Academy
- Job Focussed Academy (general)

RECOMMENDED that Council grants delegated authority, to approve the above-mentioned tenders, to the January 2023 Regeneration and Development Committee should time not permit for the reports to be presented to Council in December 2022.

(Councillor Chambers re-entered the Chamber at this stage – 8.00pm)

**RESOLVED**, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the recommendation be adopted.

## **16. CONTINUATION OF BANGOR AURORA JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Chief Executive stating that places on working groups were filled through nomination at the Council's Annual Meeting and were thus held by individual members rather than Parties. When a position became vacant, it reverted back to Council to nominate a member to fill the place rather than Party Nominating Officers.



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A vacancy had arisen, following the resignation of Councillor Gilmour from the Bangor Aurora Joint Management Committee. Since this vacancy had arisen, officers had considered the objective of the Committee.

This Committee was created to act as a conduit for the sporting bodies using Aurora to meet to ensure that all issues were being addressed. The Ards and North Down Sports Forum now functioned as the link between clubs and the Council, with meetings of the Committee becoming infrequent. Sporting bodies had been functioning well within the centre and any previous issues had since been addressed. This was coupled with the decision to insource the operation of the former North Down Borough Council facilities including Bangor Aurora.

RECOMMENDED that the Council disbands the Bangor Aurora Joint Management Committee.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor P Smith, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the recommendation be adopted.**

(Councillor MacArthur declared an interest in the next item was put on hold via Zoom at this stage – 8.01pm)

### **16.1. CHOICE HOUSING ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22 UPDATE**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Chief Executive stating that at a recent meeting of the Council, the Choice Housing Ireland Limited Annual Report 2021/22 was circulated for information. At the meeting, it was debated and agreed:

"That Council write to Choice Housing Association expressing our disappointment at the Suspension of The Tenants Financial Support Fund expressing concern that not all tenants were able to avail of this funding opportunity and request that in interests of fairness and equality to all tenants that the fund is reopened to enable all tenants to benefit from this funding opportunities fairly."

Following this, a letter was sent from the Chief Executive on 15 November to the Chief Executive of Choice Housing, Mr Michael McDonnell. A response was received from Mr McDonnell on 18 November.

Mr McDonnell sought to clarify the nature and purpose of the support fund for tenants. A number of measures were introduced during the pandemic to support tenants in need and increased the scale of this 'safety net' for the year 2022/23.

There were currently four elements which were delivered through Choice House partners, namely:

- Funding for food banks operated by the Trussell Trust.
- Household 'start-up packs' for new tenants operated by Homeless Connect; and
- Two initiatives delivered with Bryson Charitable Group to address fuel poverty and to help with the purchase of white goods.

Whilst Choice Housing had ring-fenced a significant amount of money for this programme, it was ultimately limited and was therefore targeted at the most vulnerable.

Following misleading information circulated on social media, requests for fuel poverty contributions, in particular, had recently spiked and they have had to suspend that element until pending applications had been appropriately assessed.

This assessment was designed to ensure that support went to those tenants who were in severe financial difficulties and were working with the Financial Inclusion Team who could provide a broad range of advice and guidance, and signpost tenants to other sources of help.

Mr McDonnell also wished to highlight that Choice Housing offer advice through their in-house Energy Team who had been assisting tenants to get best value from their energy consumption for many years.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes this report.

(Councillor Greer left the meeting at this stage – 8.02pm)

Councillor Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that Council thank Choice Housing for their response and information but would request that Choice Housing answer the specific of the questions in relation to the Tenants Financial Support Fund. Furthermore, that Council writes to Choice Housing Association expressing its disappointment at the suspension of The Tenants Financial Support Fund expressing concern that not all tenants were able to avail of this funding opportunity and request that in interests of fairness and equality to all tenants that the fund is reopened to enable all tenants to benefit from this funding opportunities fairly.

The proposer, Councillor Adair, expressed disappointment at the lack of specific response to his questions on this matter. He referred to information which had been shared via social media about the Fund and was of the view that in the interests of equality and fairness all tenants should be able to avail of this.

Commenting as seconder, Councillor Edmund concurred with Councillor Adair, adding that the proposal had been made in the interests of equality.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that Council thank Choice Housing for their response and information but would request that Choice Housing answer the specific of the questions in relation to the Tenants Financial Support Fund. Furthermore, that Council writes to Choice Housing Association expressing its disappointment at the suspension of The Tenants Financial Support Fund expressing concern that not all tenants were able to avail of this funding opportunity and request that in interests of fairness and equality to all tenants that the fund is reopened to enable all tenants to benefit from this funding opportunities fairly.**

(Councillors Greer & McClean re-entered the Chamber at this stage – 8.05pm)

(Councillor MacArthur rejoined the meeting via Zoom at this stage – 8.05pm)

## **17. SEALING DOCUMENTS**

**RESOLVED: -** (On the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Councillor Cathcart)

**THAT** the Seal of the Council be affixed to the following documents: -

- a) Grant of Rights of Burial: Nos 14430-14475
- b) Duplicate Right of Burial:  
Movilla cemetery Section 47 Grave 13
- c) Queen's Parade Deed of Variation Agreement

## **18. TRANSFERS OF RIGHTS OF BURIAL**

The following transfer applications were received: -

AN 4549 Gawley to Gawley

Redburn Cemetery Grave 2216 Connolly to Connolly

Movilla Cemetery Section 37 Grave 135 Hindsberg to Gormley

Movilla Cemetery Section 58 Grave 39 Price to Price Clandeboye Cemetery

Movilla Cemetery Section 58 Grave 40 Price to Price

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that the information be noted.**

## **19. NOTICE OF MOTION STATUS REPORT**

(Appendix VII)

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: -** Report from the Chief Executive detailing that the Status Report in respect of Notice of Motions was attached.

This was a standing item on the Council agenda each month and its aim was to keep members updated on the outcome of Motions. Please note that as each Motion was dealt with it would be removed from the report.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council notes the report.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **20. NOTICES OF MOTION**

### **20.1. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Adair and Thompson**

Councillor Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that Council task officers to work with The National Trust to source external funding to develop and regenerate the Car Park at Knockinelder Bay for the benefit of residents and tourists alike in seeking to deliver the Councils Tourism Strategy for the Ards Peninsula

Councillor Adair indicated that he wished to make a slight amendment to his notice of motion as detailed below:

"That Council task officers to work with The National Trust to source external funding to develop and regenerate the Car Parks at Glastry Clay Pits & knockinelder Bay for the benefit of residents and tourists alike in seeking to deliver the Councils Tourism Strategy for the Ards Peninsula".

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Regeneration & Development Committee.**

### **20.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Irwin & McAlpine**

Councillor Irwin proposed, seconded by Councillor McAlpine, that this Council requests officers bring back a report on the possibility of serving an Urgent Works Notice on the owners of Ballyrolly House, Millisle, in light of its status as a Grade B2 listed building which is in a perilous state.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Irwin, seconded by Councillor McAlpine, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Planning Committee.**

### **20.3. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Cathcart and Gilmour**

Councillor Cathcart proposed, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that this Council recognises the difficulties faced by local businesses during this 'cost of doing business crisis', especially on business cash flow. The Council will therefore review the current requirement for advanced payments for Council bin collection services to help ease cash flow issues. An officers' report will be brought back to the appropriate committee.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Environment Committee.**

### **20.4. Notice of Motion submitted by Alderman McIlveen and Councillor Cummings**

Alderman McIlveen proposed, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that Council officers open discussions with Historic Environment Division regarding the return of the 13<sup>th</sup> century 'Movilla Stones' to the Borough and the provision of a suitable site

for these to be located. Officers are also tasked with promoting these extremely important archaeological artefacts in the local community and local schools when the stones have been returned.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Community & Wellbeing Committee.**

**Circulated for Information**

- a) Department for Health Press Release - For Now For and For Future - An Advance Care Planning Policy for adults in Northern Ireland (Correspondence attached)
- b) October 2022 Newsletter for the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services (Correspondence attached)
- c) Department of Education – Outcome of Consultation on Period Products (Free Provision) Regulations (Correspondence attached)
- d) Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs – Summary of Consultation Responses to the Introduction of Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) Systems and Operator Approval (Correspondence attached)
- e) Energy Strategy E-Bulletin (Correspondence attached)
- f) DoF Business Rates Update (Correspondence attached)

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the items which were Circulated for Information be noted.**

**EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor P Smith, that the public/press be excluded from the undernoted items of confidential business.**

**7.3. REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE DATED 3 NOVEMBER 2022**

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**\*\*\*NOT FOR PUBLICATION\*\*\***

**SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)**

**7.6. SPECIAL CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE DATED 17 NOVEMBER 2022**

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**\*\*\*NOT FOR PUBLICATION\*\*\***

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

21. EXTENSION OF CONTRACT FOR PROVISION OF CORPORATE UNIFORM, CASUAL UNIFORM, LEISURE UNIFORM AND PROTECTIVE WORKWEAR (FILE PRO100)

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**\*\*\*NOT FOR PUBLICATION\*\*\***

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

22. FILLING OF DIRECTORS POSTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**\*\*\*NOT FOR PUBLICATION\*\*\***

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

23. DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO SIGN SLA WITH TOURISM NI FOR MARKET LED PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2022/23 (FILE TD176) (Appendix VIII)

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**\*\*\*NOT FOR PUBLICATION\*\*\***

SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)

24. CALL-IN RESCINDING MOTION ON OFFICE RATIONALISATION (FILE CX144) (Appendix IX)

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**\*\*\*NOT FOR PUBLICATION\*\*\***

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**SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)**

**READMITTANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED**, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Alderman Wilson, that the public/press be readmitted to the meeting.

**TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting terminated at 8.24pm

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Planning Committee was held (hybrid) on Tuesday, 6 December 2022 at 7.00 pm via Zoom and at Council Offices on Church Street, Newtownards.

### PRESENT:

**In the Chair:** Alderman Gibson

**Aldermen:** Keery  
McIlveen

<b>Councillors:</b>	Adair	McKee (via Zoom)
	Brooks	McRandal
	Cathcart (via Zoom)	Moore (via Zoom)
	Cooper (via Zoom)	P Smith
	Kennedy	Thompson
	McAlpine (via Zoom)	Walker (via Zoom)
	McClean	

**Officers:** Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning (S McCullough), Head of Planning (A McCullough), Principal Planning and Technical Officer (G Kerr) Senior Planning and Technical Officers (Paula Kerr and Andrea Todd), and Democratic Services Officers (M McElveen and S McCrea)

### **1. APOLOGIES**

An apology for lateness was received from Councillor McClean.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Alderman McIlveen declared an interest in Item 4.2: LA06/2021/0817/F – Residential development of 58 No. dwellings and associated works – Lands adjacent to and West of Adara Grove and Adara Elms to the rear and West of No 8 and 9 Swallow Close and South of No 24 to 38 (evens) Heathermount Court and No 20 to 22 Dalton Glen, Comber.

Councillor McRandal declared an interest in Item 4.5: LA06/2022/1000/F – Practice nets with security fencing – Seapark Pavilion, Holywood.

**NOTED.**

### **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022**

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:-** Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022. **RECOMMENDED** that the minutes be noted.

**AGREED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the minutes be noted.**



#### 4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

##### 4.1 LA06/2022/0346/O – INFILL SITE FOR 2 NO. DWELLINGS WITH DOMESTIC GARAGES – BETWEEN 32 AND 34 CASTLE ESPIE ROAD, COMBER

(Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

**DEA:** Comber

**Committee Interest:** A Local development application 'called-in' from the delegated list w/c 20 June by Alderman McIlveen

**Proposal:** Infill site for 2 No. dwellings with domestic garages

**Site Location:** Between 32 and 34 Castle Espie Road, Comber

**Recommendation:** Refusal

The Senior Planning Officer (Paula Kerr) advised that the application was seeking outline planning permission for an infill site for 2 dwellings between 32 and 34 Castle Espie Rd, Comber. The application had been recommended for refusal on the grounds that it was contrary to policies CTY8, CTY1, CTY13 and CTY14. It was considered that the proposal was not a small gap site within an otherwise substantial and continuously built up frontage, and would result in a prominent feature in landscape, create ribbon development and a suburban style of build-up which would harm the rural character of the area. As the proposal failed to meet the requirements of policy CTY8 it was also contrary to policy CTY1 as no overriding reasons had been demonstrated as to why the development was essential and could not be located within a settlement as it was also contrary to PPS2 Policy NH6 in that the proposal was unsympathetic to the special character of the AONB. The application was being presented to Planning Committee on the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022 following a call-in request from Alderman McIlveen from August committee which was subsequently taken off the schedule. Alderman McIlveen had asked Committee to consider whether the application met the criteria of CTY8 as a gap site.

In the intervening period, a statement from the agent was received and considered. This was reflected in the case officer report, however, did not result in a change to the recommendation. There were 4 objections received from 4 separate addresses and the issues raised were addressed in the Case officer report. The main issues were impact on rural character, pattern of development and AONB, creation of suburban style build up, gap could fit more than 2 dwellings and loss of important visual break.

The site was located to the rear of 32 Castle Espie Road, Comber and fronted a small lane which served existing dwellings Nos. 34, 36 and 38a Castle Espie Road. The proposed means of access to the site would be from a new private lane which would run from Castle Espie Road adjacent to No.30, through the roadside field and along the rear boundary of No.30a. The topography of the site sloped downwards slightly from south to the north about halfway along the site when it sloped up steeply towards the northern field boundary resulting in land visible from Castle Espie Road.

While hedgerows defined the southern, eastern and western boundaries, the northern boundary cut through the existing field and was undefined.

The site was located within the Strangford and Lecale AONB and the area as a whole had managed to maintain a very dispersed pattern of development with very few examples of ribbon development. It was considered important that the attractive rural character of this particular area should be protected against inappropriate development such as this.

Members were shown the approximate location and size of the proposed dwellings overlaid on an aerial view in the slides. Policy CTY8 stated that planning permission would be refused for a building which created or added to a ribbon of development. However, the policy also set out circumstances under which an exception will be permitted for the development of a small gap site sufficient *only* to accommodate up to a maximum of two houses within an otherwise substantial and continuously built up frontage and provided this respects the existing development pattern along the frontage in terms of size, scale, siting and plot size.

The policy defined a substantial and built up frontage as a line of three or more buildings along a road frontage without accompanying development to the rear. The existing buildings relied upon for this application included the garage of No. 32, the dwelling at No. 32, the dwelling at No. 34 and the dwelling at No. 36. All of these buildings had a frontage to the lane.

CTY 8 also required the gap site to be 'small'. In the amplification of CTY8 (Para. 5.34) reference was made to 'gaps between houses or other buildings'. Hence, it was clear the gap was not the width of the application site but rather the distance between the existing buildings and this was widely accepted by the PAC. A small gap was defined in the sense that it should be sufficient only to accommodate up to a maximum of two houses. In relation to this, the policy also required the proposed development to respect the existing development pattern along the frontage in terms of size, scale, siting and plot size. The gap in this instance was calculated to be 112m measured from the rear of No. 32 to No. 34. The frontage widths of the existing dwellings ranged between 25.6m to 52.5m, equating to an average of approx. 36m. The gap of 112m would allow for two plots each with a width of 58m, which would have significantly exceeded the average plot width of 36m. The gap would actually allow three dwellings each with a frontage width of approximately 38m to be accommodated which would reflect the average plot width of 36m. Furthermore, the average plot area of Nos. 32, 34 and 36 was 1571sqm. The gap between the existing buildings could accommodate three plots each with an area of approximately 1511sqm, entirely in keeping with the existing average plot size. Building on Tradition also advised that when a gap site was more than twice the length of the average plot width it was often unsuitable for infill with 2 new plots. The average plot width in this instance was 36m, therefore the gap of 112m would be significantly more than twice the length of such widths. Taking into consideration the culmination of the abovementioned factors, it was evident that the gap between the buildings would be capable of accommodating 3 dwellings and as such failed the policy test of CTY8 which required the gap to be small enough to accommodate 2 dwellings only.

The gap had been taken from the rear of 32 to the end of no 34, as the corrugated ancillary structure which had frontage to the road within the curtilage of No 34, very much appeared as a minor outhouse type store subordinate to the property as explored in appeal 2016/A0005 where the appeal was dismissed as the building was considered subordinate to the property rather than appearing as a building in its own merits. If the gap were taken from the minor outhouse at number 34 it would be approximately 100m which would also be too big to accommodate two dwellings in line with local development pattern and average plot widths in accordance with Building on Tradition.

It was considered that the site, at the time of writing, provided a very important visual break in built development and the erection of two dwellings would create a ribbon of development contrary to policy CTY8. This ribbon would be perceived from both the lane and from longer distance views along the Castle Espie Road itself. Due to the topography of the land, these views were significant when travelling North along the Castle Espie road and any buildings on this site would be prominent and create a ribboning effect as the views with incorporate no 32 and no 34 and would visually tie two groups of buildings which, at the time of writing, enjoyed a significant visual break which had a significant contribution to the local area and AONB.

The proposal had also been recommended for refusal on the grounds as it was contrary to policies CTY13 (Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside) & CTY14 (Rural Character) by reason of undue prominence, an unacceptable build-up of development and the adverse impact of the ancillary works as a result of the proposed access. Due to what is considered a visual break, any dwellings on this site would appear prominent. It should be noted that even if the proposal was found to be acceptable under policy CTY8, it would have still needed to meet the policies contained within CTY13 and CTY14. The view of the site from the Castle Espie Road was shown on the slides to those present who were advised to note that it is a sustained view over approximately 800m along the Castle Espie Road on approach from the north and as such, the dwellings on this elevated site would appear very visible and prominent in what was a very rural setting over a long distance. In addition, the cutting into the site to attempt to visually integrate had the potential to look out of context and character for the area as the natural landform has been altered. The two dwellings if permitted would have also resulted in an unacceptable build-up of development when viewed alongside the existing buildings, something that would have harmed the rural character of the area. The extensive access lane would also further erode the rural character of the area as well as being very visible over a long distance. This access arrangement directly off the Castle Espie Road leading to the rear of the properties was not characteristic of the existing pattern of development along the lane.

In summary, The Planning Manager advised that the proposal failed to meet the policy requirements of CTY8. The gap between the buildings was not small enough to accommodate only up to 2 dwellings. The gap of 112m could accommodate 3 dwellings with similar plot widths and areas to the existing dwellings. Both the policy and numerous planning appeal decisions made it very clear that it was the gap between the buildings rather than the site area/width that must be assessed when considering how many dwellings could be accommodated within the gap.

The site provided an important visual relief from development and the erection of two dwellings on the site would result in ribbon development contrary to CTY8. As the proposal failed to meet the provisions of policy CTY8 and no overriding reasons had been demonstrated as to why the development was essential in the countryside, it was also contrary to policy CTY1. The erection of two dwellings would have resulted in undue prominence and the extensive access lane would result in an unacceptable visual impact on the landscape contrary to CTY13 as it was deemed an important visual break.

The development would not be in keeping with the established pattern of development and would also result in an unacceptable build-up of development which would have an adverse impact on the rural character of the area contrary to CTY14. The site would have an urbanising effect as well as having a significant negative impact on AONB. Lastly, the value of the visual break was of great importance to the AONB and local area and the proposal would create a material change in the developed appearance of the local area.

RECOMMENDED that planning permission should be refused.

Members were given the opportunity to clarify any points they wished to make following the presentation. Alderman McIlveen referenced visual break and asked if it was being considered as a visual break along the laneway itself and if it was a through-lane. The officer explained that visual break had been considered from vantage points including the Castle Espie Road and from the lane meaning that those passing the area or visiting houses would experience an effect on visual break. There was no constant flow of traffic on the laneway as it was not a through-lane and that building in the proposed area would create an urbanising effect as it would bring dwellings 32 to 34 together which would be of visual prominence. Though there would be a greater impact from the laneway, it would still be of significance on the view from Castle Espie Road and, given the ribboning effect, would impact on the AONB. In surrounding areas, there were not any examples of ribbons of development, meaning a change to the specified area would not be a common site.

Alderman McIlveen, in relation to plot sizes asked whether there would be any comparable plot sizes in the surrounding area, referencing potentially significant differences in plots that could be seen from the google-earth imagery on slide 3 of the presentation. The officer explained that calculations had been taken from continual built-up frontage which had been where the applicant had taken their measurements from. In addition, given the AONB status and lack of evidence of ribbons of development, dwellings tended to be quite dispersed. Alderman McIlveen suggested that using average plot sizes would fail to take into consideration some of the differences in plot sizes that could be found nearby, though the officer explained that the policy required average plot sizes to be used in situations where areas where continual built-up frontage could exist.

Councillor P Smith recalled situations where other gap sites had been approved, specifically citing a recent planning application in the Killinchy area and, in the interests of consistency, asked the officer to remind Members as to the criteria for gap sites. The officer explained that each proposed site would be different with a range of attributes that would be taken into consideration. With this proposal, it had been the AONB and visual relief afforded by the site that had to be taken into

account. In relation to the Killinchy case that Councillor P Smith referenced, the officer explained the circumstances that led to the conclusion that the site was not deemed to be a significant visual break and that conditions existed for thick hedging to be retained which would not impact views upon the road in question.

(At 19:29, Mr Burgess entered the discussion via Zoom and presented their case)

Mr Burgess thanked Members for the opportunity to present and discuss the proposal. In conjunction with the planning statement, he described the approach to the application in regard to CTY 8 and the infill opportunity on the laneway between 32 and 34 Castle Espie Road. The final design would be decided and agreed upon at reserved matter. CTY1, CPS21 were referenced as change of character and natural beauty whilst CTY8 was the main policy with the main comparison between sites being frontages and area. In regard to plot sizes, Mr Burgess disagreed that the ancillary building should have been discluded from the Planning department, citing 2021/A 0096 that stated all buildings within a curtilage should be taken into consideration regardless of size, being seen from a public road or frontage and as such, contended that it should be considered. In terms of statistics and plot sizes, he believed average plot width was the most important dimension, comparing an average 1587sqm and numbers 15 and 19, 16 and 17 being within the largest range with the largest being number 34 with 1920sqm. As such, he stated an important part of the policy was met. The distance referenced of 112m between number 32 and 34, he argued, should be reduced as it was only 98m from the rear of number 32 to the ancillary building at number 34.

Mr Burgess discussed how the plot proposal could be integrated with new hedging as well as existing hedging from the South-west and East with excavation of the rising land behind. In relation to the Killinchy case abovementioned by Councillor P Smith, Mr Burgess cited a 120m plot width distance from that case whilst this was either to be 98m or 112m.

(Time was called for the end of the presentation)

Alderman McIlveen referenced a plot toward the end of the lane that appeared to be of a substantial size and asked why it had not been taken into consideration. Furthermore, he believed that although the lane included a bend beyond which this plot existed, it should have been considered as part of the same consideration. He recalled Mr Burgess speaking of the ancillary building and asked for further information on why it should be included given the apparent temporary appearance. He asked if there was any case law to highlight such a consideration.

Mr Burgess advised that the plot at the end of the lane was numbered as 38a and was of a 1840sqm plot size. In regard to the ancillary building, Mr Burgess explained that policy advised all buildings should be taken into account and did not define buildings under any specific guise or state. In addition, the case he had referenced earlier, 2021/A0096 stated that in referring to definition of substantial and built up frontage which includes a line of buildings or more along a road frontage which would not exclude any buildings. Regardless of the policy, Mr Burgess explained that no reference was made to the size of a building or whether it was the main building which led him to believe that the ancillary building should not be excluded. With plot sizes, he disagreed with taking the 112m distance between numbers 32 and 34 and

dividing it by an average plot width, believing it to be two different mathematical issues. He suggested the main issue was how the plot fronted onto the lane and advised Members to review the diagram from his presentation to see how the proposition would fit in with the local pattern of development.

Councillor McRandal asked what Mr Burgess thought in relation to AONB, CTY13 and visual impact, especially when looking at the photograph showing a prominent location from the road approaching alongside CTY14 relating to suburban development.

Mr Burgess explained that integration expected a building to sit neatly in a landscape but that it did not suggest a building be invisible or not seen from any point of view. He believed detail had been provided to show the house would look natural in the location and that there were three mature boundaries already on the south, west and east between the road and the site. With four different hedges and on each side of the lane as well as a short driveway. As the location was not on the roadside, when access would be formed with minimal hedge work, it would not mean that the site would be completely opened up to the road as the site was set far back to be in line with other buildings in the same location. In addition, as buildings were already on the same road and could all be viewed together, this proposal was not a new instance of a dwelling being constructed where no others existed. He explained that CTY8 applied to all of Northern Ireland and, in regard to integration or change of character, he believed that if the proposal was CTY8 compliant, then CTY14 Change of Character would not apply as infilling due to being covered by CTY8; something believed should have resulted in an approval.

Councillor Cathcart asked what materials were planned for use in the construction of access and would they be visually impacting. Mr Burgess explained that a natural thorn hedge existed at the moment with a hardcore access with a track across the field, though when complete, this would be a gravel laneway with natural species hedging. A 5m radius would require removing for construction access though this would be replaced upon completion.

Councillor P Smith queried the CTY policies quoted and asked why CTY1 had not been addressed given it being the overriding reason for essential development. Mr Burgess advised that CTY1 would allow for overarching refusal if no other reasons existed for approval, though if CTY8 applied as he believed it did in this case, CTY1 would be removed automatically.

(Mr Burgess returned to the public gallery at 19:48)

Alderman McIlveen asked why 38A had not been included in measurements nor frontage. In being told that it had not been included due to positioning, Alderman McIlveen professed the belief that it was a continuation of where the laneway ended and though the lane was in an L shape, it was still the same lane and from a visual perspective would look to be in line with the rest. The officer advised that it was not just because of a turn in the laneway but also because 38A was set back and was not deemed as a frontage to the road, thence it was not part of a continuously built-up frontage.

Alderman McIlveen asked if any guidance existed or if it had been a subjective decision by Officers. The officer advised again that, as the house was at the end of the laneway and set back that it was not considered as part of a continuously built-up frontage.

Councillor McRandal reiterated Mr Burgess' thoughts upon the CTY8 subverting the need for the likes of CTY14 and CTY1 and whether this was the case. The Planning Manager explained that the CTYs needed fulfilling and if criteria were met for one policy, it would not make the other policies a given as suggested. Given that the proposal did not meet CTY8, it also failed CTY1.

Councillor Walker asked why the ancillary building had not been considered when other proposal cases had included unusual buildings that were of smaller stature. The officer indicated that measurements were also taken to include the ancillary building but that the gap was still too large. It had not been included however due to its temporary nature.

Alderman McIlveen posed an alternative proposal, seconded by Councillor Adair to grant planning permission subject to conditions made by Planning Officers.

Alderman McIlveen believed the proposal could have, due to the merit of balance, been just as easily a recommendation for approval given that it met the policy if measurements were taken from the edge of no. 32 to the ancillary building. He believed there could not be more than two plot sizes and that they would not be of a significant size when compared directly to those surrounding plots of the area. He did not accept the visual break comments and believed that sufficient mitigations existed in the building of houses to integrate them sufficiently whilst taking into consideration views from the laneway and Castle Espie Road.

Councillor P Smith accepted the point that Alderman McIlveen was trying to make but struggled to understand how one could not consider an approval in the location to be overdevelopment. He believed the gap was critical and a key point seemed to be the number of ways a gap could be measured. On this occasion, the gap was overly large for the proposal.

Councillor Walker mirrored the thoughts of his colleague in regard to consistency in measurements, He was also concerned with the implications to the environment if that visual break was removed. He appreciated Alderman McIlveen's view of the proposal being able to go either way in terms of balance but could not support the proposal.

Councillor Cathcart sympathised with the argument in regard to the gap site but believed, in conjunction with CTY13 and 14 that the proposal would be unduly prominent which would impact on the local area, and so too could not back the proposal.

A recorded vote was taken with 6 FOR, 8 AGAINST, 1 ABSTAINING and 1, (Councillor McClean) unable to vote due to late attendance. The results could be found below. As such, the proposal fell.

PC.06.12.22

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<b>FOR (6)</b> <b>Aldermen</b> Gibson McIlveen	<b>AGAINST (8)</b> <b>Alderman</b>	<b>ABSTAIN (1)</b> <b>Alderman</b> Keery	<b>ABSENT(0)</b> <b>Aldermen</b>
<b>Councillors</b> Adair Cooper Kennedy Thompson	<b>Councillors</b> Brooks Cathcart McAlpine McKee McRandal Moore P Smith Walker		<b>Councillor</b>

With 6 voting FOR, 8 AGAINST, and 1 ABSTAINING, the proposal fell.

Councillor P Smith proposed, seconded by Councillor McAlpine that the original recommendation be adopted, and approval be refused.

A recorded vote was called with 8 FOR, 6 AGAINST, 1 ABSTAINING and 1 (Councillor McClean) unable to vote due to late attendance. The results can be found below. As such, the recommendation to refuse planning approval passed.

<b>FOR (8)</b> <b>Alderman</b>	<b>AGAINST (6)</b> <b>Aldermen</b> Gibson McIlveen	<b>ABSTAIN (1)</b> <b>Alderman</b> Keery	<b>ABSENT(0)</b> <b>Alderman</b>
<b>Councillor</b> Brooks Cathcart McAlpine McKee McRandal Moore P Smith Walker	<b>Councillor</b> Adair Cooper Kennedy Thompson	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Councillor</b>

With 8 voting FOR, 6 AGAINST, and 1 ABSTAINING, the proposal was declared carried.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor P Smith, seconded by Councillor McAlpine, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning permission be refused.**



**4.2 LA06/2021/0817/F – RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF 58 NO. DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS – LANDS ADJACENT T AND WEST OF ADARA GROVE AND ADARA ELMS TO THE REAR AND WEST OF NO 8 AND 9 SWALLOW CLOSE AND SOUTH OF NO 24 TO 38 (EVENS) HEATHERMOUNT COURT AND NO 20 TO 22 DALTON GLEN, COMBER**  
(Appendix II)

(Alderman McIlveen left the meeting at 20:07 due to a Declaration of Interest)  
(Councillor Cooper left the meeting at 20:07)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

**DEA:** Comber

**Committee Interest:** development within the Major category of development

**Proposal:** Residential development of 58 no. dwellings comprising of detached and semi-detached dwellings, garages, landscaping, open space, internal road network, right-hand turn lane at Ballygowan Road and all other associated site and access works.

**Site Location:** Lands adjacent to and West of Ardara Grove and Ardara Elms to the rear and West of Nos 8 and 9 Swallow Close and South of Nos 24 to 38 (evens) Heathermount Court and Nos 20 to 22 Dalton Glen, Comber

**Recommendation:** Approval

The Principal Planning and Technical Officer (Gail Kerr) explained that the proposal was for a residential Development of 58 No. dwellings (which were to comprise of detached and semi-detached dwellings), garages, landscaping, open space, internal road network, a right hand turn lane at Ballygowan Road and all other associated site works. The agent for the proposal was present at the meeting as well as a transport consultant and had indicated that they were happy to answer any queries Members may have had.

The site was located at lands adjacent to and West of Ardara Grove and Ardara Elms to the rear and West of Nos 8 and 9 Swallow Close and South of Nos 24 to 38 (evens) Heathermount Court and Nos 20 to 22 Dalton Glen, Comber.

The site was, at the time of writing, part of a grass field. The northern boundary lay adjacent to rear boundaries of properties in Heathermount Court with some trees within the site. The eastern boundary had a mix of trees, hedging and fencing along the residential properties in Ardara Grove, Ardara Elms and Swallow Close. The western boundary was undefined as it was part of a larger field. The southern boundary had an area of dense trees. The general area was predominantly residential with a mix of house types and designs. There were two listed buildings to the south of the site at Maxwell Court and Ardara House. Pictures of the site and general area were shown to the Committee. The application site was located within the settlement limit of Comber as designated in the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015.

The site was also zoned (CR05 - 3.14 Hectares at Land to the west of Ardara Grove).

As the site lay within a development limit, there was a presumption in favour of development unless there was demonstrable harm. In addition to this, as the site was zoned for housing and as the proposal was residential and was set amongst residential surroundings, it was considered acceptable providing certain criteria in relevant policies were satisfied. The plan had set out certain key site requirements for the site:

- Density, (A minimum development density of 20 dwellings per hectare and a maximum gross site density of 25 dwellings per hectare)
- Access arrangements with provision of an access through Ardara Grove housing estate,
- a right turn facility would also be required at the junction of Ardara Grove housing estate onto Ballygowan Road.
- buffer planting along the western and southern boundary to assist integration with existing trees and vegetation retained and enhanced throughout the site.

The proposed density in this application for the zoned site was 18 dwellings per hectare which was lower than the minimum density detailed in the ADAP. The supporting statement submitted as part of the proposal stated that although the proposed density was lower than the Plan, the proposal allowed for a spacious layout which responded to the sloping topography of the site, retained existing TPO trees and provided landscape buffers to the site boundaries including adjacent to listed buildings.

The proposal complied with the zoning and all of the Key Design Considerations set out in the plan except for one that relating to the min/max density of the site. However, in attributing determining weight to the factors which outlined the reason for the reduced density and, in considering the reduced density as acceptable for this site and area. It was therefore considered that the proposal was in conformity with the plan and the principle of development was acceptable.

The dwellings would be two-storey which respected the scale and massing of the area and would provide a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings with 3-4 bedrooms which would provide choice and variety within the development. The dwellings were to be finished in a mix of white and buff render and buff brick with grey roof tiles which reflected the variety of finishes that was expected within the urban area and within the wider area of Comber where there were many examples of different styles of housing and finishes displayed,

All dwellings would front onto the internal road layout and would have in-curtilage parking spaces which respected the pattern of development in the area. Garages were also to be provided. Landscaping would be provided within the site to soften the visual impact of the proposal. An 8-10m planted buffer would be added along the northern and western boundary which would provide screening and aid integration with the surrounding landscape. Within the site landscaped embankments would also be added to soften the changes in levels throughout the site.

The TPO trees within the site would be retained and protected during the construction phase with sufficient separation distance between them and any new development which would ensure their protection and maintain the existing character of the area. The Council's tree officer was consulted throughout the processing of the application and was content with the proposal. An area of useable open space had been provided in the middle of the site. The open space had been designed as an integral part of the development. The dwellings adjacent to the open space were designed to overlook it to provide an attractive outlook and security. The provision of public open space would contribute to creating a quality residential environment.

A Transport Assessment and Transport Statement were submitted as part of the proposal which detailed that the right turn lane would ensure free flowing traffic on Ballygowan Road was not impacted upon by turning traffic. The Transport Statement report concluded that the existing infrastructure could accommodate the trip generation associated with the proposed development without the requirement for additional mitigation measures outside of the right turn facility at the A21/ Ardara wood junction. The Transport Assessment and Statement also detailed that the site was well served for pedestrians with footpaths, for cyclists with the Comber Greenway nearby, there were public transport links on Railway Street approximately 450m from the site and the proposed development site was well served by variety of sustainable modes of transport.

During the processing of the application relevant assessments were submitted by the applicant and consultation was carried out with a range of consultees including DFI Roads, Environmental Health, Water Management Unit, Natural Environment, NI Water, HED and the Council's Tree Officer. All consultees expressed no objection to the proposal with some requesting conditions to be added to any permission granted.

It was acknowledged that this proposal had generated a high level of interest locally. All material concerns raised for example covered areas such as traffic impact and safety, visual amenity, water and drainage, residential amenity, noise and pressure on additional services All material objections raised had been assessed and detailed in the COR.

The Principal Planner summarised, advising that the material considerations such as the development plan, policies and comments from consultees and 3rd parties had been assessed with regard to the proposal. The case officer had set out a detailed assessment of the proposal in the case officer report. was a presumption in favour of development within development limits providing relevant policies were satisfied and a key consideration was the site being zoned for housing in the local area plan. The supporting information submitted with the application demonstrated that there was a high demand for quality residential development in Comber and the recommendation is to grant planning permission.

**RECOMMENDED** that planning permission be approved.

Councillor Adair noted the high level of objections but his main concern had been sewage and general infrastructure and whether these elements had been taken into consideration. Next, he believed that traffic was already a large issue across the

Comber area and was worried that speeding cars coming into the Comber area could pose a danger which may require a decreased speed limit on the main road to make entry and exit safer to the proposed development. In addition, he queried if the development would mean those houses on a lower plane would have their gardens overlooked and finally, asked if the area plan could meet current and future demands on said infrastructure in Comber.

The Principal Planner explained that, in regard to sewage, as with any major application, a wide-arching consultation had taken place which included NI Water who had no objections. There was capacity for the project at the local water treatment works, though no sewer connection existed. The developer and agent were working with NI water to address this as the connection point was outside of the lands of ownership. A legal agreement was being drafted and delegated powers were being sought for that process. With traffic, The Principal Planner accepted that there would always be objections regarding traffic with housing applications, however, the problem of traffic was a wider issue beyond the scope of the application. DfI Roads had also approved the application, showing that there had not been any significant increased traffic flows from the time of the Pirie Manor project. The road was to be adopted through the development site. For those existing properties and concerns of overlooking, a detailed assessment had been carried out in order to ensure any new builds would not affect those already in situ. As examples, the Principal Planner, in conjunction with the site overlay, explained the following considerations in terms of potential overlooking:

- plot 1 houses would be built gable to gable with 20 metres of separation between with existing vegetation maintained,
- At Ardara Grove from numbers 57 to 58, an impact assessment had taken place of how these would back onto the gable of number 9 and though elevation existed, there was sufficient separation distance of 23 metres as well as trees and vegetation being maintained with the addition of new fencing.
- Where the project would back onto numbers 9 and 10 of Swallow Close, though there were higher elevations, a separation distance of 30 metres would exist with trees maintained and a buffer to avoid adverse impacts.
- Plot 55 would be built with the gable facing existing dwellings of 8 and 9 Swallow Close with a distance of over 23 metres, both of which would ensure no overlooking toward said dwellings.
- Heathmount Court was of a higher elevation than the project and as such, no issues would arise, plus a 30 metre separation.
- Numbers 21 and 22 Dalton Green would have houses built at a lower level with 20 metres separation, a planted buffer and fencing.
- A major benefit had been that trees within the site were subject to TPOs and would continue to be retained.

The Principal Planner believed such examples provided an excellent example as to the sensitive design of the application. The department were not in possession of the new development plan for the area. The Principal Planner appreciated Councillor Adair's concerns regarding speeding from a Ballygowan direction but advised such was a wider issue outside the realms of the application as Officers could only assess matters within the red line.

Councillor Adair believed more houses would only contribute to current problems and cited NI water appearing to object to other communal plans such as Ashbury and a 3G pitch. Alderman Keery asked if any play provision would be provided during the build. The Principal Planner advised that there was no requirement for a play area within the development under the policy but that it did include an area of open space that would be accessible to everyone. However, within the wider Comber area, play provision existed in the Lower Crescent area. When asked of the distance to this area, Councillor P Smith was able to say that the closest play provision would be over a mile away.

Councillor P Smith had concerns over increased traffic through Ardara Grove as it was the main entrance and exit point for the project and how access for the development could be constrictive given on-street parking and wondered if it was normal practice to have development access through a small housing area. The Principal Planner was able to show that this access point had always been the intended access. When comparing the finish of the cul-de-sac to others, it was easily identified as unfinished due to its intended future purpose. Though she fully appreciated the concerns of residents, she stated that change is often disliked and that the area had been zoned for housing with several external agencies in support of the proposal and layout. A transport consultant had been engaged to work alongside DfI roads with positive outcomes in terms of agreement.

Councillor P Smith welcomed the news of an open space being central to the proposed development and asked what plans existed for its management. The Principal Planner explained that a management company was already prepared to take over management of this area, as they did with open spaces in other areas, plus, it had been a condition on the proposal.

Councillor P Smith understood that residents of Ardara Grove were unhappy with the thought of increased traffic and though he appreciated that things change, it was one that would affect residents substantially and asked if site traffic would be using an alternative entrance. The Principal Planner had heard of discussions taking place between the landowner and developer with an alternative entrance for site traffic to reduce disruption to those living locally. However, this was something that could not be conditioned as part of the planning application as it was outside of the red line. It would also be difficult to enforce this alternative entrance as the only entry point for construction vehicles as it would require someone on site at all times which was not cost-effective. In regard to play provisions, The Principal Planner reminded Members that such would only occur in the event of 100+ plot developments. Alderman Keery was concerned that the development would be completed in two stages of fifty houses which would equate to 100 total whilst avoiding the play park policy.

Councillor Thompson asked if the Environmental Health's note of a condition for noise was relating only to construction works or other issues. The Principal Planner confirmed that it was in relation to construction works and that similar conditions had been placed for the housing development at Killinchy Road for the same developer.

Councillor McClean apologised for his lateness to the meeting before querying construction vehicles entering the site via Ardara Grove. He was curious as to whether conditions could only be placed were absolutely enforceable, as in this

instance, he felt it was possible that a condition could be placed. In its absence however, he asked if it was possible to have it in writing that vehicles would use the alternate entrance. The Planning Principal explained that from a planning perspective, there would be many additional conditions that would be wanted but that every condition was subject to the six legal tests and as such, many were not enforceable and could not be applied.

Alderman Gibson referenced NI Water's sewage capacity and whether it could cope as well as if the connection being outside of the development site required planning to be amended. The Principal Planner pointed out that the local treatment works had capacity for the development. As for the sewage connection, she explained that a developer could only apply for planning on lands that were within their own control which had meant that a legal agreement would be required in the first instance between the applicant and the owner of the land where the connection would be.

(Mr Stokes, Mr Murdock, Mr O'Rourke and Conor O'Hara were brought into the meeting at 20:40 to speak on the item).

Mr Stokes thanked Members for the opportunity to speak on the issue and that he and his affiliates would be happy to answer any questions. Mr Stokes spoke of Pirie Manor having been shortlisted for residential scheme of the year and how the company had won it for three years running. The proposal before Members was for development on residential zoning in line with CRO5 and included three site requirements; two of which were met by the proposal save one, that of density. Whereas the requirement would mean 79 dwellings, the applicant sought a low density development of 58 houses. This was to include a right-hand turn entrance to improve traffic in the area to which DfI Roads had agreed. The applicant had met with a number of elected representatives and residents as well as having negotiated alternative access for construction vehicles. Mr Stokes et al were content to put on record that no construction traffic would pass through Ardara Grove. With regard to the zoned area, Mr Stokes believed many other housing developers would seek to achieve the maximum housing number by comparison. The project would equate to a £50m investment to the local area and, subject to approval, it was hoped for works to start in 2023.

Councillor P Smith commended the developer on their Pirie Manor work that had integrated well and was positive that the new development would be of a similarly high quality. He was still concerned as to the impact of the development upon the local town such as with traffic but was happy to hear of the agreement to stop construction vehicles passing through Ardara. Councillor P Smith asked how the open space at the centre of the development would be managed in the longer term and how access via Ardara Grove was hoped to work as that was where the biggest impact would be for local residents. Furthermore, he was curious as to the methods used by the developer to identify the project's impact on the roads. Mr Stokes et al informed him that the same management company that was used for other sites such as Pirie Manor would be looking after the open space whilst the 5.5 metre road width was capable of managing traffic of 200-400 whilst they had proposed 155 in total which meant the local network was capable of accommodating the additional level of traffic. In a detailed transport statement, the culminative impacts were addressed. The right-hand lane would provide additional safety which would improve

traffic movements it should be noted that the proposal did not require a transport statement but the applicant had done so to provide reassurance. In response to Alderman Gibson, it was stated that the road would require some widening on both sides at the turn from 7 metres to potentially nine metres, though it was considered necessary to provide a safe junction by comparison to not having any.

Alderman Gibson asked what the status was regarding the land outside of ownership. Mr Stokes advised that the Andrews family controlled the adjacent land, that they were signatories and all had been agreed.

(Mr Stokes et al were returned to the public gallery at 20:54.)

Councillor Cathcart proposed, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the recommendation be adopted, and approval be granted.

Councillor Cathcart appreciated the enlightening discussion from all parties and was satisfied that the area had been zoned for housing with all statutory agencies content. He also commended the developers for the less-density approach of the proposed development.

Councillor Adair was still concerned with how infrastructure and traffic might be affected and again referenced NI Water not objecting to residential developments by comparison to a 3G pitch and Ashbury Play Park. He cited the busy road with a school, issues regarding the speeding limit, congestion of traffic and parking on pavements all being reasons for cautiousness and as such could not support the recommendation.

Councillor P Smith commended the developers for what they had delivered and agreed it would be of a high standard. However, he too was concerned given another housing development had been approved on the opposite side of Comber and that the culminative effects of that development and this proposal would cause capacity issues for the infrastructure.

A recorded vote was called with 6 FOR, 7 AGAINST, 1 ABSTAINING and 2 ABSENT. The results can be found below. As such, the proposal fell.

<b>FOR (6)</b>	<b>AGAINST (7)</b>	<b>ABSTAIN (1)</b>	<b>ABSENT (2)</b>
<b>Aldermen</b>	<b>Aldermen</b>	<b>Aldermen</b>	<b>Aldermen</b>
	Keery		McIlveen
	Gibson		
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Councillor</b>
Cathcart	Adair	McKee	Cooper
McAlpine	Brooks		
McClellan	Kennedy		
McRandal	P Smith		
Moore	Thompson		
Walker			

With 6 voting FOR, 7 AGAINST, and 1 ABSTAINING and 2 ABSENT, the proposal fell.

Councillor P Smith proposed an alternative, seconded by Alderman Keery; that planning permission be refused due to the culminative negative impact on Comber. The Head of Planning advised that the reason for refusal was not acceptable as it was not based on any policy. Any proposal in that regard would need to be based on planning policy.

**(A recess was called at 21:05 with the meeting resuming at 21:20)**

Alderman Gibson reminded Members that a valid reason was required for refusing planning permission and, given how the land was zoned for housing, what policy would prevent approval. Councillor P Smith believed he had been clear in previous comments as to why the development should not proceed but understood the need to provide a clear policy indication and as such withdrew his proposal on that basis with Alderman Keery as seconder agreeing with the withdrawal.

Councillor McAlpine proposed, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the original recommendation be adopted, and approval be granted.

Councillor McAlpine believed local facilities were not over-capacity and could not see issues for refusing planning permission. Councillor McRandal agreed with the sentiments of his colleague.

Councillor Cathcart believed there was sound reason for approving planning and called on those who proposed to refuse planning to remember they had to make judgements based on planning policies. He welcomed the opportunity to vote on the proposal again to reach an approval.

Alderman Keery advised that he still could not support an approval as the area was already built-up and that the lack of play provision in a development was of concern.

Councillor Adair agreed with Alderman Keery, adding that his main concern was that of a lack in infrastructure investment which would lead to congestion on roads that were already struggling. He explained that most family houses had more than two cars and with the narrow entrance, further issues would arise in the future.

Councillor McClean asked if officers would require delegated powers in the event of approval and asked if there was any way that policies could be addressed to alleviate organise growth and decision making in the committee. The Head of Planning advised that Officers had provided information on how the development met policy requirements and that such policies were made by central government in an overarching regional framework that followed through PPS and SPPS. To go against such policies without adequate refusal reasons would lead to future legal issues including dealings with the Planning Appeals Commission. The area had already been zoned for dwellings whilst infrastructure and Roads were dealt with under the Regional Strategic Network Plan. As for the impacts on roads, the Head of Service understood concerns of Members but advised meetings had taken place with various stakeholders including DfI Roads and it had been decided that there was no need for additional facilities such as a GP which was why no land had been zoned for those purposes within Comber. Delegated powers were required for finalising the legal agreement to provide, at the developer's expense, infrastructure



for sewage. The wastewater treatment works had the needed capacity and that the decision to approve was based on planning policy and considerations that were all taken into account.

A recorded vote was called with 7 FOR, 3 AGAINST, 4 ABSTAINING and 2 ABSENT. The results could be found below and as such, the proposal was declared carried.

<b>FOR (7)</b> <b>Alderman</b>	<b>AGAINST (3)</b> <b>Alderman</b>	<b>ABSTAIN (4)</b> <b>Alderman</b>	<b>ABSENT (2)</b> <b>Alderman</b>
<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Councillor</b>
Cathcart	Keery	Gibson	McIlveen
McAlpine	Adair	Brooks	Cooper
McClellan	P Smith	Kennedy	
McKee		Thompson	
McRandal			
Moore			
Walker			

With 7 voting FOR, 3 AGAINST, and 4 ABSTAINING and 2 ABSENT, the proposal carried.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McAlpine, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the recommendation be adopted and that approval be granted.**

(Alderman McIlveen returned to the meeting at 21:36. Councillors Adair and Brooks left the meeting)

#### **4.3 LA06/2019/1028/O – DWELLING WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND PARKING – ADJACENT TO 7 SEAPARK TERRACE, HOLYWOOD**

(Appendix III-IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

**DEA:** Hollywood & Clandeboye

**Committee Interest:** A Local development application attracting six or more separate individual objections which are contrary to the officer's recommendation

**Proposal:** New dwelling with associated landscaping and parking

**Site Location:** Adjacent to 7 Seapark Terrace, Hollywood

**Recommendation:** Approval

The Senior Planning officer (Andrea Todd) explained that the application sought outline planning permission for a dwelling adjacent to 7 Seapark Terrace, Hollywood. The application had been brought before Planning Committee as six or more individual objections contrary to the officer's recommendation to approve had been received.

The site was located at the end of Seapark Terrace, to the immediate south-west of the existing detached dwelling at No. 7. Seapark Terrace itself was characterised

mainly by two and three storey terraces with two storey semi-detached dwellings also located on the adjacent Seapark Avenue. Members were shown a photograph of the point of access into the site and where the proposed dwelling would be located behind the existing row of dwellings out of view from the road.

In terms of the wider context, the coast lay just under 100m to the north-west with the railway line and main Belfast/Bangor carriageway to the south. To the west of the site was the existing area of open space at Seapark.

With regard to a development plan context, the site was located within the settlement limit of Holywood and within the proposed Marino, Cultra and Craigavad Area of Townscape Character as identified in draft BMAP. A portion of the site was also located within the existing open space zoning known as Holywood Esplanade and the Seapark Local Landscape Policy Area.. The site was also partially within the Croft Burn Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance.

The outline application was accompanied by a proposed site layout plan. The Planning Department raised concerns in relation to the original proposed layout plan as while the dwelling itself was located outside of the existing open space, its parking and turning area occupied the majority of the open space zoning within the site. While the zoned area within the application site was privately owned in comparison to the adjacent Council maintained land, it nevertheless still formed part of the overall open space zoning and therefore Policy OS1 of Planning Policy Statement 8 relating to the Protection of Open Space applied.

Policy OS1 of PPS8 operated a presumption against the loss of existing open space unless any of the exceptions as listed in the policy applied. These included: Substantial community benefit brought by the redevelopment which would outweigh the loss where there was no significant detrimental impact on the amenity, character or biodiversity of the area and where alternative provision was made by the developer which was as accessible to users at the time of writing and equivalent in terms of size, usefulness attractiveness and quality

The area of open space within the red line of the application site equated to approx. 0.38ha. According to draft BMAP the Hollywood Esplanade open space was a maintained grassed area with walkways along the seafront and was 2.96ha in total. The open space within the application site did not form part of these maintained grassed areas or walkways as identified in draft BMAP. However, further to the concerns that had been raised by the Planning Department, an amended plan was submitted by the agent showing a reduction in the overall parking and turning area resulting in a much smaller area of the open space being occupied and allowing the area of mature trees and vegetation bounding the Council maintained land to be retained. It was not considered that the use of this small area for access and parking to serve the proposed dwelling, would result in any material loss of open space of public value nor would it harm the overall character or amenity value of the open space. The area in question was privately owned and inaccessible from the main area of Council maintained open space outside the application site.

The area within the site was also physically separated from the Council maintained land by dense mature trees and vegetation preventing views into and out of the site.

These trees and vegetation were considered to be the main feature of the site which contributed to the amenity value of the open space and would be conditioned to be retained. As a further measure, it was also proposed to include a condition restricting the curtilage of the dwelling to exclude the area of vegetation. On this basis it was considered that there would be no material loss of any open space of public value and therefore the proposal would not contravene the aims and objectives of either the open space zoning or policy OS1.

Objections had been received from 13 separate addresses in relation to the proposal. The main concerns raised included:

- Loss of privacy to No. 7 Seapark Terrace and Nos. 2-8 Seapark Avenue
- Impact on the character of the area
- Loss of open space
- Impact on natural habitat and removal of hedges and trees
- Impact on the watercourse
- Impact on parking within the area
- Traffic impact and congestion within the area
- Impact on the sewage network
- Potential flooding

Following renotification of neighbours upon receipt of the amended site layout plan, only two further objections were received from 7 Seapark Terrace and 2 Seapark Avenue. These residents continued to raise concerns regarding traffic and parking, impact on ecology and impact on privacy.

All of these issues had been considered in detail in the case officer's report in conjunction with the responses received from the various statutory bodies who had all since been content with the proposal having considered all of the supporting information accompanying the application including a Flood Risk Assessment, an outline CEMP, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Land Contamination Risk Assessment.

With regard to the potential impact on the character of the area, the plot size was comparable to others in the area. If approved, the permission would be subject to conditions restricting the siting of the dwelling to that shown on the submitted layout plan and restricting the height to a maximum of two storey which was in keeping with existing dwellings. Conditions requiring retention of the existing trees and submission of a detailed landscaping scheme along with a Tree Survey and Tree Protection Plan were also recommended to ensure the screening to the site provided by landscaping is maintained.

With regard to the potential impact on residential amenity, the proposed dwelling would be located 4-5m from the boundary with No. 7 Seapark Terrace and approval would be subject to a condition that no windows to habitable rooms would be located on the side elevation facing No.7 to ensure no loss of privacy was to occur. The dwelling would also be located 21m away from the boundary with 2 Seapark Avenue which would ensure no acceptable impact on this property either. As an added measure, conditions withdrawing permitted development rights were also recommended.

The potential impact of the development on the ecology of the site had also been very carefully considered in consultation with Shared Environmental Service and Natural Environment Division. Having considered all of the supporting information and reports, both bodies were content that subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal would not result in any adverse impact on either the European designated sites or the ecology of the site itself.

In terms of parking, two in curtilage spaces were to be provided for the new dwelling and on street parking to the front of the existing dwellings would remain. DfI Roads had also considered the objections received in relation to traffic impact and were content that the proposal for the single dwelling would not cause any unacceptable impact.

The officer summarised that the proposal for a single dwelling was considered to be acceptable in the context of both the Development Plan and the relevant regional planning policies including Planning Policy Statement 8 Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation and Planning Policy Statement 7 Quality Residential Environments. All of the statutory consultees were content with the proposal and all representations have been carefully considered. On this basis it was recommended that outline planning permission should be granted subject to the conditions set out in the case officer's report.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council approves planning permission.

Councillor Cathcart asked how Members should judge the loss of open space and its impact in terms of planning policy considering that it was not an open space that was readily accessible to the public. The officer explained that the main amenity of the area as an open space was the trees and vegetation; something that the amendments had been sought for to ensure it was maintained.

Councillor McRandal appreciated efforts into maximising retention of open space. With regard to planning history, he referred to 2014's refusal which included reasoning for adversely affecting Croftburn River's flow by a culvert. He appreciated the relevant statutory authority was content with the proposal but from the proposed plans, noted a footbridge and a more substantial car bridge. He asked if there was culverting to take place, what had changed between 2014 and now. The officer explained that the previous refusal had been due to a lack of information and assessments in supporting information. The older plans had also had more of an impact upon the stream whilst on this occasion, the Natural Environment Division were content as a plan had been put forth which included a bottomless culvert that would protect the bed of the stream.

Councillor McRandal was concerned that parking would be affected for neighbours and residents of the area where carparking was already an issue. With access being created to connect the site, two to three spaces could be lost. In reference to QD1, he cited policy outlining adverse effects on residents and that the loss of car parking spaces whether allocated or not would constitute as a damage to residential amenity. The officer explained that no designated spaces existed on the road but that even with provision of access, there would still be space outside the front of each house. Objections had been forwarded to DfI Roads who were content that

there was no significant loss. In a worst case scenario, one to two spaces would be lost with access to the site but the car parking was part of a wider issue in the summer months with congestion. A single house wouldn't significantly impact on that issue.

Councillor McClean referenced QD1 policy, page 17 where it was stated that proposal intensifications were only permitted in exceptional circumstances. He asked if these were exceptional circumstances. The officer advised that the report did acknowledge that the proposal did not meet any exceptions but that it was based on PAC decisions. The policy would not cause an embargo upon the area and it was up to the decision maker to weight up factors on a case by case basis. PAC had advised in previous decisions that the overarching aim of the policy was that no harm should be caused. In the assessment, reasons were provided as to why no harm would be caused to the ATC with efforts to keep vegetation, conditions for landscaping and height with impact of the overall appearance being minimal. Councillor McClean asked if PACs were clear that the policy could be considered as, 'advisory.' The Head of Planning advised that there was case law outlining pointing toward not slavishly applying the policy. In *Tesco V Dundee*, there was no compulsion to apply everything as there were so many conflicting policies to take account of. A weight of balance was taken to mitigate and proposed actions were not considered as harming the overall ATC. The Head of Planning reminded Members that this may be different if the proposal was adopted and planning guidance was received of the ATC but with the overall ATC, harm was not considered.

(Mr Rooney and Mr Menary were brought into the meeting to speak at 21:58)

Mr Rooney spoke of a history of approvals in the area with four apartments on site. There was also approval for a single dwelling. The application had been refused on the basis of NH1 and NH5 which were largely due to the applicant not having submitted relevant information requested. With this application, he advised that they had engaged relevant consultants for reports to mitigate concerns. OS1 of PBS8's reference to a loss of open space would be negated, as Mr Rooney spoke of how the space was closed to the public, had no value and attracted antisocial behaviour. Annex A of PPS8 did not fall neatly into any topographies and they were going to try to retain as many trees as possible to maintain visual amenity. Mr Rooney advised that no other detrimental impacts existed and that any concerns regarding the detail and design of the plot could be discussed at the reserve matter stage. No windows were to be on the North-East gable to maintain privacy of the adjacent property, number 7 whilst objectors concerns regarding parking and turning had also been addressed by the Case Officer and DfI Roads.

Councillor McRandal asked if Mr Rooney could comment on the loss of parking spaces. Mr Rooney explained that spaces were present on the site and that the statutory consultee was DfI Roads who had not provided any issues with the proposal. As for amenities, for the neighbours, Mr Rooney argued would have objections that fell under a civil matter as opposed to planning. Mr Rooney asked if one to two non-designated spaces being lost for access would be detrimental to stop the process. The applicant added that properties had parking to the rear of their houses which residents chose not to use. If this parking had been used, it would make up for any shortfall.

(Mr Rooney et al were returned to the gallery at 22:05.)

Alderman Keery proposed, seconded by Alderman McIlveen that the recommendation be adopted, and approval be granted.

Alderman McIlveen believed a thorough examination of policies had occurred and a good explanation offered and was happy to support.

A recorded vote was called with 10 FOR, 1 AGAINST, 2 ABSTAINING and 3 ABSENT. The results can be found below. As such, the proposal carried.

<b>FOR (10)</b>	<b>AGAINST (1)</b>	<b>ABSTAIN (2)</b>	<b>ABSENT (3)</b>
<b>Aldermen</b>	<b>Alderman</b>	<b>Alderman</b>	<b>Alderman</b>
Keery McIlveen		Gibson	
<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Councillors</b>
Cathcart Kennedy McAlpine McKee Moore P Smith Thompson Walker	McRandal	McClean	Adair Brooks Cooper

With 10 voting FOR, 1 AGAINST, and 2 ABSTAINING and 3 ABSENT, the proposal was declared carried.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Keery, seconded by Alderman McIlveen that the recommendation be adopted and that approval be granted.**

#### **4.4 LA06/2022/0855/F – ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING HUB & CANOPIES – MAXOL SERVICE STATION, 69 BELFAST ROAD, HOLYWOOD**

(Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

**DEA:** Holywood & Clondeboye

**Committee Interest:** An application on land in which the Council has an interest

**Proposal:** Electric Vehicle Charging Hub & Canopies

**Site Location:** 69 Belfast Road, Holywood (Maxol Service Station)

**Recommendation:** Approval

Item 4.4 was for Electric Vehicle Charging Hub & Canopies 69 Belfast Road, Holywood which was more commonly known as the Maxol Service Station.

The Principal Planner (Gail Kerr) explained that the application was before members as the proposal was to be on land in which the Council had an interest.

There were no objections to the proposal and all consultees were content with some recommending conditions. The site was within the settlement limit of Holywood as designated in North Down and Ards Area Plan (NDAAP) 1984-1995 and draft BMAP 2015. The immediate area was predominantly residential with the A2 carriageway along the western boundary of the site. The land for the EV Hub was on a long lease from ANDBC to the applicants Maxol. As the proposal was within development limits there is a presumption in favour of development. Members were shown photographs of the area and plans of the proposal.

The SPSS stated that Northern Ireland had *"...a vibrant renewable energy industry that makes an important contribution towards achieving sustainable development, and a significant provider of jobs and benefits across the region."* Also, in paragraph 6.216 that *"Renewable energy reduces our dependence on imported fossil fuels ...It also helps Northern Ireland achieve its targets for reducing carbon emissions and reduces environmental damage..."*

Paragraph 3.1 PPS18 on Renewable Energy sought to facilitate renewable energy facilities in appropriate locations.

The applicant for this proposal was the Maxol who had relayed that they intended for this proposal to be a flagship EV hub on with the capacity to charge 6 EV Cars at any time contributing to their investment in sustainability initiatives. This application marked a positive step for sustainable energy sector development with an ideal location at an existing Service Station.

The EV Hub & Canopies would primarily be located to the side of the existing premises. The proposal was for a free-standing pergola and steel canopy adjacent to the existing shop and a canopy over the EV Charging bays - the frames were contemporary and light comprising powder coated galvanised steel columns and beams with a top layer of Douglas Fir Rafters. The design would complement existing. Existing trees and a grassed area at the front and rear of the site would be retained and additional planting would be added to soften the visual impact and aid integration. An area of grass was to remain at the junction of Belfast Road and the A2 to provide a landscaped wedge at the entrance to Holywood.

The existing retail and petrol station use was well established on the site, the extension to the building and parking area would read with the existing use and would have no adverse impact on the character of the area.

The EV Charging Hub would utilise parking spaces and have the capacity to charge 6 electric vehicle cars at a time as follows:

- one 200kW fast charger dedicated to one single parking space
- two 150kW fast chargers, each servicing two car park spaces
- one 50kW charger dedicated to a single space.
- There will also be 2 outdoor payment terminals (OTP's) to service the six bays

Considering the positive move to sustainable energy and a proposal that complied with planning policy, grant of planning permission is recommended

**RECOMMENDED** that planning permission be granted.

Councillor McClean welcomed this application adding that it was a fantastic asset to the town. Furthermore, no objections had been received and he would be happy to propose.

Councillor McClean proposed, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the recommendation be adopted, and approval be granted.

In concurrence, Councillor McRandal noted that the proposed facility had met all planning tests and the offering of six charging points was a great step forward.

Alderman McIlveen enquired if the charging hubs would be operated by Maxol or become part of the general network. He also wondered if users would be required to pay for this service.

The Principal Planning Officer confirmed that Maxol would indeed be the operator and a payment would be expected. Having said that, she emphasised the fact that they would be fast charging but still allow sufficient time to visit the shops/cafes. Thus, there was a perceivable overall benefit for the town of Holywood.

Although a huge advocate for improving the EV charging infrastructure, Alderman McIlveen mentioned it was in a chronic state given the poor decisions taken in the past by both legacy Councils as they had failed to take part in discussions with the DRD. However, this application would create much better facilities operated by the private sector. He queried if the electricity would be obtained from a sustainable source or from the general grid.

In response, the Principal Planning Officer referred to the drawings highlighting that an NIE hub was situated next to the site in question. She assumed that that would therefore be the case but could not give a definitive confirmation.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McClean, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the recommendation be adopted and that approval be granted.**

(Having declared an interest, Councillor McRandal left the meeting at this stage – 10.14pm)

#### **4.5 LA06/2022/1000/F – PRACTICE NETS WITH SECURITY FENCING – SEAPARK PAVILION, HOLYWOOD** (Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

**DEA:** Holywood & Clandeboye

**Committee Interest:** An application on land in which the Council has an interest

**Proposal:** Practice nets with security fencing (max height 4.5m)

**Site Location:** Lands immediately adjacent and SE of the Bowling Green, Seapark Pavillion, Holywood

**Recommendation:** Approval



The Principal Planner (Gail Kerr) explained that there were no objections to the proposal and consultee Environmental Health were content. The application as before members as the proposal was on land in which the Council had an interest. The site was part of a larger park containing a bowling green, tennis courts, cricket and football field. Four metre fencing defined the northern boundary which was shared with the adjacent bowling club. Mobile bowling bays/netting (for cricket) were on the site.

Playing fields were bound on two sides by residential properties; the south-eastern boundary defined by the railway; the north-western boundary was defined by a car park and informal open space that gave access to the coastal footpath.

The site was within the settlement limit and within an area of Existing Recreation and Open Space and a Local Landscape Policy Area. In relation to the built environment, the site was within the Marino, Cultra and Craigavad Area of Townscape Character (ATC). There were no archaeological or architectural designations affecting the development. The principle of this type of development was considered acceptable given the existing use of the site.

Members were shown an image of the proposal on the site which was to be a permanent feature rather than the mobile netting that was on site at the time of writing. The nets would be 40m in length, approximately 11m in breadth and would have a maximum height of 4.5m. The nets would back onto the bowling green. There was at the time of writing a 4m fence separating the bowling green from the site.

Given the setting within playing fields and sporting recreation uses, the proposal was acceptable within this area and, considering the distance from properties, the proposal would have no material impact on any listed buildings in the vicinity.

In terms of amenity to residents in the area with the closest neighbour being 33m to the southwest and that there had been a cricket club on the site, the proposal was considered to not cause any adverse effects.

The nets were side on to the housing on Seapark Road and their 'open side' would face out towards the rest of the park. The proposal was seen as being a benefit in ensuring there are less wayward balls which may cause a risk to property.

**RECOMMENDED** that planning permission be granted.

Proposed by Councillor McClean, seconded by Alderman McIlveen that the recommendation be adopted, and approval be granted.

Councillor McClean mentioned the possibility of residents living adjacent to the site becoming aware of the sound of leather on willow. However, given that no objections were received that would appear not to be the case. The structure might not be the most aesthetically pleasing but he noted that it would be completely screened albeit by deciduous trees. With that borne in mind, he had no hesitation in recommending that planning permission be granted.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McClean, seconded by Alderman McIlveen that the recommendation be adopted and that approval be granted.**

## **5. UPDATE ON PLANNING APPEALS**

(Appendix VI - VII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Head of Planning detailing the following:

### **Appeal Decisions**

1. No appeal decisions had been received between the date of the last report and the date of this report.

### **New Appeals Lodged**

2. The following appeal was lodged on 17 October 2022.

PAC Ref	2022/A0123
Application ref	LA06/2021/1451/F
Appellant	John Furney
Subject of Appeal	Attic conversion to incorporate new dormer window
Location	82 Ward Avenue, Bangor

3. The following appeal was lodged on 20 October 2022.

PAC Ref	2022/A0127
Application ref	LA06/2022/0078/O
Appellant	Adam Clint
Subject of Appeal	1No. dwelling with detached garage using existing site entrance
Location	Site 30m SW of 9a Quarter Road, Cloughey

4. The following appeal was lodged on 16 November 2022.

PAC Ref	2022/A0145
Application ref	LA06/2019/1007/F
Appellant	NI Water
Subject of Appeal	Fence and gate surrounding an existing pumping station (Retrospective)
Location	Seacourt WwPS, Lands 20m North of 1 Seacourt Lane, Bangor

### **Withdrawn appeals**

5. The following appeal against service of an Enforcement Notice was withdrawn on 03 November 2022

PAC Ref	2021/E0045
Application ref	LA06/2017/0374/CA
Appellant	Glen Baxter
Subject of Appeal	Alleged unauthorised construction of earth bund adjacent to front boundary along Gransha Road
Location	431a Gransha Road, Bangor

6. The following appeal was withdrawn on 21 November 2022.

PAC Ref	2022/A0080
Application ref	LA06/2019/0518/O
Appellant	David Bryce
Subject of Appeal	Off-site replacement dwelling and garage (Existing building to be retained for ancillary use to the main house)
Location	25m North of 22 Lisbane Road, Comber

Details of appeal decisions, new appeals and scheduled hearings could be viewed at [www.pacni.gov.uk](http://www.pacni.gov.uk).

RECOMMENDED that Council notes this report.

Proposed by Alderman Keery, seconded by Councillor Cathcart that the recommendation be adopted.

The Head of Planning summarised the monthly update to Members outlining that there were no appeal decisions since the last report, with two new appeals lodged and two withdrawn.

In relation to appeals before the PAC, Councillor Cathcart questioned if Members of the Committee would be permitted to comment by means of correspondence.

The Head of Planning detailed that all appeals would be advertised in the local press, whereby objectors or representees would be contacted. She conveyed to Councillor Cathcart that Members could certainly respond at that time as well as attend the hearing.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Keery, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## 6. UPDATE ON TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS (Appendices VIII – XXI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Head of Planning detailing the following:

Further to the Notice of Motion debated by Planning Committee at its meeting of 06 September 2022 (Item 10), it was agreed that officers would bring a quarterly report setting out detail relating to Tree Preservation Orders served and applications for consent to carry out works to protected trees.

The table overleaf provided the figures from April 2022 to date.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the content of this report.

Proposed by Councillor McKee, seconded by Alderman McIlveen that the recommendation be adopted.

The Head of Planning articulated that the update had arisen from a previous debate on a Notice of Motion requesting quarterly reports. Following on, she brought attention to the second page of the report highlighting that a provisional TPO had been served on land at 1 Maxwell Drive, Bangor in March. That had since been confirmed with modifications to the original number of trees. In addition, six consents were granted on work applications for trees with one of those sited within a conservation area. She verified that the six consents for work on felling diseased trees or those in a poor state comprised 15 Dunover Road, Ballywalter, 102 Bangor Road, Hollywood, 25a Church Avenue, Hollywood, 5 Tudor Park, Hollywood which was in a conservation area and lastly 2 and 4 Martello Gate, Hollywood.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the recommendation be adopted.**

**7. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON COMMENCEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESERVOIRS ACT (NI) 2015**  
(Appendices VIII – XXI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Head of Planning detailing the following:

Members were asked to recall the Consultation as issued by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) in late November 2021 in respect of proposed legislation to commence and implement the Reservoirs Act (NI) 2015 and the draft reservoir designation criteria.

Delegated authority was granted by the Council at its meeting of 22 December 2021 to Planning Committee to issue a response, which was agreed at the Committee's meeting of 18 January 2022, and duly submitted to the Department.

DFI had written to the Head of Planning dated 1 November 2022 providing a link to the Consultation Report which provided details of the key issues / comments raised in respect of the consultation and the Department's response.

**RECOMMENDED** that Council notes the content of this report and the attached letter and Consultation Report.

The Head of Planning recalled the detailed response from the Council previously submitted to the DfI. She wished to bring to Members' attention that the DfI had now published the full Consultation Report.

Proposed by Councillor Thompson, seconded by Councillor McClean that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Cathcart regretted that the report contained several frustrating responses from the Department. It posed serious consequences to our Council area and the Committee and it was his viewpoint that the sooner they enacted certain elements the better. On that basis, he hoped it would be implemented and not left to sit on the shelf.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Councillor McClean that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **8. DFI CONSULTATION ON VALIDATION CHECKLISTS**

(Appendices VIII – XXI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Head of Planning detailing the following:

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To advise the Committee that the Department for Infrastructure had written to the Council informing of a public consultation on proposals to amend the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 ('GDPO') to introduce validation checklists for planning applications submitted to the regional and local planning authorities.

### **Background**

2. Article 3 of the GDPO set out what was to be contained within an application for planning permission as follows:
  - A written description of the development
  - The postal address of the land which the development related to (or description of the land if no postal address)
  - Name and address of applicant and agent (if applicable)
  - A plan sufficient to identify the land to which it relates and showing the situation in relation to the locality and neighbouring land
  - Such other plans and drawings as necessary to describe the development
  - A plan identifying where any neighbouring land is owned by the applicant
  - An ownership certificate
  - A pre application community report (for proposals in major category of development)
  - A design and access statement (if required)
  - 3 additional copies of plans; and
  - The relevant fee
3. Article 3 (6) set out that the Council may by direction in writing addressed to the applicant require such further information as may be specified in the direction to enable the Council to determine any application.
4. The above list was what had been referred to as being the 'validation checklist' and the Council would require to be in receipt of all the above before being able to deem an application 'valid' in order to commence the appropriate processing. However, it had been recognised that the legislation as exists sets an extremely 'low bar' to make a legally valid planning application.
5. The Northern Ireland Audit Office Report into the planning system in Northern Ireland, dated February 2022, reported a view that the criteria set out in the Planning Act was too narrowly prescribed and did not require submission of key supporting documentation (e.g. flood risk assessments, transport assessments, bat surveys) at the point of submission. This meant that potentially 'incomplete'

(not front-loaded) applications were to be accepted by the planning authority (having met the minimum statutory requirements) and from which the time period for statutory processing began.

6. The NIAO believed this contributed to inefficiency and poor processing times in a number of ways:
  - statutory consultees were often expected to provide a substantive response to planning applications where essential supporting information was missing;
  - consultees were spending time on poor quality or incomplete applications, and often had to be consulted multiple times on the same application; and
  - applications which arrived at the Planning Committee for a decision often had to be deferred to allow supporting information to be provided.
7. The NIAO considered if the planning system continued to accept poor quality applications, this created a culture of speculative applications, whereby the system was being used to effectively "MOT" proposals and determine the assessments required.
8. The Public Accounts Committee Report published March 2022 highlighted significant concern regarding the quality of applications entering the planning process, and that the system at the time of writing did not encourage submission of good quality applications. Thus, it recommended that the Department implement changes to improve the quality of applications entering the system and believed the introduction of validation checklists was one way to achieve this.
9. The Council operated an informal Validation Checklist, and whilst useful to direct certain applicants, there was significant pushback from agents who met the statutory validation checklist at the time of writing, thus making such checklists mandatory as required via legislative amendment.

### **Proposal**

10. The Department as proposing to amend the GDPO that existed at the time of writing to enable a planning authority to prepare and publish 'checklists' above the statutory minimum statutory requirement at the time of writing which would remain unchanged, setting out the additional supporting information/evidence which would be required to accompany different types of planning application. This would provide flexibility for individual councils to take an approach that suited their local area and planning issues.
11. The consultation document sets out the generally accepted benefits of such an approach in respect of validation checklists:
  - they set out the scope of information required at the outset to ensure a 'fit for purpose' submission
  - they enabled the planning authority to have all the necessary information to determine the application and to draft the planning permission and conditions appropriately

- they minimised the need for further submission of additional information during the life of the application which avoids unnecessary delay in the determination of applications
- they provided applicants with certainty as to the level of information required and the likely overall investment needed prior to the application submission; and
- they ensured that the appropriate information is provided with an application to assist interested parties, including consultees, in their consideration of development proposals

12. The consultation also included examples from England and Wales in respect of approaches to validation disputes, whereby an applicant disagreed with the planning authority's determination as to an application being invalid.

#### **Consultation Timeframe**

13. The Department had invited response to its consultation by response to a series of questions by 6 January 2023.

#### **Proposed Response**

14. Item 8c sets out the proposed response drafted by Planning officials for the Committee's consideration and approval.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the content of this report and the attached letter and Consultation and approve the draft response to be issued to DfI.

Proposed by Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Thompson that the recommendation be adopted.

The Head of Planning made reference to the DfI Consultation explaining that it was the outcome of the NI Audit Office Report and the Public Accounts Committee Report into aspects of the planning system in January/February 2022. She remarked that Officers had lobbied for the introduction of a statutory validation checklist to enable them to set out what was required for applicants and agents as they commenced the planning application process to make it valid. The current legislation set the bar very low as it only consisted of the fee, site location and plans. As a result, this proposed checklist would allow the Council to set out what we would accept in terms of not progressing the application further. She indicated that our response was attached alongside a resolution should a conflict situation arise.

Councillor Cathcart thanked Officers for their response and was mindful that it may assist in speeding up the planning process.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Thompson that the recommendation be adopted.**

### **9. DFI CONSULTATION ON PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS** (Appendices VIII – XXI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Head of Planning detailing the following:

1. The Council had received a letter from the Department for Infrastructure's Chief Planner advising that the Department had issued a consultation paper on proposals to amend permitted development rights.
2. The Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 sets out types of development which could be undertaken without requiring express planning permission through a planning application. These were referred to as permitted development rights and often related to minor building works that had minimal impact to amenity and the environment. In most cases such permitted development rights were subject to conditions and limitations or provided that such rights only apply to certain developers (e.g. councils or statutory undertakers). Proposed development that did not fall within the scope of permitted development rights, including any conditions, must be subject of a planning application.
3. The consultation document attached formed part of the continuing review of permitted development rights being undertaken by the Department for Infrastructure. The Department was seeking views on the proposed changes in relation to permitted development rights for:
  - Installation of domestic microgeneration equipment (air source heat pumps, ground or water source heat pumps, domestic wind turbines)
  - Reverse Vending Machine
4. The closing date for the consultation was to be the 23 December 2022.
5. A draft response for Committee's approval was attached.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report and the attached consultation and approves the response to be submitted to DfI.

Proposed by Alderman Keery, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the recommendation be adopted.

Drawing Members' attention to the report, the Head of Planning reiterated that the DfI proposed to widen the permitted development rights in respect of renewables. Therefore, it was seeking views on the proposed changes on the installation of air source heat pumps, ground or water source heat pumps and domestic wind turbines. At present it did not propose to introduce permitted development rights for domestic wind turbines and Officers supported that action with the comments to DfI attached. The new micro domestic generation equipment such as an air source heat pump resembled an air conditioning unit that sat outside a building. Officers had submitted comments regarding the reduction of the distance to a property boundary or height and the potential accumulated impact. However, they welcomed that it would be accompanied with a certification process. The second part of the consultation related to a reverse vending machine where single use plastic such as a plastic bottle could be fed into a machine for money. The Department planned to introduce those into shops but Officers had questioned why those machines could not also be placed in larger public areas or outside schools.



**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Keery, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **10. QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

(Appendices VIII – XXI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Head of Planning detailing the following:

### **Context**

Members may have been aware that Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service were to contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### **Reporting approach**

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

### **Key points to note:**

- A total of 235 planning applications in the Local category of development were received, whilst 306 were decided/withdrawn
- Householder decision totalled 159, of which 54 were determined within the internal performance target of 8 weeks (34%) whilst a total of 91 were determined within the statutory target of 15 weeks (57%). Performance in that area had been affected by staff absences

- Enforcement cases continued to be processed alongside the significant backlog caused by temporary suspension during COVID
- Two appeals were upheld during this quarter, one relating to Quintin Castle, the other relating to an agricultural shed at Drumhirk Way (by time appeal heard and decision issued, the six year test had been passed)

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the report.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the recommendation be adopted.

The Head of Planning indicated that that the report covered performance during the three months of July, August and September. She informed Members that a key point to note was that performance had been affected by staff absences and the ongoing work testing the new planning portal which went 'live' this week. That would continue to occur until all the bugs in the system were fixed.

Regarding the planning portal and having attempted to use this new system, Alderman McIlveen underlined that the functionality was very poor as it failed to recognise applications, numbers or addresses and maps were even missing.

The Head of Planning was unable to verify if maps would be included as that was an external facing feature. She had attempted to input the reference number which unfortunately did not work for her either. All those issues had been raised with Terra Quest as they held a meeting at 4.00 pm each day with the DfI and all Councils to examine every aspect that had not worked to date. Currently there were 110 major issues being addressed but she felt that the portal was working marginally better than expected. Screens were very small for staff to utilise and she assumed that a map should have been included in the public site but she undertook to investigate further. She regretted that due to this situation, there was now a huge backlog of applications but hoped that it would eventually lead to a paperless system.

Continuing, Alderman McIlveen noticed that there had been nothing coming through on the delegated list and enquired when that was likely as it impacted upon the Council meeting its targets. If the interface was not working for the external user it meant that the delegated list became useless.

The Head of Planning anticipated that the delegated list should be made available next week and stressed that Officers were unable to upload the Case Officer reports which had caused the delay. The DfI had also been approached in terms of performance and the problems Councils were facing in that regard. She asked Members to report any issues through the general planning email account.

The chairman looked forward to receipt of the delegated list which would encompass three weeks.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor McRandal that the recommendation be adopted.**

(Councillor P Smith left the meeting at this stage – 10.33pm)

## **11. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO PLANNING ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY**

(Appendices VIII – XXI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Head of Planning detailing the following:

Members would have been aware of the existence of the Council's Planning Enforcement Strategy which was adopted prior to the transfer of the majority of planning powers.

It was considered appropriate to add the following wording to the Strategy, to highlight to readers that the Planning Service was unable to provide detailed updates during the processing of a planning enforcement investigation, as this may prejudice the case if it were determined appropriate to take formal action.

The following wording had been added at paragraph 14.1-14.2.

- 14.1 Please note that the Council was unable to provide any specific details of any ongoing and active planning enforcement cases to any interested parties, which includes complainants or site owners/occupiers/operators. This was not to be unhelpful however it should be emphasised that any release of information could prejudice the effectiveness of the Council's case should future enforcement action be taken.
- 14.2 The Council, nonetheless, wished to assure all those interested in the enforcement process that this did not imply inactivity. As outlined previously in this Strategy the Council took its responsibilities seriously and would reiterate that all cases were thoroughly, professionally and diligently investigated in line with planning legislation.

The Strategy was also to be updated to advise how members of the public would be able to lodge a complaint regarding an alleged breach of planning control on the new Planning Portal, as soon as the details were known following launch.

RECOMMENDED that Council note the content of this report and approve the change as set out to the Planning Enforcement Strategy, and furthermore approve officers to add the detail regarding how to lodge a complaint online, in respect of the new Portal, once known.

The Head of Planning sought authority to include two paragraphs for the attention of the public or offenders involved in enforcement cases that Officers could not release pertinent information. It was important for the public to be reassured that they were not being obstructive; rather it was a legal issue that doing so could prejudice the case. Additionally, members of the public needed to know how to log onto the new system to report a breach and add in details of a complaint.

(Councillor P Smith entered the meeting at this stage – 10.34pm)

Proposed by Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Alderman McIlveen that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Cathcart insisted that the wording should be made clear to the public that if a case was being actively investigated, the release of any information could prejudice us. He was often asked for such information relating to enforcement cases and without doubt, it would provide a reassurance that if they complained it would be actively investigated. He acknowledged that it would be beneficial for the public to be able to do so online.

As seconder, Alderman McIlveen understood that the current practice was to notify complainants via a letter so in essence this was a reminder.

In agreement, the Head of Planning clarified that the letter would state that the enforcement action was a long and protracted process. This proposed inclusion was for those who made a complaint about a breach, offenders and elected Members.

The Chairman offered his support to what he deemed to be a sensible course of action.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Alderman McIlveen that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **12. RESOLUTION BY FERMANAGH AND OMAGHDISTRICT COUNCIL RE ROMPS** (Appendices VIII – XXI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Head of Planning detailing the following:

1. The Chief Executive of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council had written to the Council to advise of a recent resolution by that Council of a Notice of Motion regarding Review of Old Minerals Permissions ('ROMPs'). The letter sets out the wording of the resolution to the Minister for Infrastructure and was seeking all councils to support the call to the Minister by making similar representation to the Department for Infrastructure.
2. Members would have been aware that Council adopted a similar Notice of Motion in February 2022 by Councillor McKee and Councillor Kendall, which resulted in correspondence between the Council and the Minister for Infrastructure. A copy of the most recent letter dated 01 August 2022 (which was tabled at the Planning Committee meeting of 06 September) is attached for ease of reference regards the Minister's further letter to the Council, which refused to move on the issue of ROMPs.

RECOMMENDED that Council note the content of this report and attached letter from FODC and delegate authority to the Head of Planning to write to the Chief Executive advising of this Council's previous efforts in respect of ROMPs.

The Head of Planning furnished Members with an update that the Chief Executive of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council was seeking support to lobby the Minister for Infrastructure with regard to a Review of the Old Minerals Permission. That had not yet been commenced within the Planning Act. She was seeking permission to delegate authority for her to respond and advise that this Council had already assumed those efforts.

Proposed by Councillor McKee, seconded by Councillor Cathcart that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor McKee welcomed support from other Councils as a united voice for those areas affected by ROMPs.

Councillor McClean stated that given the history of Fermanagh Council's correspondence to us, his default reaction was merely to note the letter. However, if the Head of Planning wished to respond to the Chief Executive then that was fine. Government worked by people asking us to lobby on their behalf, we then liaised with our colleagues, MLAs or MPs as that was the way power structure worked. He did not want to be unhelpful but thought that the best method to discourage people to desist from asking us to get on board would be to note regardless of the issue raised.

Echoing the sentiments of the previous speaker, Alderman McIlveen commented that there had been a lot of nonsense received from this particular Council in respect of its own campaigning. However, this review of permissions affected every Council and appropriate action should be undertaken. He was mindful that the Stormont Committee had been pushing it but the matter had dragged on. It was good to see others coming on board and as Fermanagh Council always needed to feel it was leading the charge, we could relay to them that much of this work had been instigated by us.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Councillor Cathcart that the recommendation be adopted.**

(Councillor McClean left the meeting at this stage – 10.46pm)

### **13. CORRESPONDENCE FROM NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING FOR COUNCIL FOR NOTING**

(Appendices VIII – XXI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of letter from NI Housing.

Proposed by Councillor Thompson, seconded by Alderman Keery that the correspondence be noted.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Alderman Keery that the correspondence be noted.**

## **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

**AGREED**, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Alderman Keery, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted item of confidential business.

### **14. UPDATE ON PLANNING ENFORCEMENT MATTERS** (Appendices VIII – XXI)

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**\*\*\*NOT FOR PUBLICATION\*\*\***

**SCHEDULE 6 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)**

## **RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED**, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor P Smith, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

## **TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting terminated at 10.50pm.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A hybrid meeting (in person and via Zoom) meeting of the Environment Committee was held at Council Offices, Church Street, Newtownards on Wednesday, 7 December 2022 at 7.00 pm.

### PRESENT:

**In the Chair:** Alderman McDowell

**Aldermen:** Armstrong-Cotter (Zoom)      Smith, M (Zoom)  
Carson (Zoom)

**Councillors:** Boyle                      Johnson (Zoom)  
Cathcart (Zoom)      McAlpine (Zoom)  
Cummings              McKee (Zoom)  
Edmund                  Smart (Zoom)  
Irwin (Zoom)  
Greer (Zoom)

**Officers:** Head of Waste and Cleansing Services (N Martin), Head of Regulatory Services (S Addy), Head of Assets and Property Services) and Democratic Services Officer (R King)

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor MacArthur, Councillor Woods and the Director of Environment.

**NOTED.**

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair asked for Declarations of Interest and none were indicated.

**NOTED.**

### **3. NOM REPORT – POLICY ON THE PROVISION OF PERSONAL SEA RESCUE EQUIPMENT (FILE 65000)**

(Appendix I)

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:-** Report from the Director of Environment detailing the undernoted:

## **Background**

In September 2022 the Council agreed a Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Chambers and Brooks that read:

*We ask this Council to consider the urgent provision of sea rescue equipment to Cove Bay beach, known locally as the third beach, in Groomsport. A review into other locations around the Borough, should also be considered.*

The minutes also recorded that: *"The Chair asked Councillor Chambers if he would like a report to look at the policy and provision of sea rescue equipment throughout the Borough and the Member agreed but asked that Groomsport be considered in the first instance since that village had been the purpose of his Motion.*

Given the urgent nature of this request, officers prioritised this work and a draft policy for the provision of Personal Rescue Equipment (PRE) was attached for approval.

### **Assessing the Request at Cove Bay against the Draft Policy**

Cove bay in Groomsport was not Council land so therefore would not be considered for PRE under this policy.

As noted in the policy; with the longest coastline of any Council area and potentially thousands of possible sites for PRE to be installed, it was, in the opinion of officers, impractical to provide and maintain provision of PRE across all the potential locations that were not owned by the Council. Furthermore, each site would need to be risk assessed and the landowner's permission sought and there would simply be too many factors outside of our control for this to be feasible.

### **Assessment of the remainder of the Borough against the Draft Policy**

Officers had catalogued some 68 existing items of PRE across the Borough. All met the criteria set out in this draft policy.

Officers were not currently aware of any gaps in provision that would comply with the criteria set out in the draft policy but would continue to keep this under review.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the draft policy attached.

The Head of Assets and Property Services pointed to page 2 of the report which stated that Cove Bay was not Council owned land. Due to a fault with the Council's mapping system, he advised that this information was incorrect and that the land was indeed owned by the Council and would be included as part of the above PRE. The ownership had also been rectified on the Council's mapping system.

Proposed by Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Irwin, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Edmund welcomed the progress and felt that it was important to keep an eye on safety equipment that was already in place. Councillors Irwin and McKee welcomed the clarification around land ownership at Cove Bay and that it would be included in the exercise. Councillor McKee raised concerns over the potential



removal of safety equipment under the policy and it was advised by the officer that this would only be done in extreme cases where there was ongoing vandalism.

Councillor Smart commented that the policy was sensible and reasonable but asked if the inaccuracy around the land ownership was repeated elsewhere in other matters across Council. The officer advised that Cove Bay had been a one-off occurrence and the matter had been rectified on the mapping system. The system was used daily and 99.9% of the time it was accurate.

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

#### **4. TECHNICAL REVENUE BUDGET FOR REFURBISHMENTS 2023/24 (FILE 65374)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing the undernoted report:

##### **1. Strategic Context**

The Council's agreed Maintenance Strategy incorporated a "needs based" budgeting model, rather than a more traditional "fixed amount" approach for its refurbishment programme.

Properties were condition scored and a threshold for action was to be agreed by the Council, subject to budget considerations.

By making a budgetary decision at this stage, ahead of the rates setting process, Members were able to see the detail behind each option in order to inform the decision and give officers guidance on the amount to include in the next draft of the 2023/24 budget. Members would have the ability to review any decision as part of the overall final rates setting process.

##### **2. Area of Focus for 2023/24**

In 2023/24 works would focus on Tourism Buildings, Public Toilets & HRC's.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cemeteries & assoc. buildings	Tourism Buildings	Administrative Buildings
Community Centres	Public Toilets	Leisure Centres
Car Parks	Waste Recycling Centres & Transfer Stations	Sports Pavilions

##### **3. Budget Considerations in current context**

Historically our threshold for action had been around 75% with costed options for revising this threshold up or down. However, this year there were several large projects in the 71% to 75% bracket which may have made this threshold unaffordable. A brief explanation of these projects was below:

The Parade WCs, Donaghadee	73.69%	£100,000	The basic works package to refurb the toilet block will cost around £85k. However, following a NoM in Oct 21 additional work was included to create a layout suitable for future changing places compliance. Note: Additional works are needed to gain CP accreditation - see 4.0 discretionary costs.
Main Street WCs, Greyabbey	71.13%	£50,000	Options include either refurbishment of existing toilet block or relocation of toilets as part of a regen project at the Village Hall (subject to Planning and consultation)

#### 4. Cross-Departmental Working

Cognisance of wider strategies and plans for these assets was essential so as to meet the expectations of our internal customers and reduce the likelihood of spending significant sums of money on assets that may be disposed of or replaced in the foreseeable future. Therefore, discussions with relevant officers had taken place and the proposed works reflected any known plans for the assets concerned.

In addition to the condition-based works, there were a number of project works that had either been requested by the Council or were otherwise required to maintain the safe and effective operation of the buildings. These "operational" works therefore needed to be completed irrespective of the overall condition of the building and were quantified within the table in section 6.0.

#### 5. Discretionary Costs

Several items had been added under this column as they were neither condition based nor were they operational/H&S related and were therefore discretionary. The first item was the additional cost to make the Parade toilets into a changing places facility as previously requested by the Council. Officers acknowledged that in the current budget setting context this additional cost may not be palatable and had therefore upgraded the basic refurbishment works to allow it to be future proofed, enabling further equipment fit-out at a later date to gain changing places accreditation, should budget become available.

The second item was for some experimental works to address seepage in the seawall at Millisle lagoon. It was noted that the structure had a considerable amount of seepage through and under the lagoon wall meaning that in certain tidal conditions the water almost completely drained from the lagoon. Officers had commissioned several specialist assessments of the structure and had confirmed that the defects had not affected the structural integrity at this time, and it was therefore not currently at risk of collapse. However, it was clear that in the longer term the seepage needed to be addressed. It had been suggested by the specialist that we carry out some experimental repairs whereby cores were drilled, and wet concrete was pumped into the voids from above at a number of locations along the wall. Seepage could be monitored before and after so that any improvement could be verified. If successful, further cores would follow in subsequent years' budget allocations.

EC7.12.2022

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## 6. Condition scores and Costs

The condition scores and corresponding costs were shown on the table below:

Type of Building	Building name	Location	Condition Score 2020	Costs for Condition based works	Operational requests	Discretionary Costs	Notes
Waste Recycling Centres	Ballygowan Road	Comber	80.94%				
Public Conveniences	Main Road Car Park WCs	Cloughey	80.81%				
Public Conveniences	Springvale Road WCs	Ballywalter	80.69%				
Public Conveniences	Abbey Street WCs	Bangor	80.13%				
Tourism	Cockle Row	Groomsport	80.06%				
Public Conveniences	Anchor Car Park WCs	Portavogie	80.00%	€ 1,500			
Public Conveniences	Castle Park WCs	Bangor	79.81%	€ 3,000			
Public Conveniences	Ward Park WCs	Bangor	79.75%	€ 1,000			
Public Conveniences	Groomsport WCs	Groomsport	79.56%	€ 1,000			
Public Conveniences	Castle Street WCs	Comber	79.50%	€ 1,000			
Public Conveniences	Islandhill WCs	Comber	79.13%	€ 2,000			
Public Conveniences	Kiltonga WCs	Newtownards	79.00%	€ 500			
Public Conveniences	Ballyhalbert WCs	Ballyhalbert	78.94%	€ 1,500			
Public Conveniences	Seapark WCs	Hollywood	78.69%	€ 60,000			
Tourism	Tower House	Bangor	78.63%	€ 2,500			
Tourism	Townhall	Newtownards	78.50%		€ 36,000		Works to replace front windows
Waste Recycling Centres	Parsonage Road	Kircubbin	78.50%	€ 2,000			
Public Conveniences	Ballywalter Road Car Park WCs	Millisle	78.44%	€ 10,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Moss Road	Millisle	78.31%	€ 3,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Quarry Heights	Newtownards	77.88%	€ 1,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Balloo HRC	Bangor	77.63%		€ 35,000		Extensive works to kiosk building
Public Conveniences	Londonderry Park WCs	Newtownards	77.56%	€ 2,500			
Waste Recycling Centres	Waste Transfer Station	Bangor	77.38%		€ 30,000		Repair cladding / repair toilets
Public Conveniences	Mill Street WCs	Newtownards	77.31%	€ 1,500			
Waste Recycling Centres	Moss Road	Ballygowan	77.25%	€ 3,000	€ 30,000		Lay by/Entrance improvements (road safety issue)
Public Conveniences	Banks Lane WCs	Bangor	77.06%	€ 60,000			
Public Conveniences	South Pier WCs	Bangor	76.69%	€ 20,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Coach Road	Portaferry	76.38%	€ 5,000			
Public Conveniences	The Commons WCs	Donaghadee	76.00%	€ 30,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Railway Street	Donaghadee	75.69%	€ 10,000			
Public Conveniences	Hibernia Street WCs	Hollywood	75.19%	€ 60,000			
Public Conveniences	Ballyholme WCs	Bangor	75.13%	€ 60,000			
Public Conveniences	The Parade WCs	Donaghadee	73.69%	€ 100,000		€ 55,000	Extra cost for changing places equipment
Public Conveniences	Main Street WCs	Greyabbey	71.13%	€ 50,000			New toilet block to be considered as part of regen project
Public Conveniences	Whiterock WCs	Killinchy	70.00%	€ 50,000			
External works	Millisle Lagoon	Millisle				€ 35,000	Experimental works to resolve seepage
Option 1	<70%			€ 50,000	€ 131,000		€ 181,000
Option 2	<75%			€ 200,000	€ 131,000		€ 331,000
Option 3	<80%			€ 542,000	€ 131,000		€ 673,000
Additional costs for discretionary works						€ 90,000	
Option 1 + Discretionary works				€ 50,000	€ 131,000	€ 90,000	€ 271,000
Option 2 + Discretionary works				€ 200,000	€ 131,000	€ 90,000	€ 421,000
Option 3 + Discretionary works				€ 542,000	€ 131,000	€ 90,000	€ 763,000

## 7. Options Available

**7.1** If Members opted to adopt a threshold of 70%, only Whiterock toilets would receive a refurbishment. This added to the "operational works" gave a total of **£181k** and would result in the budget being **reduced by 2.6%** from last year, achieving a saving of **£4,924**.

**7.2** Alternatively, Members had the option to implement a threshold of 75%, meaning that refurbishments would also take place at The Parade, Donaghadee and at the Public Toilets in Greyabbey. By consequence, **£331k** would be included in the 2023/24 estimates for refurbishments, resulting in a **78% increase (£145k)** over the 2022/23 revenue allocation.

**7.3** If Members wished to carry out the £90k of discretionary works in addition to Option 1, **£271k** would be included in the 2023/24 refurbishments budget, representing an **increase of 46% or £85k** over the 2022/23 revenue allocation.

**7.4** If Members wished to carry out the £90k of discretionary works in addition to Option 2, **£421k** would be included in the 2023/24 refurbishments budget, representing an **increase of 126% or £235k** over the 2022/23 revenue allocation.

## **8. Longer Term Consequences**

It should be noted that the option set out in 7.1, would result in a reduction in revenue budget. Whilst this may be desirable and feasible this year, Members should bear in mind that this would be the third year in a row where this budget has been reduced. All buildings deteriorate through wear and tear and unforeseen issues and there was a possibility that we may have needed to request this money back into revenue budgets next year, depending on what the condition surveys found. Naturally, the more this budget was eroded, the bigger the potential impact on future budgets when it was reinstated.

In addition, option 7.1 limited the amount of refurbishment carried out to just one project and therefore carried a risk of increased reactive maintenance costs in the estate and a greater potential for the properties to fail to meet user expectations.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves as its preferred option, that set out in section 7.1 of this report, resulting in £181,000 being included in the 2023/24 budget, subject to the Estimates process.

Councillor Boyle referred to WCs at Main Street, Greyabbey and understood they were to come under a Regeneration programme. He asked what finances would be in place to replace those and if they would be included in that programme.

The officer advised that the recommendation was to proceed with the first option, numbered 7.1, but Greyabbey would sit outside of that threshold. If Members raised the bar to 75% then Greyabbey would be included. He clarified that it had been considered to include Greyabbey WCs as part of wider regeneration programme planned for the Village Hall and it had been the preference to put the WCs through a required planning application at the same time as that project. He clarified that there was a possibility though that without commitment of funding under this scheme, the regeneration programme could commence without the WCs.

Given that response, Councillor Boyle felt that it was important to have a balance between need and desire. While mindful of the extra cost, he felt that the third option (7.3) was more inclusive and included work that was needed.

Councillor Boyle proposed, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that Option 7.3 be adopted.

Councillor Cummings was happy to support that proposal and was mindful of the cost but it was important for Council to take care of its property and ensure facilities were fit for use.

He pointed to works at Ballygowan's Moss Road that were listed in the chart and queried the general capacity around those works and asked for a timeline that officers were working towards.

The Officer explained that there were potential issues around the skips being emptied but there was no firm proposal on the ground but the budget was there for works to take place in the incoming financial year. He was unable to provide a timeline at this stage but would keep the Member informed on further developments.

Councillor Edmund was supportive of the proposal and felt the work was needed while Councillors Greer, Smart and Cathcart, while understanding of the need to bring facilities up to standard, were mindful of the potential impact this could have on the rate and queried how the expenditure would be dealt with as part of the rate setting process. The officer clarified that this was a standard amount put forward every year as part of the estimates process for Members to consider in further detail.

The Chair commented that he was content for it move towards the rate setting process and it could be considered further and changed if necessary.

Summing up, Councillor Boyle took on board the above comments and recognised that there could be alterations under the estimates process.

Members indicated they were content with the proposal.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that Option 3 (numbered as 7.3 in the report) be adopted.**

## **5. NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL AUTHORITY MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STATISTICS – APRIL TO JUNE 2022 (FILE 53042)**

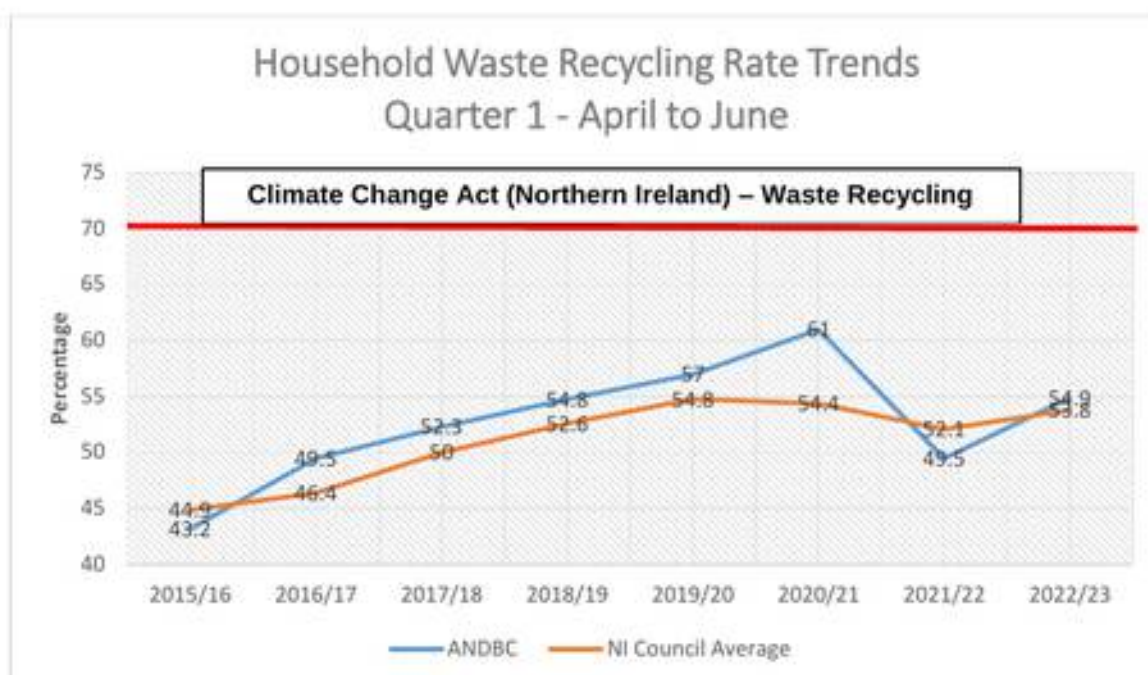
PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the following:

### **Background**

The official waste management statistics for the first quarter of 2022/2023 (April to June 2022) had been released by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

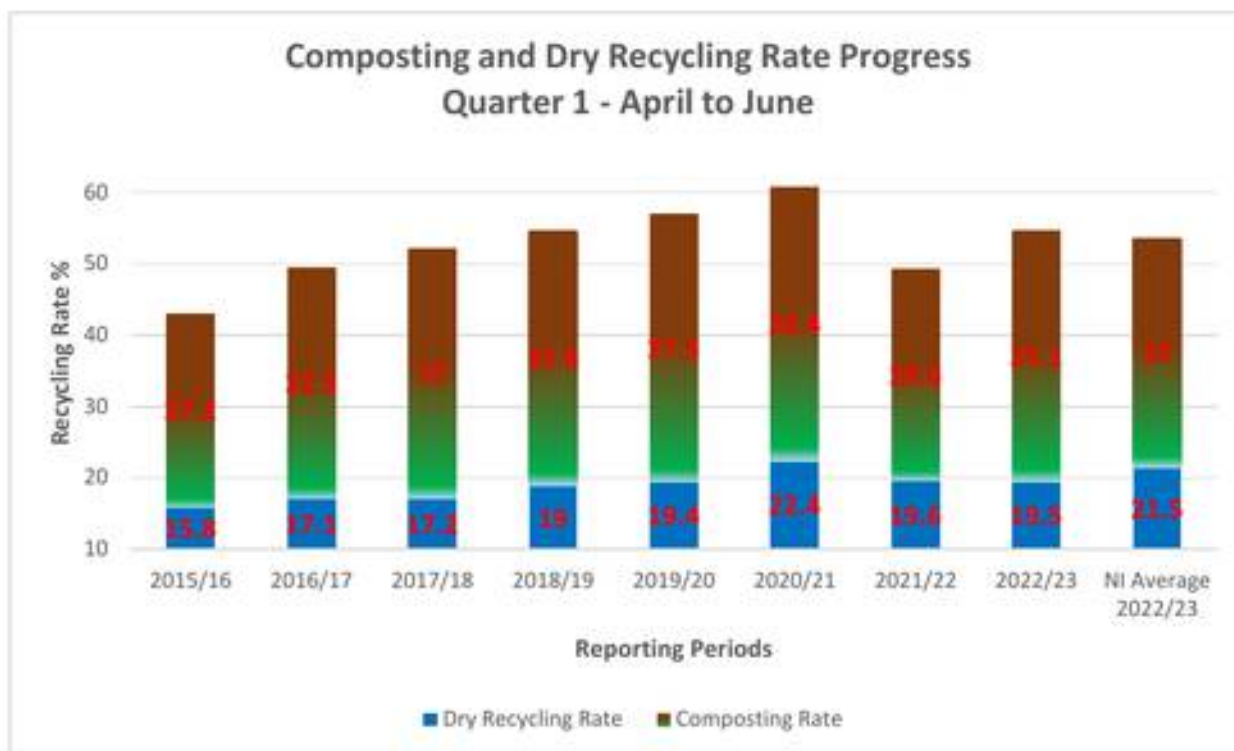
The significant headlines contained within the latest DAERA report showed that:

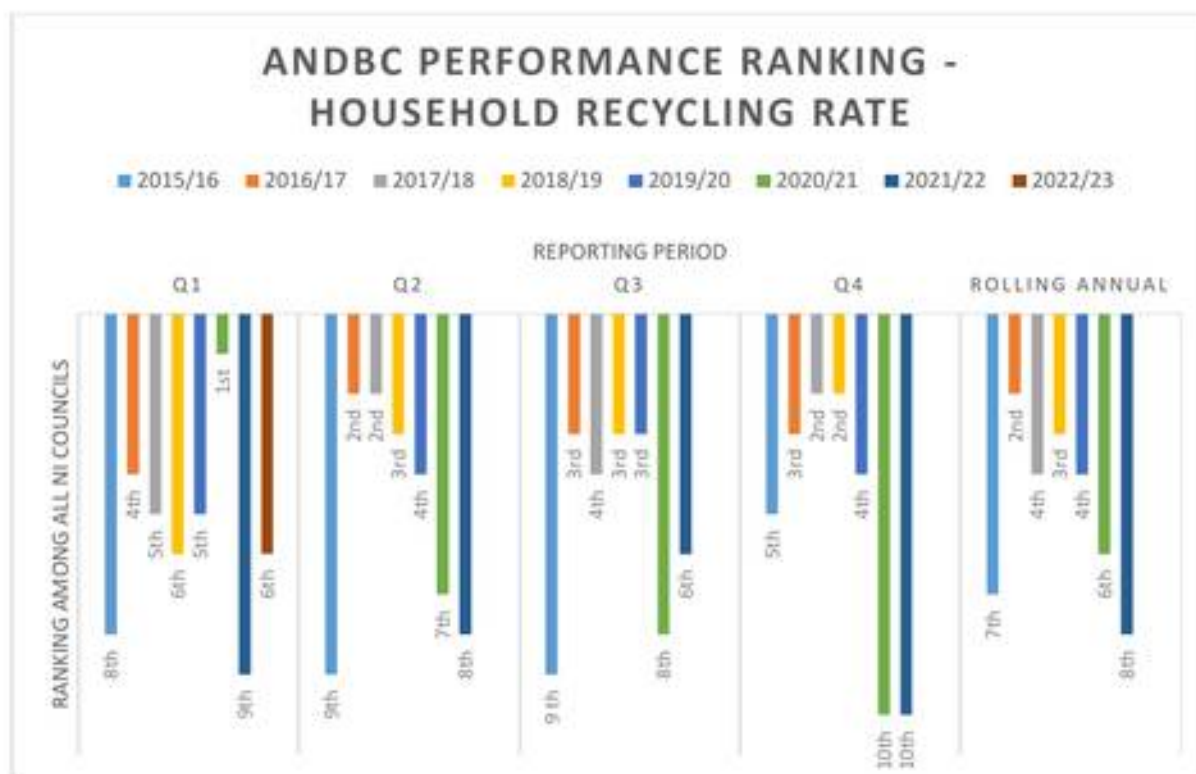
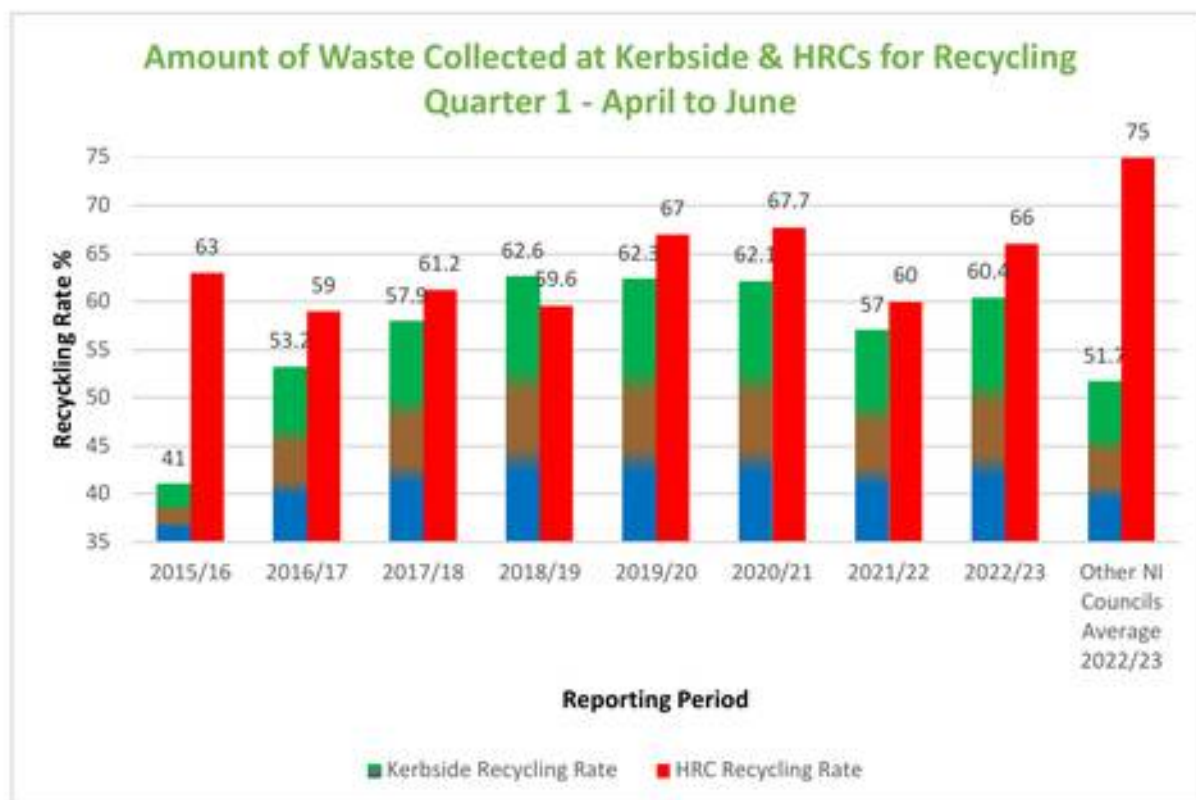
- i. Our household waste recycling rate rose compared to Q1 last year, from 49.5% to 54.9%.



- ii. Our household waste recycling rate of 54.9%, was 1.1% higher than the NI average of 53.8%.
- iii. We were ranked sixth out of the 11 NI Councils for our household waste recycling rate, up from the ninth place ranking last year.
- iv. Our household waste composting rate rose by 5.5% - from 29.6% to 35.1%. Our household waste dry recycling rate fell by 0.1% - from 19.6% to 19.5%.
- v. Our household waste composting rate of 35.1% was 3.1% higher than the NI average of 32%.
- vi. Our household waste dry recycling rate (i.e. recycling of items other than organic food and garden waste) of 19.5% was 2% lower than the N.I. average of 21.5%.
- vii. Our kerbside recycling capture rate of 78.3% for household compostable waste materials compared to a NI Council average of 72.8%.
- viii. We were at the bottom end of the performance table for 'dry' recycling rate, ranking ninth out of eleven Councils.
- ix. We received 33.5% more waste per capita at our HRCs compared to the average for other NI Councils.
- x. We received 78% more non-recycled waste at our HRCs per capita than the average for other NI Councils.
- xi. The percentage of waste collected at our HRC sites for recycling was lower than the average for other Councils – 66%, compared to an average rate of 75% for other Councils.

- xii. The percentage of waste collected at the kerbside for recycling was higher than the average for other Councils – 60.4%, compared to an average rate of 51.7% for other Councils.
- xiii. Overall (HRC plus kerbside), we collected 14% more household waste per capita than the average for other NI Councils; 33.5% more waste through HRCs and 11% more waste at the kerbside.
- xiv. Our rolling 12-month recycling rate (July 2021 to June 2022) was 49.8%; this was 0.7% lower than the average for all Councils, ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of 11 Councils and is 20.2% lower than the new 70% waste recycling target set for 2030.







### Summary and Conclusions

Members would note that we were still some way off the new 70% waste recycling target introduced for 2030, under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. Whilst our kerbside recycling rate was above the Northern Ireland average, our HRC recycling rate was below the average for other Councils. In both these key aspects of our waste management services, there was still very significant scope for improved recycling and cost reduction outcomes.

Further to a report brought to the October 2022 meeting of the Environment Committee, a major campaign of recycling engagement was currently underway. This would see a combination of both education and enforcement being used to target householder recycling behaviours as well as aiming to better control the source and type of waste that Council collects. Periodic progress reports would be brought to the Committee in due course.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Boyle felt the report was a mixed bag and noted that the percentage of waste collected at Council's HRC sites for recycling was lower than the average for other Councils – 66%, compared to an average rate of 75% for other Councils. There was still a journey to travel on but he appreciated the work that the Director of Environment and officers who were working hard and commended them on a publication that was released recently on how everyone could improve recycling rates. That would also have a positive benefit on the rate setting process.

Through the publication though, he had noted that the nearest facility to dispose of hard plastics was in Newtownards, which was considerable distance from Portaferry. The Head of Waste and Cleansing explained that space was the main factor and that it was not economically viable to condense hard plastics as it lowered their recycling value. Due to that the material could only be collected at larger sites where a roll-on roll-off skip could be provided.

Councillor Cathcart welcomed some of the progress that had been made but believed there needed to be a strategic approach with larger, but fewer, HRCs in place across the Borough in order to maximise revenues from materials. He felt that 33% more waste being deposited at Council sites was a staggering amount and felt that the figure needed to be addressed but also communicated to the public to provide some context around why the new permit system had been introduced. The Chair felt this was a good point and invited the officer to comment.

The officer explained that larger signs instructing that HRCs were for resident use only had been installed along with the commencement of ID checks. The statistic referred to by Councillor Cathcart had been publicly released but he would ask for it be circulated through Council social media channels.

Councillor Greer agreed with the comments made by Councillor Cathcart in terms of taking a strategic approach to HRCs and felt that difficult decisions needed to be

made to ensure what was available was fit for purpose. She asked if there were any plans for a review of the Council's HRCs and it was advised that external funding could be considered to undertake such a process but there had been no appetite to date. In terms of opening new larger sites there were lengthy timescales involved for gaining planning permission and obtaining waste management licences. That was a two-to-three-year process.

He advised that the performance levels at larger HRC's which offered the full range of recycling, pointing to the Balloo site in Bangor, were on a par with the higher performing councils in Northern Ireland.

Councillor Greer acknowledged that the Borough was performing well, with high levels of recycling from kerbside collections but there was a need to address performance at HRCs and difficult decisions would have to be made in order to do that.

Councillor Smart agreed and reflected on missed opportunities to modernise HRC facilities at Donaghadee and Millisle. A piecemeal approach would not work and the estate needed to be reviewed in its entirety. He asked if that was possible and how that would be undertaken.

The officer advised that it would be the desire to look externally and commission an independent review of HRCs.

Councillor Edmund argued that larger and fewer sites would only mean longer distances for motorists and that in itself would be detrimental to the planet. He pointed out that a HRC user in Portaferry would need to make a 54-mile round trip in order to use the site in Ards. So closing small HRCs was not necessarily the answer and could also lead to fly-tipping.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **6. LICENSING Q1 ACTIVITY REPORT (1 APRIL 2022 TO 30 JUNE 2022) (FILE LQR / 90100)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the the information provided in this report covered, unless otherwise stated, the period from **1 April to 30 June 2022**. The aim of the report was to provide Members with details of some of the key activities of the Licensing Service, the range of services it provided along with details of level of performance.

### **Applications Received**

The Service dealt with a wide range of licensing functions which required the officers to consult with the PSNI, NIFRS and a range of other internal Council Sections in making their assessment of an application.

	<b>Period of Report 1 April to 30 June 2022</b>	<b>Same quarter last year 1 April to 30 June 2021</b>
<b>Entertainment Licence</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Cinema Licence</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Amusement Permits</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership Place Approval</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pavement Café Licence</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Street Trading Licence</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Lottery Permits</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

Most of the licences issued are for renewals and hence the workload is relatively constant year on year. Renewing a licence still entails considerable work to access the application and consult with the other bodies.

### **Regulatory Approvals**

The following table gives the number of licences, approvals and permits that had been processed and issued.

	<b>Period of Report 1 April to 30 June 2022</b>	<b>Same quarter last year 1 April to 30 June 2021</b>
<b>Entertainment Licence</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Cinema Licence</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Amusement Permits</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership Place Approval</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Pavement Café Licence</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Street Trading Licence</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Lottery Permits</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

### **Town Centre CCTV**

The Council currently operated 18 cameras in Bangor, Holywood and Newtownards with the control room located in Bangor. They were manned for 40 hours per week; the remainder of the week the cameras were recording from a fixed position.

Five incidents were recorded (up to the 18 May 2022) and reported to the PSNI by the CCTV operator.

The CCTV system failed on the 18 May 2022 and whilst the cameras continued to work it was not possible to review or record any incidents. A solution to this problem was being sought.

Offence Recorded	Bangor	Holywood	Newtownards	Total
Traffic accidents	1	1	1	3
Criminal damage			1	1
Other	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Man fell and required medical help</li> <li>2. Person lying in the road – Safe Zone attended</li> </ol>			2

Members would also be aware that a Working Group had been established to review this service and it was proposed to allocate a budget in the next financial year to provide expert support to facilitate the review process.

#### Off-Street Car Parking

**Table 1: Income from Ticket Sales**

	Period of Report 1 April to 30 June 2022
Income from ticket sales	£180,028

**Table 2: PCN's Issued**

	Period of Report 1 April to 30 June 2022	Same quarter last year 1 April to 30 June 2022
Bangor	277	293
Holywood	300	166
Newtownards	360	295
<b>Total</b>	<b>937</b>	<b>754</b>

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Boyle noted that Council's town centre CCTV system had failed in May and since then had been unable to record any incidents. He asked for further details around that matter and the Head of Waste of Cleansing Services advised that the relevant officer would update members directly.

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

## **7. GRANT AND TRANSFER OF ENTERTAINMENT LICENCES (FILE LR 100 / 90101)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing the following:

1. An application had been received for the grant of an entertainment licence as follows:

### **Donaghadee Parish Church Halls, Church Lane, Donaghadee**

**Applicant:** Mr David Sloan, 45 The Meadows, Donaghadee

**Days and Hours:** 9.00am – 11.30pm

**Occasional Licence:** granted for 14 unspecified days within the next 12 months

**Type of entertainment:** Indoor dancing, singing and music or any other entertainment of a like kind; A Theatrical Performance.

The PSNI and NIFRS had advised that they had no objections.

2. An application has also been made for the **Transfer of Licence:**

### **The Portaferry Hotel, The Strand, Portaferry**

**Applicant:** Mr Kieran Quinn, 12 Millview, Portaferry

**Days and Hours:** Monday to Sunday during the permitted hours when alcohol may be served on these premises under the Licensing (NI) Order 1996

**Type of entertainment:** Indoor dancing, singing and music.

The PSNI and NIFRS had advised that they have no objections.

RECOMMENDED that the Council grants the applications.

Proposed by Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Boyle welcomed the granting of the licences and wished to congratulate the new owner of The Portaferry Hotel following a recent takeover and wished him well.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.**

**8. GRANT OF PAVEMENT CAFÉ LICENCE (FILE LR PCL47 / 90101)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the following application had been received for the grant of a Pavement Café Licence:

**The Olive Tree Artisan Café**

**Applicant:** Mr Scott McDonald

**Venue:** The Olive Tree Artisan Café, 9-11 Bridge Street, Bangor

**Day and hours of use:**

Monday - Saturday	08.00 - 16.00
Sunday	09.00 - 16.00

The application had been publicly displayed on the relevant premises for 28 days as required in the legislation. No objections had been received.

DFI Roads and the Planning Service had been consulted. No objections had been raised to the application.

Under the agreed conditions of licence, the pavement cafe would be required to:

- only use the agreed area to be outlined in the licence,
- provide only the approved furniture,
- completely remove any furniture from the pavement at the end of each day's trading
- keep the area used for the café to be kept clean of litter and liquid spills

RECOMMENDED that the Council grants the above licence.

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

**9. GRANT OF AMUSEMENT LICENCE (FILE LR 100 / 90101)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the following application for an Amusement Permit had been received:

**Premises:** Bean BT18 Ltd, 107 Bloomfield Road South, Bangor BT19 7HR

**Applicant:** Mr Francis Brady, Dunmalagh Park, Ballycastle

An application for an **amusement permit** had been made under Article 108 (1) (ca) of the Order to provide gaming machines with a maximum cash prize pay-out of £25. Access to the premises will be restricted to over 18-year-olds only.

### **Comment**

The application had been publicly advertised as required by the Order and there had been no objections.

The PSNI had also confirmed that they did not have any objection to the provisional grant of the application.

Should the Council be minded to refuse this application or wish to impose further restrictions on the applicant then the Council was required to serve Notice on the applicant stating the proposed grounds for the refusal or additional restrictions. The applicant then had 14 days to inform the Council in writing their desire to show cause, in person or by a representative as to why the application should not be refused or the additional conditions applied.

RECOMMENDED that the Council considers the application and confirms if it wishes to grant or to indicate its intention to refuse the permit/grant with further restrictions.

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

## **10. NOTICES OF MOTION**

### **10.1. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS CATHCART AND GILMOUR**

That this Council recognises the difficulties faced by local businesses during this 'cost of doing business crisis', especially on business cash flow. The Council will therefore review the current requirement for advanced payments for Council bin collection services to help ease cash flow issues. An officers' report will be brought back to the appropriate committee.

Proposed by Councillor Cathcart, Seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the notice of motion be adopted.

Proposing, Councillor Cathcart told the Committee that we were facing both a cost-of-living crisis and a cost of doing business crisis. We were all aware of the impact of rising costs of everything, from fuel, heating our homes, to food. Local businesses were facing a double whammy because they too were having to deal with rising costs but at the same time, they were seeing a falling demand for goods and services as everyone was cutting expenditure to get through this difficult time. This was resulting in cash flow problems in local businesses.

He explained that cashflow was simply the net balance of cash moving into and out of a business at a specific point in time.

Cash flow was often seen as one of the major financial indicators for the health of a business, because it impacted such a significant amount of the business. Success was often judged on good cash flow. However, it was not always unprofitable businesses that could face troubles with cash flow.

A cash flow problem was obviously when the cash going out of the business outweighed the cash coming in, causing a lack of liquidity meaning a company would struggle to make payments to suppliers, pay bills and ultimately to run the business. According to a report by digital SME bank Cashplus Bank, Nine out of ten small firms in the UK were reporting higher costs, with costs outstripping income over the last six months.

One of the biggest increases in the cost of doing business had been in supplies and stock purchased, which had gone up by 21 per cent year on year.

Small businesses were also spending on average 37 per cent more on fuel since the beginning of 2022.

The economy had been weak following the shock of the pandemic. Small business income and outgoings were broadly flat in the six months between August 2021 and February 2022 but then the war in Ukraine began.

Costs had outgrown income between March and September this year. Costs had grown by 10 per cent while income only grew by 8 per cent.

This was worse in Northern Ireland because of the protocol. It was estimated that the Protocol had caused a 6% rise in costs for goods and materials from our most important market, the rest of the UK, some businesses had seen have supply chains from GB completely stopped as companies had decided it was too expensive and complicated to trade with Northern Irish companies. So they had had to look at more expensive supplies elsewhere. Some local companies that were still getting supplies from GB had faced long delays in getting these actually delivered that it was severely impacting their business cash flow.

I am aware of one local business who was facing up to three-week delays on supplies from GB. They had a 30-day invoice period with suppliers to pay for the stock in full which effectively gave them a week to try and get some income from sales to help pay for it. This was not sustainable; they were trying to negotiate longer invoice periods but companies were not willing to do this as they had their own cash flow issues.

Local Businesses were in a difficult place, dealing with rising costs and a fall in demand.

Councillor Cathcart had asked local businesses and the Bangor Chamber of Commerce how Council could help. Obviously, Council had limited powers and needed help from central Government, like it had during the Covid pandemic.

It had been mentioned to him that the Council could help business cash flow for some small local businesses by not charging in advance for bin collection services.



As I have highlighted local businesses were struggling to pay invoices that were after they had received the goods or services. We were charging for a future service.

He was now requesting that a report be brought back to look at this to see if Council could look at payment options for local businesses which used the bin collection services to see if Council could help cash flow. Furthermore, they were having to judge how many bin lifts they required into the future, with demand falling, it was hard to judge what would be required and they may end up paying for more than they actually needed.

This was a relatively minor thing regarding a service that was not expensive. However, as a well known supermarket chain would say, "every little helps", He encouraged Members to support the proposal.

Speaking as seconder, Councillor Cummings recognised the challenges faced by businesses and they were only compounded by the increased cost of living and Covid recovery. He explained how it would be a small matter of timing of the payment but it would go a long way to ease cashflow positions. He encouraged Members to support the motion.

Members debated the motion and were sympathetic to the challenges faced in the current economic climate.

Councillor Boyle queried the current payment system for commercial collections and the Head of Waste and Cleansing Services advised that service users were billed in advance in the financial quarter before the services were delivered. For example, payment for services delivered between January and March 2023 would be processed by the end of December 2022. If payment was not received the service would be suspended. He explained the previous difficulties in recovering payment if it ran in to the second quarter. More than 1,000 businesses paid by direct debit and there was only a handful every month where payment didn't clear. This could often be a simple case of bank details changing, however.

Councillor Boyle would be supporting the motion but was mindful of the complications and affects it could have in the rate setting process.

Supporting the Motion, Councillor Smart recognised the difficult financial climate and this proposal was just a drop in the ocean compared with other costs that businesses were facing. It was worth looking at to see if an alternative system could work but it needed to be looked at in the round as it could have an impact on the rate.

Councillor Greer agreed with those comments and would await a report. She asked if any businesses had asked for alternative arrangements and the officer advised that while public sector organisations were unaffected due to the necessity to use purchase order and invoicing system, some smaller businesses had felt the current system did not work. He clarified that any changes to the current payment system would be dealt with through the Corporate Services Committee.

EC7.12.2022

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Before inviting the proposer to sum up, the Chair added his support to the motion and would be interested to see a report but he felt that Members needed to be mindful of any impact it could have on the rates.

Councillor Cathcart added that businesses had raised the issue with the current payment system. He felt that the questioning of officers at this stage had been unnecessary as the purpose of bringing a report back was to allow officers to go away and look at this in further detail and to recommend a way forward.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the notice of motion be adopted.**

## **11. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

There were no items of Any Other Notified Business.

### **CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION**

- (a) NOARC21 - STOP THE LEGAL CHALLENGE PETITION
- (b) LETTER FROM DFC – FEES FOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCES

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the items circulated for information be noted.**

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS**

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



EC7.12.2022

EC7.12.2022

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**RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.**

**TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting terminated at 20.21.

## **ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A hybrid meeting (in person and via Zoom) meeting of the Environment Committee was held at Council Offices, Church Street, Newtownards on Wednesday, 7 December 2022 at 7.00 pm.

### **PRESENT:**

**In the Chair:** Alderman McDowell

**Aldermen:** Armstrong-Cotter (Zoom)      Smith, M (Zoom)  
Carson (Zoom)

**Councillors:** Boyle                      Johnson (Zoom)  
Cathcart (Zoom)      McAlpine (Zoom)  
Cummings              McKee (Zoom)  
Edmund                  Smart (Zoom)  
Irwin (Zoom)  
Greer (Zoom)

**Officers:** Head of Waste and Cleansing Services (N Martin), Head of Regulatory Services (S Addy), Head of Assets and Property Services) and Democratic Services Officer (R King)

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor MacArthur, Councillor Woods and the Director of Environment.

**NOTED.**

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair asked for Declarations of Interest and none were indicated.

**NOTED.**

### **3. NOM REPORT – POLICY ON THE PROVISION OF PERSONAL SEA RESCUE EQUIPMENT (FILE 65000)**

(Appendix I)

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:-** Report from the Director of Environment detailing the undernoted:

## **Background**

In September 2022 the Council agreed a Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Chambers and Brooks that read:

*We ask this Council to consider the urgent provision of sea rescue equipment to Cove Bay beach, known locally as the third beach, in Groomsport. A review into other locations around the Borough, should also be considered.*

The minutes also recorded that: *"The Chair asked Councillor Chambers if he would like a report to look at the policy and provision of sea rescue equipment throughout the Borough and the Member agreed but asked that Groomsport be considered in the first instance since that village had been the purpose of his Motion.*

Given the urgent nature of this request, officers prioritised this work and a draft policy for the provision of Personal Rescue Equipment (PRE) was attached for approval.

### **Assessing the Request at Cove Bay against the Draft Policy**

Cove bay in Groomsport was not Council land so therefore would not be considered for PRE under this policy.

As noted in the policy; with the longest coastline of any Council area and potentially thousands of possible sites for PRE to be installed, it was, in the opinion of officers, impractical to provide and maintain provision of PRE across all the potential locations that were not owned by the Council. Furthermore, each site would need to be risk assessed and the landowner's permission sought and there would simply be too many factors outside of our control for this to be feasible.

### **Assessment of the remainder of the Borough against the Draft Policy**

Officers had catalogued some 68 existing items of PRE across the Borough. All met the criteria set out in this draft policy.

Officers were not currently aware of any gaps in provision that would comply with the criteria set out in the draft policy but would continue to keep this under review.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the draft policy attached.

The Head of Assets and Property Services pointed to page 2 of the report which stated that Cove Bay was not Council owned land. Due to a fault with the Council's mapping system, he advised that this information was incorrect and that the land was indeed owned by the Council and would be included as part of the above PRE. The ownership had also been rectified on the Council's mapping system.

Proposed by Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Irwin, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Edmund welcomed the progress and felt that it was important to keep an eye on safety equipment that was already in place. Councillors Irwin and McKee welcomed the clarification around land ownership at Cove Bay and that it would be included in the exercise. Councillor McKee raised concerns over the potential

removal of safety equipment under the policy and it was advised by the officer that this would only be done in extreme cases where there was ongoing vandalism.

Councillor Smart commented that the policy was sensible and reasonable but asked if the inaccuracy around the land ownership was repeated elsewhere in other matters across Council. The officer advised that Cove Bay had been a one-off occurrence and the matter had been rectified on the mapping system. The system was used daily and 99.9% of the time it was accurate.

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

**4. TECHNICAL REVENUE BUDGET FOR REFURBISHMENTS 2023/24 (FILE 65374)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing the undernoted report:

**1. Strategic Context**

The Council's agreed Maintenance Strategy incorporated a "needs based" budgeting model, rather than a more traditional "fixed amount" approach for its refurbishment programme.

Properties were condition scored and a threshold for action was to be agreed by the Council, subject to budget considerations.

By making a budgetary decision at this stage, ahead of the rates setting process, Members were able to see the detail behind each option in order to inform the decision and give officers guidance on the amount to include in the next draft of the 2023/24 budget. Members would have the ability to review any decision as part of the overall final rates setting process.

**2. Area of Focus for 2023/24**

In 2023/24 works would focus on Tourism Buildings, Public Toilets & HRC's.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cemeteries & assoc. buildings	Tourism Buildings	Administrative Buildings
Community Centres	Public Toilets	Leisure Centres
Car Parks	Waste Recycling Centres & Transfer Stations	Sports Pavilions

**3. Budget Considerations in current context**

Historically our threshold for action had been around 75% with costed options for revising this threshold up or down. However, this year there were several large projects in the 71% to 75% bracket which may have made this threshold unaffordable. A brief explanation of these projects was below:



The Parade WCs, Donaghadee	73.69%	£100,000	The basic works package to refurb the toilet block will cost around £85k. However, following a NoM in Oct 21 additional work was included to create a layout suitable for future changing places compliance. Note: Additional works are needed to gain CP accreditation - see 4.0 discretionary costs.
Main Street WCs, Greyabbey	71.13%	£50,000	Options include either refurbishment of existing toilet block or relocation of toilets as part of a regen project at the Village Hall (subject to Planning and consultation)

#### 4. Cross-Departmental Working

Cognisance of wider strategies and plans for these assets was essential so as to meet the expectations of our internal customers and reduce the likelihood of spending significant sums of money on assets that may be disposed of or replaced in the foreseeable future. Therefore, discussions with relevant officers had taken place and the proposed works reflected any known plans for the assets concerned.

In addition to the condition-based works, there were a number of project works that had either been requested by the Council or were otherwise required to maintain the safe and effective operation of the buildings. These "operational" works therefore needed to be completed irrespective of the overall condition of the building and were quantified within the table in section 6.0.

#### 5. Discretionary Costs

Several items had been added under this column as they were neither condition based nor were they operational/H&S related and were therefore discretionary. The first item was the additional cost to make the Parade toilets into a changing places facility as previously requested by the Council. Officers acknowledged that in the current budget setting context this additional cost may not be palatable and had therefore upgraded the basic refurbishment works to allow it to be future proofed, enabling further equipment fit-out at a later date to gain changing places accreditation, should budget become available.

The second item was for some experimental works to address seepage in the seawall at Millisle lagoon. It was noted that the structure had a considerable amount of seepage through and under the lagoon wall meaning that in certain tidal conditions the water almost completely drained from the lagoon. Officers had commissioned several specialist assessments of the structure and had confirmed that the defects had not affected the structural integrity at this time, and it was therefore not currently at risk of collapse. However, it was clear that in the longer term the seepage needed to be addressed. It had been suggested by the specialist that we carry out some experimental repairs whereby cores were drilled, and wet concrete was pumped into the voids from above at a number of locations along the wall. Seepage could be monitored before and after so that any improvement could be verified. If successful, further cores would follow in subsequent years' budget allocations.

## 6. Condition scores and Costs

The condition scores and corresponding costs were shown on the table below:

Type of Building	Building name	Location	Condition Score 2020	Costs for Condition based works	Operational requests	Discretionary Costs	Notes
Waste Recycling Centres	Ballygowan Road	Comber	80.94%				
Public Conveniences	Main Road Car Park WCs	Cloughey	80.81%				
Public Conveniences	Springvale Road WCs	Ballywalter	80.69%				
Public Conveniences	Abbey Street WCs	Bangor	80.13%				
Tourism	Cockle Row	Groomsport	80.06%				
Public Conveniences	Anchor Car Park WCs	Portavogie	80.00%	€ 1,500			
Public Conveniences	Castle Park WCs	Bangor	79.81%	€ 3,000			
Public Conveniences	Ward Park WCs	Bangor	79.75%	€ 1,000			
Public Conveniences	Groomsport WCs	Groomsport	79.56%	€ 1,000			
Public Conveniences	Castle Street WCs	Comber	79.50%	€ 1,000			
Public Conveniences	Islandhill WCs	Comber	79.13%	€ 2,000			
Public Conveniences	Kiltonga WCs	Newtownards	79.00%	€ 500			
Public Conveniences	Ballyhalbert WCs	Ballyhalbert	78.94%	€ 1,500			
Public Conveniences	Seapark WCs	Hollywood	78.69%	€ 60,000			
Tourism	Tower House	Bangor	78.63%	€ 2,500			
Tourism	Townhall	Newtownards	78.50%		€ 36,000		Works to replace front windows
Waste Recycling Centres	Parsonage Road	Kircubbin	78.50%	€ 2,000			
Public Conveniences	Ballywalter Road Car Park WCs	Millisle	78.44%	€ 10,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Moss Road	Millisle	78.31%	€ 3,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Quarry Heights	Newtownards	77.88%	€ 1,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Balloo HRC	Bangor	77.63%		€ 35,000		Extensive works to kiosk building
Public Conveniences	Londonderry Park WCs	Newtownards	77.56%	€ 2,500			
Waste Recycling Centres	Waste Transfer Station	Bangor	77.38%		€ 30,000		Repair cladding / repair toilets
Public Conveniences	Mill Street WCs	Newtownards	77.31%	€ 1,500			
Waste Recycling Centres	Moss Road	Ballygowan	77.25%	€ 3,000	€ 30,000		Lay by/Entrance improvements (road safety issue)
Public Conveniences	Banks Lane WCs	Bangor	77.06%	€ 60,000			
Public Conveniences	South Pier WCs	Bangor	76.69%	€ 20,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Coach Road	Portaferry	76.38%	€ 5,000			
Public Conveniences	The Commons WCs	Donaghadee	76.00%	€ 30,000			
Waste Recycling Centres	Railway Street	Donaghadee	75.69%	€ 10,000			
Public Conveniences	Hibernia Street WCs	Hollywood	75.19%	€ 60,000			
Public Conveniences	Ballyholme WCs	Bangor	75.13%	€ 60,000			
Public Conveniences	The Parade WCs	Donaghadee	73.69%	€ 100,000		€ 55,000	Extra cost for changing places equipment
Public Conveniences	Main Street WCs	Greyabbey	71.13%	€ 50,000			New toilet block to be considered as part of regen project
Public Conveniences	Whiterock WCs	Killinchy	70.00%	€ 50,000			
External works	Millisle Lagoon	Millisle				€ 35,000	Experimental works to resolve seepage
Option 1	<70%			€ 50,000	€ 131,000		€ 181,000
Option 2	<75%			€ 200,000	€ 131,000		€ 331,000
Option 3	<80%			€ 542,000	€ 131,000		€ 673,000
Additional costs for discretionary works						€ 90,000	
Option 1 + Discretionary works				€ 50,000	€ 131,000	€ 90,000	€ 271,000
Option 2 + Discretionary works				€ 200,000	€ 131,000	€ 90,000	€ 421,000
Option 3 + Discretionary works				€ 542,000	€ 131,000	€ 90,000	€ 763,000

## 7. Options Available

**7.1** If Members opted to adopt a threshold of 70%, only Whiterock toilets would receive a refurbishment. This added to the "operational works" gave a total of **£181k** and would result in the budget being **reduced by 2.6%** from last year, achieving a saving of **£4,924**.

**7.2** Alternatively, Members had the option to implement a threshold of 75%, meaning that refurbishments would also take place at The Parade, Donaghadee and at the Public Toilets in Greyabbey. By consequence, **£331k** would be included in the 2023/24 estimates for refurbishments, resulting in a **78% increase (£145k)** over the 2022/23 revenue allocation.

**7.3** If Members wished to carry out the £90k of discretionary works in addition to Option 1, **£271k** would be included in the 2023/24 refurbishments budget, representing an **increase of 46% or £85k** over the 2022/23 revenue allocation.

**7.4** If Members wished to carry out the £90k of discretionary works in addition to Option 2, **£421k** would be included in the 2023/24 refurbishments budget, representing an **increase of 126% or £235k** over the 2022/23 revenue allocation.

## **8. Longer Term Consequences**

It should be noted that the option set out in 7.1, would result in a reduction in revenue budget. Whilst this may be desirable and feasible this year, Members should bear in mind that this would be the third year in a row where this budget has been reduced. All buildings deteriorate through wear and tear and unforeseen issues and there was a possibility that we may have needed to request this money back into revenue budgets next year, depending on what the condition surveys found. Naturally, the more this budget was eroded, the bigger the potential impact on future budgets when it was reinstated.

In addition, option 7.1 limited the amount of refurbishment carried out to just one project and therefore carried a risk of increased reactive maintenance costs in the estate and a greater potential for the properties to fail to meet user expectations.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves as its preferred option, that set out in section 7.1 of this report, resulting in £181,000 being included in the 2023/24 budget, subject to the Estimates process.

Councillor Boyle referred to WCs at Main Street, Greyabbey and understood they were to come under a Regeneration programme. He asked what finances would be in place to replace those and if they would be included in that programme.

The officer advised that the recommendation was to proceed with the first option, numbered 7.1, but Greyabbey would sit outside of that threshold. If Members raised the bar to 75% then Greyabbey would be included. He clarified that it had been considered to include Greyabbey WCs as part of wider regeneration programme planned for the Village Hall and it had been the preference to put the WCs through a required planning application at the same time as that project. He clarified that there was a possibility though that without commitment of funding under this scheme, the regeneration programme could commence without the WCs.

Given that response, Councillor Boyle felt that it was important to have a balance between need and desire. While mindful of the extra cost, he felt that the third option (7.3) was more inclusive and included work that was needed.

Councillor Boyle proposed, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that Option 7.3 be adopted.

Councillor Cummings was happy to support that proposal and was mindful of the cost but it was important for Council to take care of its property and ensure facilities were fit for use.

He pointed to works at Ballygowan's Moss Road that were listed in the chart and queried the general capacity around those works and asked for a timeline that officers were working towards.

The Officer explained that there were potential issues around the skips being emptied but there was no firm proposal on the ground but the budget was there for works to take place in the incoming financial year. He was unable to provide a timeline at this stage but would keep the Member informed on further developments.

Councillor Edmund was supportive of the proposal and felt the work was needed while Councillors Greer, Smart and Cathcart, while understanding of the need to bring facilities up to standard, were mindful of the potential impact this could have on the rate and queried how the expenditure would be dealt with as part of the rate setting process. The officer clarified that this was a standard amount put forward every year as part of the estimates process for Members to consider in further detail.

The Chair commented that he was content for it move towards the rate setting process and it could be considered further and changed if necessary.

Summing up, Councillor Boyle took on board the above comments and recognised that there could be alterations under the estimates process.

Members indicated they were content with the proposal.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that Option 3 (numbered as 7.3 in the report) be adopted.**

**5. NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL AUTHORITY MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STATISTICS – APRIL TO JUNE 2022 (FILE 53042)**

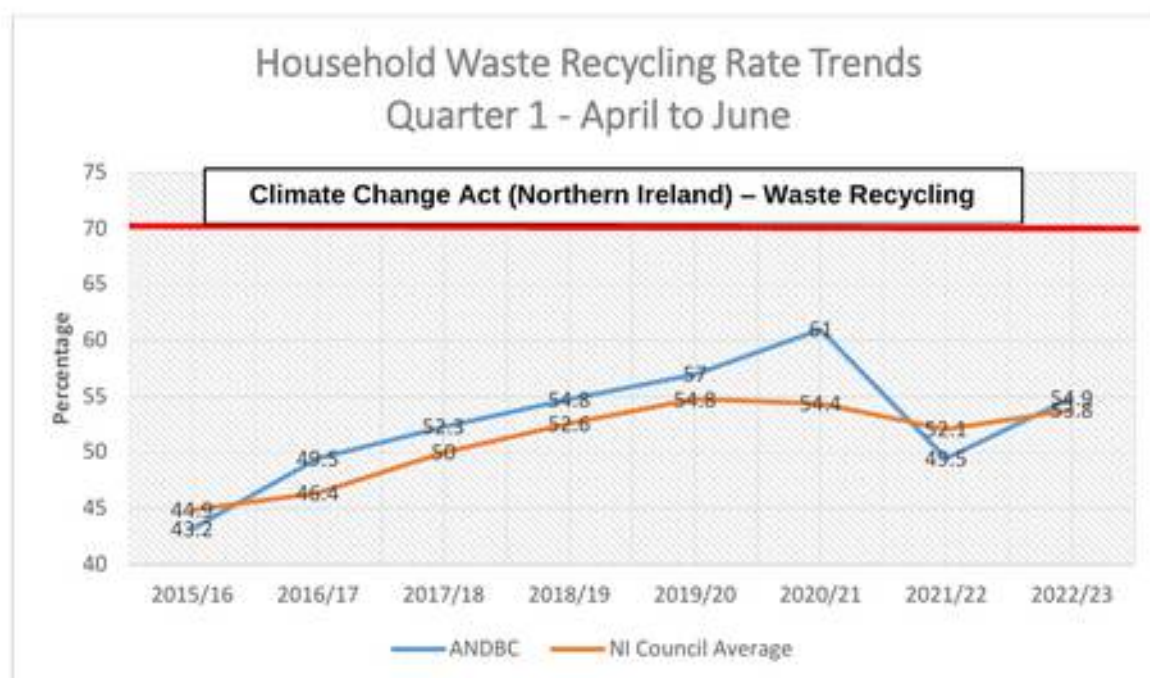
PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the following:

**Background**

The official waste management statistics for the first quarter of 2022/2023 (April to June 2022) had been released by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

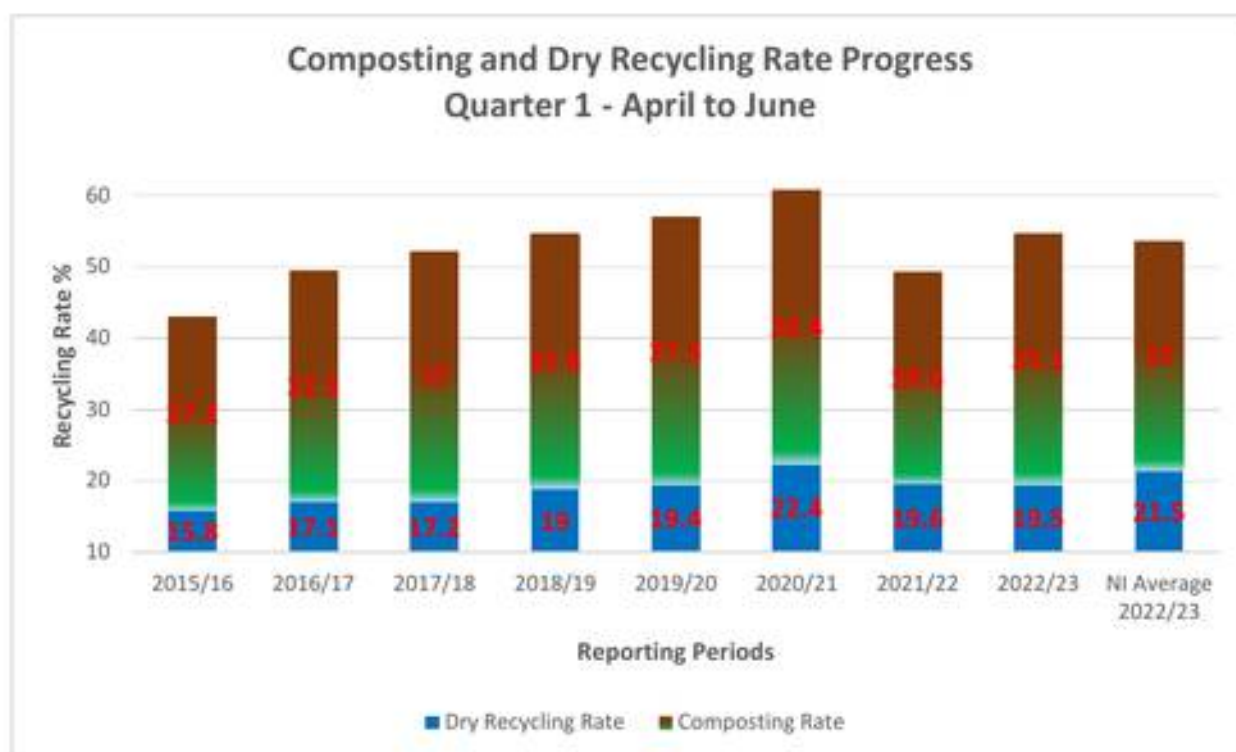
The significant headlines contained within the latest DAERA report showed that:

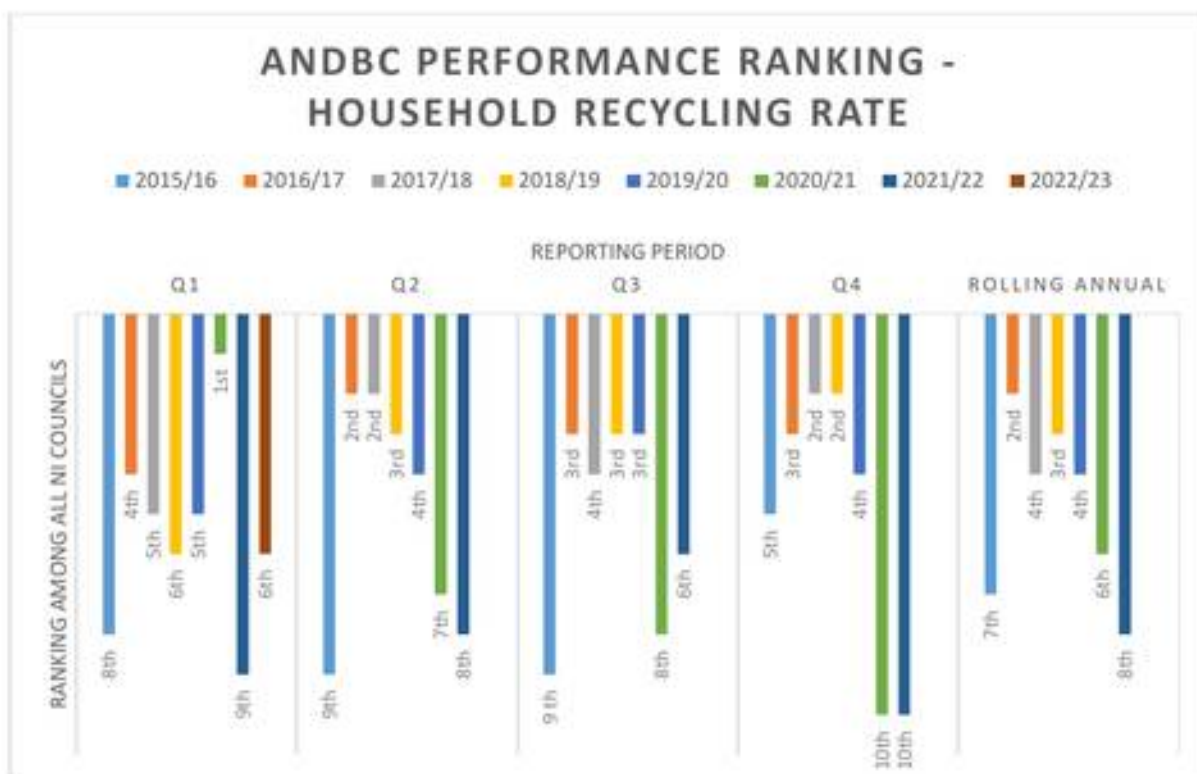
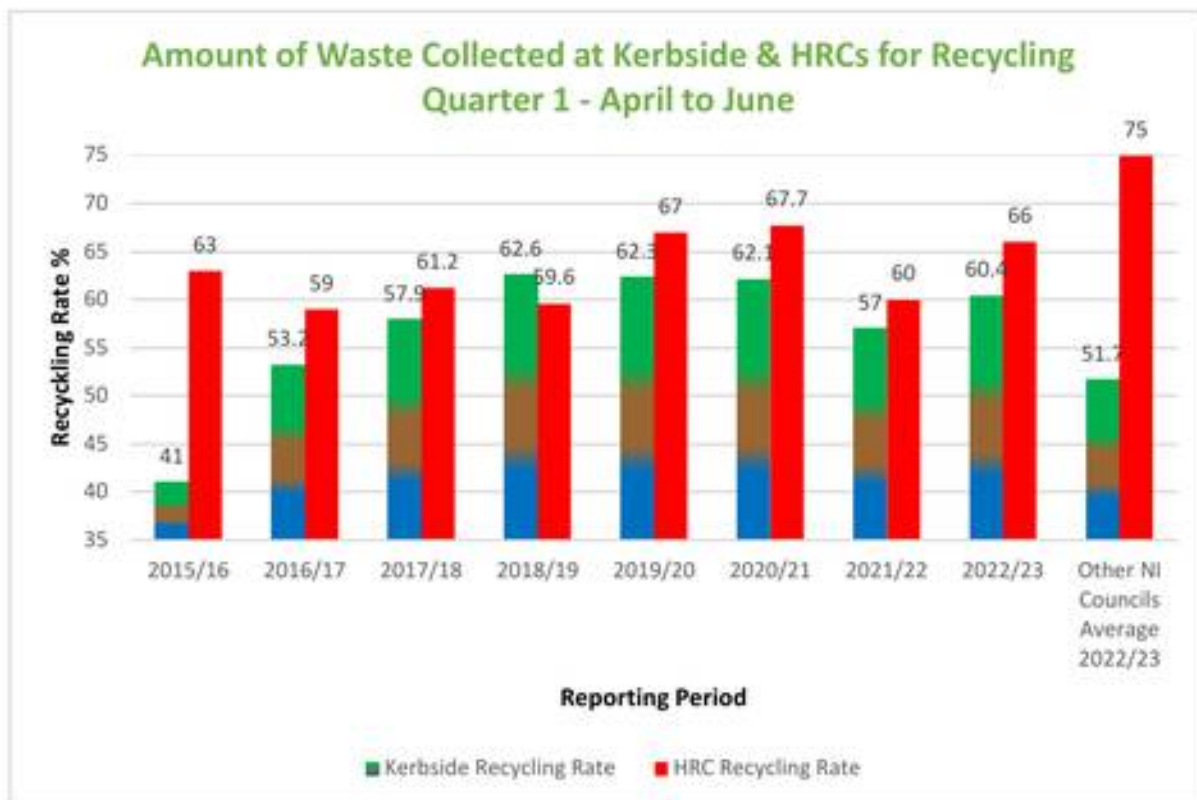
- i. Our household waste recycling rate rose compared to Q1 last year, from 49.5% to 54.9%.



- ii. Our household waste recycling rate of 54.9%, was 1.1% higher than the NI average of 53.8%.
- iii. We were ranked sixth out of the 11 NI Councils for our household waste recycling rate, up from the ninth place ranking last year.
- iv. Our household waste composting rate rose by 5.5% - from 29.6% to 35.1%. Our household waste dry recycling rate fell by 0.1% - from 19.6% to 19.5%.
- v. Our household waste composting rate of 35.1% was 3.1% higher than the NI average of 32%.
- vi. Our household waste dry recycling rate (i.e. recycling of items other than organic food and garden waste) of 19.5% was 2% lower than the N.I. average of 21.5%.
- vii. Our kerbside recycling capture rate of 78.3% for household compostable waste materials compared to a NI Council average of 72.8%.
- viii. We were at the bottom end of the performance table for 'dry' recycling rate, ranking ninth out of eleven Councils.
- ix. We received 33.5% more waste per capita at our HRCs compared to the average for other NI Councils.
- x. We received 78% more non-recycled waste at our HRCs per capita than the average for other NI Councils.
- xi. The percentage of waste collected at our HRC sites for recycling was lower than the average for other Councils – 66%, compared to an average rate of 75% for other Councils.

- xii. The percentage of waste collected at the kerbside for recycling was higher than the average for other Councils – 60.4%, compared to an average rate of 51.7% for other Councils.
- xiii. Overall (HRC plus kerbside), we collected 14% more household waste per capita than the average for other NI Councils; 33.5% more waste through HRCs and 11% more waste at the kerbside.
- xiv. Our rolling 12-month recycling rate (July 2021 to June 2022) was 49.8%; this was 0.7% lower than the average for all Councils, ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of 11 Councils and is 20.2% lower than the new 70% waste recycling target set for 2030.





### Summary and Conclusions

Members would note that we were still some way off the new 70% waste recycling target introduced for 2030, under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. Whilst our kerbside recycling rate was above the Northern Ireland average, our HRC recycling rate was below the average for other Councils. In both these key aspects of our waste management services, there was still very significant scope for improved recycling and cost reduction outcomes.

Further to a report brought to the October 2022 meeting of the Environment Committee, a major campaign of recycling engagement was currently underway. This would see a combination of both education and enforcement being used to target householder recycling behaviours as well as aiming to better control the source and type of waste that Council collects. Periodic progress reports would be brought to the Committee in due course.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Boyle felt the report was a mixed bag and noted that the percentage of waste collected at Council's HRC sites for recycling was lower than the average for other Councils – 66%, compared to an average rate of 75% for other Councils. There was still a journey to travel on but he appreciated the work that the Director of Environment and officers who were working hard and commended them on a publication that was released recently on how everyone could improve recycling rates. That would also have a positive benefit on the rate setting process.

Through the publication though, he had noted that the nearest facility to dispose of hard plastics was in Newtownards, which was considerable distance from Portaferry. The Head of Waste and Cleansing explained that space was the main factor and that it was not economically viable to condense hard plastics as it lowered their recycling value. Due to that the material could only be collected at larger sites where a roll-on roll-off skip could be provided.

Councillor Cathcart welcomed some of the progress that had been made but believed there needed to be a strategic approach with larger, but fewer, HRCs in place across the Borough in order to maximise revenues from materials. He felt that 33% more waste being deposited at Council sites was a staggering amount and felt that the figure needed to be addressed but also communicated to the public to provide some context around why the new permit system had been introduced. The Chair felt this was a good point and invited the officer to comment.

The officer explained that larger signs instructing that HRCs were for resident use only had been installed along with the commencement of ID checks. The statistic referred to by Councillor Cathcart had been publicly released but he would ask for it be circulated through Council social media channels.

Councillor Greer agreed with the comments made by Councillor Cathcart in terms of taking a strategic approach to HRCs and felt that difficult decisions needed to be



made to ensure what was available was fit for purpose. She asked if there were any plans for a review of the Council's HRCs and it was advised that external funding could be considered to undertake such a process but there had been no appetite to date. In terms of opening new larger sites there were lengthy timescales involved for gaining planning permission and obtaining waste management licences. That was a two-to-three-year process.

He advised that the performance levels at larger HRC's which offered the full range of recycling, pointing to the Balloo site in Bangor, were on a par with the higher performing councils in Northern Ireland.

Councillor Greer acknowledged that the Borough was performing well, with high levels of recycling from kerbside collections but there was a need to address performance at HRCs and difficult decisions would have to be made in order to do that.

Councillor Smart agreed and reflected on missed opportunities to modernise HRC facilities at Donaghadee and Millisle. A piecemeal approach would not work and the estate needed to be reviewed in its entirety. He asked if that was possible and how that would be undertaken.

The officer advised that it would be the desire to look externally and commission an independent review of HRCs.

Councillor Edmund argued that larger and fewer sites would only mean longer distances for motorists and that in itself would be detrimental to the planet. He pointed out that a HRC user in Portaferry would need to make a 54-mile round trip in order to use the site in Ards. So closing small HRCs was not necessarily the answer and could also lead to fly-tipping.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **6. LICENSING Q1 ACTIVITY REPORT (1 APRIL 2022 TO 30 JUNE 2022) (FILE LQR / 90100)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the the information provided in this report covered, unless otherwise stated, the period from **1 April to 30 June 2022**. The aim of the report was to provide Members with details of some of the key activities of the Licensing Service, the range of services it provided along with details of level of performance.

### **Applications Received**

The Service dealt with a wide range of licensing functions which required the officers to consult with the PSNI, NIFRS and a range of other internal Council Sections in making their assessment of an application.

	<b>Period of Report 1 April to 30 June 2022</b>	<b>Same quarter last year 1 April to 30 June 2021</b>
<b>Entertainment Licence</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Cinema Licence</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Amusement Permits</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership Place Approval</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pavement Café Licence</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Street Trading Licence</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Lottery Permits</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

Most of the licences issued are for renewals and hence the workload is relatively constant year on year. Renewing a licence still entails considerable work to access the application and consult with the other bodies.

### **Regulatory Approvals**

The following table gives the number of licences, approvals and permits that had been processed and issued.

	<b>Period of Report 1 April to 30 June 2022</b>	<b>Same quarter last year 1 April to 30 June 2021</b>
<b>Entertainment Licence</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Cinema Licence</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Amusement Permits</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership Place Approval</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Pavement Café Licence</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Street Trading Licence</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Lottery Permits</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

### **Town Centre CCTV**

The Council currently operated 18 cameras in Bangor, Hollywood and Newtownards with the control room located in Bangor. They were manned for 40 hours per week; the remainder of the week the cameras were recording from a fixed position.

Five incidents were recorded (up to the 18 May 2022) and reported to the PSNI by the CCTV operator.

The CCTV system failed on the 18 May 2022 and whilst the cameras continued to work it was not possible to review or record any incidents. A solution to this problem was being sought.

Offence Recorded	Bangor	Holywood	Newtownards	Total
Traffic accidents	1	1	1	3
Criminal damage			1	1
Other	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Man fell and required medical help</li> <li>2. Person lying in the road – Safe Zone attended</li> </ol>			2

Members would also be aware that a Working Group had been established to review this service and it was proposed to allocate a budget in the next financial year to provide expert support to facilitate the review process.

#### Off-Street Car Parking

**Table 1: Income from Ticket Sales**

	Period of Report 1 April to 30 June 2022
Income from ticket sales	£180,028

**Table 2: PCN's Issued**

	Period of Report 1 April to 30 June 2022	Same quarter last year 1 April to 30 June 2022
Bangor	277	293
Holywood	300	166
Newtownards	360	295
<b>Total</b>	<b>937</b>	<b>754</b>

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Boyle noted that Council's town centre CCTV system had failed in May and since then had been unable to record any incidents. He asked for further details around that matter and the Head of Waste of Cleansing Services advised that the relevant officer would update members directly.

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

## **7. GRANT AND TRANSFER OF ENTERTAINMENT LICENCES (FILE LR 100 / 90101)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing the following:

1. An application had been received for the grant of an entertainment licence as follows:

### **Donaghadee Parish Church Halls, Church Lane, Donaghadee**

**Applicant:** Mr David Sloan, 45 The Meadows, Donaghadee

**Days and Hours:** 9.00am – 11.30pm

**Occasional Licence:** granted for 14 unspecified days within the next 12 months

**Type of entertainment:** Indoor dancing, singing and music or any other entertainment of a like kind; A Theatrical Performance.

The PSNI and NIFRS had advised that they had no objections.

2. An application has also been made for the **Transfer of Licence:**

### **The Portaferry Hotel, The Strand, Portaferry**

**Applicant:** Mr Kieran Quinn, 12 Millview, Portaferry

**Days and Hours:** Monday to Sunday during the permitted hours when alcohol may be served on these premises under the Licensing (NI) Order 1996

**Type of entertainment:** Indoor dancing, singing and music.

The PSNI and NIFRS had advised that they have no objections.

RECOMMENDED that the Council grants the applications.

Proposed by Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Boyle welcomed the granting of the licences and wished to congratulate the new owner of The Portaferry Hotel following a recent takeover and wished him well.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.**

**8. GRANT OF PAVEMENT CAFÉ LICENCE (FILE LR PCL47 / 90101)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the following application had been received for the grant of a Pavement Café Licence:

**The Olive Tree Artisan Café**

**Applicant:** Mr Scott McDonald

**Venue:** The Olive Tree Artisan Café, 9-11 Bridge Street, Bangor

**Day and hours of use:**

Monday - Saturday	08.00 - 16.00
Sunday	09.00 - 16.00

The application had been publicly displayed on the relevant premises for 28 days as required in the legislation. No objections had been received.

DFI Roads and the Planning Service had been consulted. No objections had been raised to the application.

Under the agreed conditions of licence, the pavement cafe would be required to:

- only use the agreed area to be outlined in the licence,
- provide only the approved furniture,
- completely remove any furniture from the pavement at the end of each day's trading
- keep the area used for the café to be kept clean of litter and liquid spills

RECOMMENDED that the Council grants the above licence.

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

**9. GRANT OF AMUSEMENT LICENCE (FILE LR 100 / 90101)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the following application for an Amusement Permit had been received:

**Premises:** Bean BT18 Ltd, 107 Bloomfield Road South, Bangor BT19 7HR

**Applicant:** Mr Francis Brady, Dunmalagh Park, Ballycastle

An application for an **amusement permit** had been made under Article 108 (1) (ca) of the Order to provide gaming machines with a maximum cash prize pay-out of £25. Access to the premises will be restricted to over 18-year-olds only.

### **Comment**

The application had been publicly advertised as required by the Order and there had been no objections.

The PSNI had also confirmed that they did not have any objection to the provisional grant of the application.

Should the Council be minded to refuse this application or wish to impose further restrictions on the applicant then the Council was required to serve Notice on the applicant stating the proposed grounds for the refusal or additional restrictions. The applicant then had 14 days to inform the Council in writing their desire to show cause, in person or by a representative as to why the application should not be refused or the additional conditions applied.

RECOMMENDED that the Council considers the application and confirms if it wishes to grant or to indicate its intention to refuse the permit/grant with further restrictions.

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

## **10. NOTICES OF MOTION**

### **10.1. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS CATHCART AND GILMOUR**

That this Council recognises the difficulties faced by local businesses during this 'cost of doing business crisis', especially on business cash flow. The Council will therefore review the current requirement for advanced payments for Council bin collection services to help ease cash flow issues. An officers' report will be brought back to the appropriate committee.

Proposed by Councillor Cathcart, Seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the notice of motion be adopted.

Proposing, Councillor Cathcart told the Committee that we were facing both a cost-of-living crisis and a cost of doing business crisis. We were all aware of the impact of rising costs of everything, from fuel, heating our homes, to food. Local businesses were facing a double whammy because they too were having to deal with rising costs but at the same time, they were seeing a falling demand for goods and services as everyone was cutting expenditure to get through this difficult time. This was resulting in cash flow problems in local businesses.

He explained that cashflow was simply the net balance of cash moving into and out of a business at a specific point in time.

Cash flow was often seen as one of the major financial indicators for the health of a business, because it impacted such a significant amount of the business. Success was often judged on good cash flow. However, it was not always unprofitable businesses that could face troubles with cash flow.

A cash flow problem was obviously when the cash going out of the business outweighed the cash coming in, causing a lack of liquidity meaning a company would struggle to make payments to suppliers, pay bills and ultimately to run the business. According to a report by digital SME bank Cashplus Bank, Nine out of ten small firms in the UK were reporting higher costs, with costs outstripping income over the last six months.

One of the biggest increases in the cost of doing business had been in supplies and stock purchased, which had gone up by 21 per cent year on year.

Small businesses were also spending on average 37 per cent more on fuel since the beginning of 2022.

The economy had been weak following the shock of the pandemic. Small business income and outgoings were broadly flat in the six months between August 2021 and February 2022 but then the war in Ukraine began.

Costs had outgrown income between March and September this year. Costs had grown by 10 per cent while income only grew by 8 per cent.

This was worse in Northern Ireland because of the protocol. It was estimated that the Protocol had caused a 6% rise in costs for goods and materials from our most important market, the rest of the UK, some businesses had seen have supply chains from GB completely stopped as companies had decided it was too expensive and complicated to trade with Northern Irish companies. So they had had to look at more expensive supplies elsewhere. Some local companies that were still getting supplies from GB had faced long delays in getting these actually delivered that it was severely impacting their business cash flow.

I am aware of one local business who was facing up to three-week delays on supplies from GB. They had a 30-day invoice period with suppliers to pay for the stock in full which effectively gave them a week to try and get some income from sales to help pay for it. This was not sustainable; they were trying to negotiate longer invoice periods but companies were not willing to do this as they had their own cash flow issues.

Local Businesses were in a difficult place, dealing with rising costs and a fall in demand.

Councillor Cathcart had asked local businesses and the Bangor Chamber of Commerce how Council could help. Obviously, Council had limited powers and needed help from central Government, like it had during the Covid pandemic.

It had been mentioned to him that the Council could help business cash flow for some small local businesses by not charging in advance for bin collection services.

As I have highlighted local businesses were struggling to pay invoices that were after they had received the goods or services. We were charging for a future service.

He was now requesting that a report be brought back to look at this to see if Council could look at payment options for local businesses which used the bin collection services to see if Council could help cash flow. Furthermore, they were having to judge how many bin lifts they required into the future, with demand falling, it was hard to judge what would be required and they may end up paying for more than they actually needed.

This was a relatively minor thing regarding a service that was not expensive. However, as a well known supermarket chain would say, "every little helps", He encouraged Members to support the proposal.

Speaking as seconder, Councillor Cummings recognised the challenges faced by businesses and they were only compounded by the increased cost of living and Covid recovery. He explained how it would be a small matter of timing of the payment but it would go a long way to ease cashflow positions. He encouraged Members to support the motion.

Members debated the motion and were sympathetic to the challenges faced in the current economic climate.

Councillor Boyle queried the current payment system for commercial collections and the Head of Waste and Cleansing Services advised that service users were billed in advance in the financial quarter before the services were delivered. For example, payment for services delivered between January and March 2023 would be processed by the end of December 2022. If payment was not received the service would be suspended. He explained the previous difficulties in recovering payment if it ran in to the second quarter. More than 1,000 businesses paid by direct debit and there was only a handful every month where payment didn't clear. This could often be a simple case of bank details changing, however.

Councillor Boyle would be supporting the motion but was mindful of the complications and affects it could have in the rate setting process.

Supporting the Motion, Councillor Smart recognised the difficult financial climate and this proposal was just a drop in the ocean compared with other costs that businesses were facing. It was worth looking at to see if an alternative system could work but it needed to be looked at in the round as it could have an impact on the rate.

Councillor Greer agreed with those comments and would await a report. She asked if any businesses had asked for alternative arrangements and the officer advised that while public sector organisations were unaffected due to the necessity to use purchase order and invoicing system, some smaller businesses had felt the current system did not work. He clarified that any changes to the current payment system would be dealt with through the Corporate Services Committee.



Before inviting the proposer to sum up, the Chair added his support to the motion and would be interested to see a report but he felt that Members needed to be mindful of any impact it could have on the rates.

Councillor Cathcart added that businesses had raised the issue with the current payment system. He felt that the questioning of officers at this stage had been unnecessary as the purpose of bringing a report back was to allow officers to go away and look at this in further detail and to recommend a way forward.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the notice of motion be adopted.**

## **11. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

There were no items of Any Other Notified Business.

### **CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION**

- (a) NOARC21 - STOP THE LEGAL CHALLENGE PETITION
- (b) LETTER FROM DFC – FEES FOR ENTERTAINMENT LICENCES

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the items circulated for information be noted.**

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS**

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

## **12. EXTENSION OF TENDERS FOR THE COLLECTION AND REPROCESSING OF VARIOUS WASTE STREAMS FROM ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRES (FILE 77071)**

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

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

## **13. ITEM WITHDRAWN**

It was noted that Item 13 had been withdrawn.

### **RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

EC7.12.2022 PM

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**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Edmund, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.**

**TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting terminated at 20.21.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Regeneration and Development Committee was held at Church Street, Newtownards on Thursday 8th December 2022 at 7.00pm.

### PRESENT:

<b>In the Chair:</b>	Councillor Walker	
<b>Aldermen:</b>	Girvan M Smith	Wilson (7.45 pm)
<b>Councillors:</b>	Adair Brooks Cummings Dunlop	Gilmour Irvine Kennedy McKimm

**In Attendance:** Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning (S McCullough), Head of Tourism (S Mahaffy), Head of Economic Development (C McGill), Head of Regeneration (B Dorrian) and Democratic Services Officer (H Loebnau)

### **1. APOLOGIES**

The Chairman (Councillor Walker) sought apologies at this stage.

Apologies had been received from Alderman McDowell. Apologies for lateness were received from Alderman Wilson. Later in the meeting apologies were received from Alderman Armstrong-Cotter who had had difficulties connecting remotely.

**NOTED.**

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman sought Declarations of Interests and Councillor McKimm declared an interest in Item 6 – Portaferry Park Masterplan/Feasibility Study.

**NOTED.**

### **3. ARDS CHAMBER OF TRADE REPORT**

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:-** Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that at the meeting of the Council held on 29 June 2022 it was agreed to invite each of the Chambers of Commerce to make a short presentation about the work they intended to undertake over the current financial year and how they planned to use the Council's grant of £12k.

The Newtownards Chamber had already provided the following indicative proposals and plans to return to regular networking events, training events, engagement on Council-led events and support for their members.

Some of the planned activity for the year included:

- *Initiatives aimed at growing the Chamber:*
  - Drives to support current membership and attract new members.
  - Initiatives which help businesses/traders improve skills.
  - Initiatives to keep an updated Web and social media presence.
  - Initiatives which enable networking.
  - Initiatives to aid in issues arising from Covid recovery and Brexit.
  - Initiatives to help businesses understand and achieve net Zero Carbon emissions green recovery.
  
- *Initiatives aimed at increasing the profile of the Town:*
  - Shop Local initiatives - Initiatives which add value to visitors/tourists to the town - Ensure that events do not detract from trade - Standalone events - Recruitment drive.
  - Partnering with other events to add value.
  - Easter /Halloween Family Orientated Event - Campaign for Council managed Christmas Event that encourages spend Identify and improve the Ards product through involvement in Council and subsequent groups (Steering and public realm TAG etc.)
  
- *Administration:*
  - To assist with communication sharing news, events and training opportunities.
  - To increase the use of the social media/digital presence of the Chamber.
  - To assist with the delivery of the Business Plan.
  - Collecting membership fees.
  - Liaising with Council in relation to funding support.
  - Business Awards.
  - Reward businesses within the Chamber for their Merit.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the above report.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the recommendation be adopted.**

### **3.1 Presentation by President of Ards Chamber of Trade, Derek Wright** (Appendix I)

Derek Wright and Leigh Nelson, representing Ards Chamber of Trade were welcomed to the meeting and invited to make their presentation.

Mr Wright thanked Members for the opportunity to address the meeting in his hometown, representing the Chamber of Trade of Newtownards. The Chamber's aim

was to provide a positive retail voice for the town of Newtownards and the wider Peninsula area. Newtownards was fortunate to have a strong retail offering but as everyone was aware these were difficult times economically and businesses were struggling, finding trading circumstances challenging.

Newtownards had been fortunate to be awarded a Great British High Street Award in 2019, The Irish News, High Street of the Year 2020 and a High Street Heroes 2022 Award. The town was proud of those achievements and the Chamber reported that traders in the town had a Facebook page and met four times each year to link together and share experiences. It was an active Chamber, representing all sectors of business, enjoying a strong relationship with the Council and its aim was purely non-political with a focus on business alone.

Mr Wright outlined some projects that the Chamber and Council were working on jointly such as the Meeting Lane Project, Newtownards Business Awards and the Parklets which would be introduced to Newtownards this month. It was working towards the development of a 10-year Masterplan for Newtownards with the Council and some disappointment was expressed at the lack of representation from local elected representatives at a recent meeting on this.

The Chamber would welcome a covering for Conway Square, where outdoor events could be held in all weather and the introduction of additional seating. There was an ongoing issue of car parking around The Square, and it was hoped that that could be discussed in the New Year.

The Chamber received £12k from the Council and that funding helped the Chamber to organise the Christmas market which had brought thousands of people into the town. That had been promoted well through television, radio and social media and businesses had reported an upturn in trade on that day. The Chamber indicated that £12k was not enough to allow it to do what was necessary going forward and it called for a serious uplift to funding from the Council.

Mr Wright indicated that he was happy to take questions from Members at this point.

Councillor Dunlop thanked the Chamber for the update and complimented Newtownards as being a fantastic retail centre for the Borough. He asked, apart from increased funding to the Chamber, what could the Council do to improve the brand of Newtownards. In response it was indicated that business Rates were stressful for local traders who were concerned that they could not take any further hikes in those charges. He indicated that some independent traders were paying about forty times more than a householder would pay for a single dwelling.

Alderman Girvan thanked the Chamber for its presentation and for the good work which it undertook for the benefit of the town. She asked about the membership of the Chamber itself and was informed that it was growing in numbers with about 120 members, and approximately 50 of those were actively involved. The Alderman asked what the Chamber would use additional funding for and was informed that it would be used to pay for administration. Currently £4k had been allocated to that work but staff costs were increasing and the funding had remained the same for the past ten years. The Alderman stated that she was aware of the amount of

administrative work necessary and would be supportive of additional funds for that purpose. She reported that there had been a similarly low turnout of elected representatives when Comber was looking at its Masterplan and wished Newtownards success for the future and would help it, if necessary, in any way she could.

Councillor Cummings congratulated Newtownards on the awards it had received which in turn had helped to raise the profile of the Borough. He asked for a comparison of experiences of the retail sector against the hospitality sector in the town and how the Council could assist. It was reported that Newtownards was a diverse town with a strong retail presence but that it was hoped that the night-time economy could be improved by people staying in the town centre for longer. There was a good mix of businesses and a range of services, such as hairdressers, which brought people into the town centre on a regular basis and it was hoped that in time the evening economy would be developed with restaurants and coffee shops opening for longer in the evenings. A covering for Conway Square would help that but the Chamber wished to help smaller independent businesses particularly which were counting every penny at the current time, and it was important to keep a good footfall in the town.

Councillor Brooks commended the speakers and reported that he had once run a retail business and was very aware of the cost pressures involved and he believed that the Rate system was outdated and had often stated that a goal should be to move to a form of online taxation if the high street was to survive. He believed radical action was needed if high streets were to thrive.

Councillor S Irvine praised the work of the Chamber around the recent Christmas Fair and said that even though the weather had been poor there was a general buzz and vibrant atmosphere in Conway Square. He referred to the worrying trend in hospitality and some bars had already closed, and others were up for sale. He wondered how the Council could help. The Chamber recognised those problems and similar issues were being seen across Northern Ireland with business down approximately 50%. The Chamber suggested there could be schemes such as eat out to help out or supporting the businesses with food deliveries such as had been in place during the Covid pandemic. It was suggested that Rate relief was also a significant way to help local hospitality businesses.

Councillor W Irvine touched on car parking in Conway Square which had been referred to earlier in the meeting and the Chamber explained that the parking around The Square was used as free all-day parking because of the ownership of that land, by DfI. Even long-established business retailers were using it to park which had led to disputes among local businesses themselves which was regrettable since it was better to be of one voice. There were also health and safety issues around that as well as vehicles blocking the attractive street scape and obscuring the views around the town.

Alderman M Smith referred to the friendly rivalry between Bangor and Newtownards but recognised Newtownards was a go to place to shop. She referred to the coming Parklets and whether those would impact car parking provision in some areas. It was explained that the Parklets had been extensively researched and while parking

was important there was ample parking available in the town. Parklets were used in most countries of the world and were viewed as ways of bringing people together. All of them would have seating and soft planting and would complement the town centre. They were also a good solution for small business, in having somewhere where people could sit and drink coffee for example. They also helped to reduce the car aesthetic and would add greatly to the town centre. Alderman M Smith wished the Chamber every success in the coming year.

Councillor McKimm asked how the Chamber communicated in the hope that Bangor could learn from another local experience. It was explained that keeping channels of communication open was a challenge. Face to face interaction was important and businesses wanted to see people on the ground that they could relate to.

Councillor Kennedy referred to the £12k funding which the Council offered and asked the Chamber for a figure that it believed would be more appropriate. The Chamber expressed that £32k would be more appropriate for a town the size of Newtownards. The Council did not allocate funding according to the size of towns and that could be looked at more closely.

In closing the Member asked the Chamber about the services the Council offered to business such as courses and business advice and how that could be improved. In response it was noted that short courses could be delivered in the town centre where people were working and a future emphasis could be given to training in customer service and the use of social media.

The Chair thanked the representatives of the Chamber for the information they had provided to the meeting and for the time they had taken to do that and offered best wishes for the New Year.

**NOTED.**

#### **4. DONAGHADEE CHAMBER OF TRADE REPORT**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that at the meeting of the Council held on 29 June 2022 it was agreed to invite each of the Chambers of Commerce to make a short presentation about the work they intended to undertake over the current financial year and how they planned to use the Council's grant of £12k.

The Donaghadee Chamber had already provided the following indicative proposals and plans to return to regular networking events, training events, engagement on Council-led events and support for their members.

The Chamber would continue with the administration duties required for the delivery of initiatives aimed at growing the Chamber and at increasing the profile of the town. Some of the planned activity for the year includes:

- To promote and retain membership across all categories. Current membership is Traders (83); Community Orgs (25) and Individuals (34)

- To organise additional public meetings.
- To organise a summer festival each year with a target of involving 35 different organisations and holding more than 75 events across the Summer.
- To organise and co-ordinate the Christmas Santa Parade.
- To involve the wider community in the Crommelin Wood Environmental Project and the Marine Litter Project.
- To continue to inform members, visitors and the general public on issues affecting Donaghadee via the website and social media
- To ensure businesses are informed of sources for advice and grants
- To help traders and businesses improve skills
- Increase the number of members in the trader category from (83) to (95)
- To develop at least two "shop local" campaigns each year
- To promote footfall at festival and other events by marketing events outside the town
- To take up and create opportunities for networking.
- To secure trader involvement in Ulster in Bloom.
- To continue work on the restoration of Crommelin Wood.
- To support schools in the Marine Litter Project.
- To retain our Ulster in Bloom title.
- To maintain pressure on Elected representatives and officials to keep Donaghadee tidy.
- To examine the potential for community allotments.
- To examine the potential for a Sensory Garden incorporating a Men's Shed.
- To circulate material received from other sources to members.
- To promote and support well-being initiatives.
- To advise and support groups who require help with grant applications.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the above report.

Proposed by Councillor Brooks, seconded by Councillor McKimm, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Brooks had reviewed the presentation and welcomed and expressed his thanks to the community development groups in Donaghadee. Seconding the recommendation Councillor McKimm thought that Donaghadee had a wonderful model of town centre trading which he praised.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Brooks, seconded by Councillor McKimm, that the recommendation be adopted.**

**4.1 Presentation by President of Donaghadee Chamber of Trade, John Caldwell**  
(Appendix II)

Mr Denis Waterworth, President of Donaghadee Chamber of Trade, and Mr John Caldwell, Secretary of Donaghadee Chamber of Trade were introduced to the meeting and were invited to make their presentation.



Mr Waterworth thanked the Committee for the invitation to speak and also for the funding which the Council had provided and he handed over to Mr Caldwell to represent the Chamber.

Mr Caldwell was aware that Members had received a copy of the presentation in advance of the meeting and he would be happy to take questions later. He explained that members of the Chamber had a common interest to see the development of Donaghadee as a thriving town through the partnership of business trading and community efforts.

He explained that the main activities over the past year had been the Summer and Christmas Festivals, the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, along with 'shop local' initiatives and incentives for retailers to paint shop windows to make the town visually interesting. Environmental work was also incorporated with the help of individuals and many local community groups and local running clubs. Schools worked to provide window boxes for the town centre in partnership with Ulster in Bloom and those had looked very striking. The community also worked in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to carry out a marine litter project. Crommelin Wood was also being developed with woodland trails and it was hoped to transfer that land to Council ownership.

(Alderman Wilson entered the meeting at 7.45 pm)

Councillor Brooks asked the Chamber if it would be happy for him to work with them to develop a regular market for the town. The Chamber responded that that would be welcomed.

Alderman Girvan congratulated Donaghadee and had always been impressed with the volunteers there and the work that went on to make the town so attractive. She asked them how they had obtained so much funding in the previous year and it was noted it was mainly directly from grants, the Festival Fund and sponsorship. Live Here Love Here had given funds as well as the local traders who paid for hanging baskets. The Alderman asked how events were evaluated and it was noted that that was mainly through footfall within the town and feedback directly to traders or on social media.

Councillor McKimm congratulated Donaghadee for its success in creating a go to destination and referred to the town as winning a residential award in Northern Ireland. He referred to family visiting from England who wished particularly to visit Donaghadee following the Hope Street series shown on BBC.

Following on from that Alderman M Smith congratulated the town and asked if Hope Street was helping increase tourism to the area. The Chamber advised that the series had helped a great deal and he spoke to visitors almost every week who were in Donaghadee because they had watched the programme. Those visitors came from as far away as Canada, the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. There were more series planned so that growth would only increase. It was known that America was also enjoying the series and it was hoped in time to attract some people from the cruise ships which stopped in Belfast to make a day trip to the town of Donaghadee.

Speaking further on tourism Councillor Kennedy referred to the rich history locally for the culturally curious and how that could be developed further to take advantage of the increased levels of tourism.

The Chamber informed Members that it had contributed to a meeting the previous week with the Ulster Scots Community Network. Donaghadee had been the gateway to Ulster being a significant port at the time of the Plantation and it was hoped that the culture could be preserved and developed. Donaghadee was working on the development of an Ulster Scots Festival of music and dance, along with re-enactments of scenes which may have been typical at that point in history.

Representatives from the Donaghadee Chamber were thanked and best wishes were offered for the year ahead.

**NOTED.**

## **5. REGENERATION SERVICE PLAN Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23**

(Appendix III)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement the Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### **Reporting approach**

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March

Q4	January - March	June
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The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

#### Key points to note:

- DfC had agreed an extension of the Covid Recovery funding programme until 31 March 2023. However, some projects were taking longer to deliver than first anticipated.
- Planning permission had been received for the parklet schemes. Installation would take place in December.
- The covering project for Hibernia Street, Holywood still awaited a planning determination. (Had since been approved). DfI had however put conditions on the scheme that made it unrealistic to proceed. Also, the preferred tenderer had come back to confirm that it could not now deliver the project for the agreed price. Additional projects were now being considered.
- The Portavogie Harbour project, which was to be funded by SEAFLAG, had received permission to commence. The Council and DAERA had agreed an approach to ensure the scheme could now be delivered. The contractor had been appointed and works were commencing.

#### Key achievements:

- The Council had obtained confirmation from DAERA that funding under the Rural Development Programme for playpark projects in Portaferry and Cloughey had been agreed.
- Under the Rural Development Programme, the LAG was awarded £3,150,000 of funding for rural projects in the ANDBC area. Due to the success of the Programme, the funding pot was increased to £4,238,769. That had been allocated but an underspend now existed because the Portaferry Ropewalk Scheme did not proceed. Some of the underspend had been used to fund the playparks.
- The regeneration project at Portavogie promenade has commenced and would be completed in Q3. Initial comments were very positive.

#### Emerging issues:

- Funding may become available under the Peace Plus programme within the next year. Funding would be required to develop some projects to be ready to avail of that when the various calls opened.
- It was now becoming evident that it was unlikely that there would be a replacement scheme for the Rural Development Programme in the next one/two years. Information on that from DAERA had been very limited. That would now stop several projects from advancing.

#### Action to be taken:

- To continue to monitor the implementation of all projects.
- To commence a programme of meetings with the various village groups to review and prioritise projects in the village plans that may be suitable for funding under Peace Plus or other funding streams.
- To lobby DAERA for information about a new rural funding programme.

- To make a bid for funding in the Rate setting process to develop projects, rural and urban, to the delivery stage.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor Adair, seconded by Alderman Girvan, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Adair commended the work of the regeneration department. He was delighted that work had started at Portavogie harbour and believed that would transform the area. It has been a long time since there had been any investment at Portavogie and this investment had been very well received. The Promenade looked beautiful and was a job well done.

He was encouraged to see Portavogie fully harnessing the funding from the Fisheries Fund. He asked if there was an update on consultation for the parklands project now that AECOM had been appointed and it was noted that that would take place in the first quarter of next year.

Alderman Girvan referred to the Rural Development Scheme and the projects that would be stopped from advancing. She was informed that the plans for those would remain in place and they would be taken forward at a future point in time.

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

(Having declared an interest in Item 6 Councillor McKimm left the meeting at 8.08 pm)

## **6. PORTAFERRY PARK MASTERPLAN/FEASIBILITY STUDY**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that as Members would recall, the Council agreed to undertake a Masterplan/Feasibility Study for Portaferry Park in partnership with Portaferry Regeneration Ltd (PRL). The budget agreed was £25k from the Council and £5k from PRL.

A development brief was prepared, agreed with PRL and issued to the market. However, by the closing date no quotations had been received. PRL then offered to issue the brief in its name to companies it had worked with and to make personal contact to encourage companies to respond. Again, no quotations were received and some contacts suggested that the budget was unrealistic for the work required. For Members' information that was the same budget set for the Donaghadee Commons Masterplan Project which had been completed.

RECOMMENDED that considering the above, that no further budget was available and that the project would not be complete by March 2023, it was recommended that the Council agrees not to proceed with the project at this time. PRL was in agreement with that proposal.

Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Adair thought that the news was a double blow for Portaferry whose people had been looking ahead with excitement and anticipation and now faced disappointment that the rope walk would not be going ahead at this time. The parklands would have been transformed from a derelict area and that was regrettable. He understood that the reason was rising costs and inflation. His hope was that this would not be taken off the agenda permanently but would be looked at later.

The Head of Regeneration made it clear that he had spoken with a number of companies who dealt with those projects and it was made clear that the budget which the Council had would be insufficient. He continued to work with the Portaferry regeneration group and was aware that there remained a desire to see this be developed along with the ropewalk at a future date. Councillor Adair agreed that the development could transform Portaferry and the wider Ards Peninsula.

Councillor Cummings concurred with those comments.

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

(Councillor McKimm returned to the meeting at 8.11 pm)

## **7. CITY AND TOWN ADVISORY GROUP MINUTES**

### **7.1 Newtownards TAG Minutes dated 26 September 2022** (Appendix IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Minutes of the Newtownards Town Advisory Group meeting dated 26 September 2022.

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the minutes be noted.**

### **7.2 Bangor CAG Minutes dated 29 September 2022** (Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Minutes of the Bangor City Advisory Group meeting dated 29 September 2022.

Referring to a matter of accuracy Councillor McKimm spoke about Item 7 page 9 where it stated that the meeting was moved to another room. He reported that the meeting was held in the open air at Queen's Parade, Bangor.

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the minutes be noted.**

### **7.3 Redacted Comber TAG Minutes 3 November 2022** (Appendix VI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Redacted minutes of the Comber Town Advisory Group meeting dated 3 November 2022.

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the minutes be noted.**

#### **7.4 Holywood TAG Minutes dated 4 November 2022 (Appendix VII)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Minutes of the Holywood Town Advisory Group meeting dated 4 November 2022.

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the minutes be noted.**

#### **7.5 Donaghadee TAG Minutes dated 10 November 2022 (Appendix VIII)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Minutes of the Donaghadee Town Advisory Group meeting dated 10 November 2022.

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the minutes be noted.**

### **8. TOURISM SERVICE PLAN Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23**

(Appendix IX)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement the Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

#### **Reporting approach**

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January – March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

**Key points to note:**

- Ongoing capacity development with event organisers, Festival Forum to regroup in November.
- Post evaluation returns were still to be complete for Tourism Grants which had taken place in this quarter.

**Key achievements:**

- Successful completion of bookable experience development programme; 58% of out of borough tickets sold over 18 experiences and 89% of available tickets sold.
- Majority of walks and tours programme complete; 92% of available tickets sold.
- Completion of Summer Food Festival including Comber Earlies Food Festival. 14 direct or collaborative experiences delivered with circa 2,500 attendees.
- Food and Drink small business promotion: attendance at Honey Fair, Game Fair with 10 local businesses showcased. All businesses provided positive feedback of their experiences.
- Autumn Food Festival delivery including Tide and Turf, Portavogie with shoulder events, complemented with third-party activity.
- Spring marketing destination campaign with reach of 135k on social and 434k opportunities for consumers to see campaign across 77 out of home locations across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

**Emerging issues:**

- Increase in costs for events infrastructure and programming.
- Weather 'proofing' events additional costs.
- Potential reduced budgets for service planning for 23/24.

**Action to be taken:**

- Partnership and third-party support/delivery critical to experience and event delivery.
- Business case in the rates process for Tourism Events Programme 23/24.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor McKimm had a question under emerging issues where officers listed the implications there may be to service delivery when it came to the Rate setting

process. He thought it would be helpful to hear about those implications to get a sense of what that would mean in practice.

The Head of Tourism indicated that tourism spend was discretionary to the Council and as such a number of business cases had been submitted as part of the Rate setting process to secure budget to deliver the tourism activity as outlined within the service unit plan. She further highlighted that the activity undertaken was to support the businesses within the Borough and to increase visitors and spend. Good progress was being made in the delivery of the Council's Events Strategy and Food Destination Plan and it was hoped that budget would be available to continue with those in the future and supporting those businesses who delivered that activity.

Councillor Kennedy referred to the table which showed the percentage of out of Borough bookings for events within the Borough. Cruise ships had been discussed earlier in the meeting and he wondered if the Council had a policy to attract those visitors.

In response the officer stated that the Council worked in partnership with Visit Belfast which had a clear relationship with Belfast port. Teams engaged regularly with cruise operators with varied itineraries and the Borough had been successful in securing some day trips such as to the Walled Garden, Bangor or the Mount Stewart estate. That work would continue ensuring that Visit Belfast was aware of the extent of the tourist product within the Borough.

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

**9. REQUEST BY RESERVE FORCES AND CADETS ASSOCIATION (RFCA) FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER HOSTING ARMED FORCES DAY 2024 AND BEYOND**

(Appendix X)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that in October 2022, the Chief Executive, along with the other Local Authority Chief Executives, received a letter from the Chief Executive of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA) regarding a request to the Council for the potential to host Armed Forces Day in 2024 and beyond.

The letter explained how previous events of that nature had been dealt with in Local Authority plus the confirmed location for the event in 2023. The event in 2023 would be held in Mid and East Antrim Borough Council due to its delayed delivery because of Covid-19.

Ards and North Down Borough Council previously hosted Armed Forces Day in 2017 as part of the Sea Bangor event. The total Tourism budget allocated was £118,000 with income of £10,000 from Tourism NI and £10,000 RFCA respectively. Additional costs for various other elements of the weekend activity were attributed to a separate Administration budget.



The Chief Executive of RFCA had asked for the Council's view on hosting the event in 2024 and beyond. It was anticipated that RFCA would likely seek the view from all interested Councils and potentially consider a rotation process. Should the Council be asked to host the event in 2024 or any further year, a report would be brought back to the Council with suggested locations, venue/s, programme and budget, subject to the relevant Rates setting process.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council considers the request from RFCA to host Armed Forces Day in 2024 and beyond and writes to its Chief Executive confirming that Ards and North Down Borough Council would like to be considered as a future host location.

Proposed by Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Cummings asked to put on record his appreciation of the work of the outgoing Chief Executive, Colonel Rollins, who had now retired and he extended a welcome to Brigadier Murdoch who now took up the role. As Veterans Champion, it gave the Member great pleasure in proposing the recommendation to salute the work of the three services. He stressed that the Borough had a unique relationship with the armed services and pointed to the enthusiastic response to the Freedom of the Borough of the Irish Guards and felt that it was vital to mark the work of this vanguard to the United Kingdom's response to disasters and humanitarian work such as during the Covid pandemic.

Councillor Gilmour was in agreement and recognised the strong military family connection across the Borough and it was a way to remember and celebrate the Armed Forces and the contribution they made to the life of the nation and further afield.

Councillor McKimm believed that society owed a great debt of gratitude to the Armed Forces and the Police Service of Northern Ireland for the work they had done in the past and continued to do in the present to keep people safe.

In no way was he showing disrespect when he asked about the scale of those events and what they brought to the Borough. The Head of Tourism explained that research on large scale events was always undertaken and that she would get back to the Member with further information. This was an annual commitment so would be rotated among all Councils who expressed an interest in hosting and it was expected that Ards and North Down might host every three or four years.

Councillor Adair expressed support and referred to the proud history of the armed services and mentioned that the first centre to support veterans had recently been opened in Portavogie by a local charity.

Councillor Cummings thanked Members for their comments and support.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **10. MARKETING – DESTINATION CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW SPRING AND AUTUMN 2022**

(Appendix XI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning.

### **Strategic Context**

The Integrated Strategy for Tourism, Regeneration and Development (ITRDS) had identified the delivery of a Borough Marketing and Communications Strategy (BMCS) as a key action to help drive gains towards the following ambitious targets:

- To increase the Borough's share of overnight tourism trips to NI from 6% in 2016 to 10% in 2030.
- To increase associated visitor expenditure from £46M in 2016 to £82M in 2030.

The roll out of biannual destination campaigns (Spring and Autumn) was a key deliverable of the BMCS. In 2022, those campaigns were delivered in February/March and October and guided by Tourism Northern Ireland's consumer sentiment research to target segments most likely to travel in both the Northern Ireland domestic and Republic of Ireland markets.

### **Campaign Approach**

Both campaigns were designed to raise awareness of Ards and North Down as an appealing destination that was easily accessible to potential visitors and offered value for money short breaks.

Those were multi-channel, but digital-led campaigns designed to support the industry by encouraging audiences to book offers directly with providers and inspire potential visitors with clear and compelling reasons to visit the Borough. They were also designed to help grow visitAND's online following.

In line with consumer desire to explore outdoor spaces, after Covid-19 restrictions eased, visuals featured many of the inspiring outdoor locations throughout the Borough.

Total marketing budget was £47,950 (£26,207 from Council, supported by £21,743 from the Tourism NI (TNI) Spring 2022 Co-operative Partnership Marketing Fund). That TNI fund was part of pandemic recovery funding and therefore unlikely to be available for future campaigns.

### **Spring 2022**

The **'Make It Yours' Campaign** ran across out of home, organic and paid-for social media, video, email, and web. The campaign targeted 'Aspiring Families' and 'Natural Quality Seekers' in Northern Ireland and 'Active Maximizers' and 'Indulgent Relaxers' in the Republic of Ireland.

### Key Objectives and Results

Objective	Result
Feature 100% of AND providers with offers listed in the Tourism NI Spring 22 Coop Marketing Campaign and registered with the 'We're Good to Go' scheme.	100% tourism provider offers promoted (19 offers)
Build awareness of AND as an appealing visitor destination that is easily accessible	
<b>DIGITAL CHANNELS</b> At least 1% growth in social media audience  At least 6,000 web page views E-zine open rates of at least 35% as a direct result of the campaign.	7% social media growth - Facebook and Instagram overall  135k reach  6,145 web page click-thrus 59% average open rate for consumer e-zines
<b>TRADITIONAL CHANNELS</b> Out-of-home (OOH) ran over 77 locations across NI and the ROI with 434k opportunities to see the campaign, and in the Visit Belfast Welcome Centre – city centre gateway for visitors.	

### Autumn 2022

'Your Autumn Getaway Awaits' Campaign ran across paid-for digital advertising, organic social media, email, web, out of home and via Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland radio advertising. It targeted the 'Natural Quality Seeker' segments in Northern Ireland and 'Open-Minded Explorers' in the Republic of Ireland.

Considering the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis (and Tourism NI consumer sentiment research that indicated perceptions of the Island of Ireland holidays being high cost versus other European breaks), campaign messaging focussed on value-for-money. The campaign's call to action was to book offers directly with tourism providers and to enter the campaign competition for a chance to win £300 off a stay in the Borough.

### Key Objectives and Results

Objective	Result
Promote AND tourism industry offers aligned to TNI offers listed on the discoverni and visitardsandnorthdown webpages	100% of tourism provider offers promoted (23 offers)
Web traffic measured via users landing on campaign pages – at least 4k web views and 400 competition entries	4,434 web views 562 competition entries
At least 4% growth in social media audience	4.7% social media growth - Facebook and Instagram overall  Reach = 28k
Promotion of all offers submitted to Tourism NI in autumn campaign call out.	100% via web, social media and ezines  Call to action on all artwork to book offers
Digital impressions 400k	553k digital impressions

	(Google Ads and Pay -per-click = 256k impressions, 2.6k clicks, 1,069 actions and online advertising via media partnerships =297k impressions, 260 clicks)
E-zine open rates of at least 35% as a direct result of the campaign	62% average open rate
<b>TRADITIONAL CHANNELS</b>	
Out of Home (OOH) - Visit Belfast Welcome Centre – city centre gateway for visitors 287 radio ads ran across 5 stations with high listenership levels for the target segments across NI and ROI.	

### Combined Outcomes

- Both campaigns achieved a very strong social media reach of 163k with 1.8mn impressions.
- The combined social media audience growth was 11.7%.
- Digital marketing metrics showed strong overall visibility of the campaign with 553k impressions from Google Ads/Pay-per-Click, and online advertising and 1.6mn social media impressions.
- The campaigns promoted all spring and autumn offers gathered by Tourism NI for tourism providers based in the Borough with 10k visitors being driven to the visitardsandnorthdown.com website from the promotional activity.
- The existing Visit Belfast Regional Tourism Partnership with Visit Belfast was also utilized to further extend campaign reach. This strategic partnership managed via 2 x annual SLAs ensured strong year-round visibility across Belfast and in both airports and the harbour as well as continuous digital promotion to Visit Belfast's large online audience. It remained a hugely beneficial promotional tool extending the Borough's promotional reach to potential visitors.

### Conclusion

The campaign's main objective, building awareness through creating a strong profile for the Borough as an appealing visitor destination was achieved with strong reach across Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland audiences. It was anticipated that the output of that greater awareness would be a positive impact on visitor interest and bookings. TNI undertook no direct evaluation of 'call to action' bookings and providers indicated that it was difficult to report via the various platforms. The Tourism Development team continued to engage with providers to encourage review of source(s) of bookings.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council notes this report.

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

### 11. FOOD AND DRINK DEVELOPMENT SECTOR UPDATE 2022 (Appendices XII -XIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that after a challenging period through the

Covid-19 pandemic, comprising of three extended shutdowns and staffing restraints, the industry had now been further impacted with the crippling effect of increased operational costs, for example on utilities and inflation on goods.

Businesses reported ongoing issues including: the continuing political instability, Protocol uncertainty, impacts of Brexit (for example in relation to staffing), alongside the fragile food supply chain, which remained in constant state of flux with producers needing to source new suppliers of core ingredients and find new ways to reach customers via direct sales. Restaurants continued to struggle with capacity and consistency of service resulting in shorter opening hours and smaller menus that were changeable week to week.

As a result, continuous challenges for food development, support and food tourism programmes existed. Despite that climate the team had been able to deliver on a number of the commitments within the Food Destination Development Plan including expanded attendance at trade shows, activity as part of the Borough's experience development programme, deliver themed restaurant nights/"meet the maker" food showcases and content within the main annual food and drink festivals.

The following highlighted the activity that had taken place during 2022 to date.

### **The Balmoral Show**

The 2022 Balmoral Show took place on 11 to 14 May 2022. Six producers were featured on the Taste Ards and North Down stand within the Food NI pavilion, across the four days. Businesses with a turnover of up to £155k were able to take space within the Council stands this year. The businesses included:

- Ballyboley Dexters: a pasture-fed beef business from Greyabbey.
- Mallow Makers: a luxury mallow business from Bangor.
- Morning Glory Granola: an artisan granola business based in Bangor.
- Peppup Sauces: Italian-style sauce company based in Newtownards
- Spore Shore: a gourmet mushroom business from Ballywalter.
- Wild Heart Coffee: ethical coffee roasting start-up from Newtownards.

Ards and North Down took 66 square metres of exhibition space next to one of the main entrances of the pavilion, that was a 30 square metre increase on footprint taken in 2021. The design of the stand was upgraded with traders being given more individual space to display product and new reusable display units were provided to create a more consistent appearance. The new layout provided a single walk-through access which ensured maximum visibility for the traders.

As with all previous trade shows, restrictions were removed which allowed for the businesses to enjoy a more 'typical' Balmoral Show experience across the four days; all were able to provide samples, sell produce, fully interact with a broader range of retail and hospitality group buyers. Additionally, produce was featured on the three demo kitchens inside the food Northern Ireland Pavilion. There was also more connection made with other areas of the show for the first time.

Feedback from the businesses was substantially more positive than in 2021. Peppup Sauces had the most successful show of all; the featured producers picked up considerable buyer interest from Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland retail groups. They were now retailing in Avoca and The Butler's Pantry chains in the Republic of Ireland through direct contact at the show. Wild Heart Coffee and Morning Glory Granola picked up substantial local hospitality interest as well as farm shop and independent chain leads helping both these recent start-ups to gain brand recognition. Ballyboley Dexters used the event purely for quality brand recognition linking their presence in the cattle show area to customer sales on the Taste AND stand and sold out twice in two days. The Mallow Makers used the event to build collaboration opportunities and have their products featured in local produce boxes/hampers.

All businesses rated the experience as 4.5 out of five or above when surveyed and considered the key value of the event to be 'trade show learning' with 'making connections/collaboration' and 'reaching new customers' as most common responses.

On the demo kitchens all six companies succeeded in having produce featured across the four days with various chefs; Ballyboley Dexters and Peppup had most exposure with a range of chefs using their products on three demo sessions. On the Friday morning session, Paula McIntyre promoted Comber Earlies and featured Richard Orr. Ballyboley Dexters took the main feature on Saturday morning discussing Nature Friendly Farming and The Mallow Makers made dessert with Chef Noel McMeel. Other demo shows included Portavogie seafood with Jim Mulholland of No14 The Georgian House in Comber and Copeland Distillery's Rum collection.

### **Irish Game Fair Review**

The Irish Game Fair took place on 25/26 June 2022 at Shane's Castle, Antrim after a return of four years. The event was tested this year to assess the value of promoting Taste Ards and North Down at an event billed as one of the premier outdoor cultural events in Northern Ireland.

Olive Tree Bakes and The Local NI took space inside the Artisan Food Pavilion alongside a Taste Ards and North Down stand providing information on experiences, restaurants, and food tours. The two-day event was affected by heavy downpours and significant cancellations. Olive Tree Bakes sold out on day two of the event although sales were not what was anticipated for both traders.

The feedback was that the event did not match the quality artisanal content that organisers promoted. Whilst the Taste Ards and North Down information stand was busy on the Saturday, visitors were not considered by the two businesses to be buying artisanal food but hot food to go. The view was that the event would not be attended by Taste AND in 2023 and the Garden Show Ireland would be tested at Clotworthy House in Antrim as an alternative.

### **Honey Fair Review**

The Honey Fair in Hillsborough Castle was a premier food and drink event in Northern Ireland. The event took place on 6/7 August 2022; the second year the event had run at the venue. Taste Ards and North Down was given eight trading

spaces and was allowed to use the Taste Ards and North Down identity to promote its food destination at the two-day event.

Eight business took trading spaces:

- Cacao Patisserie
- Counterculture Bakeries
- Earth Rainbow
- Habanero Steve's
- Mallow Makers
- Morning Glory Granola
- North Down Beef Company
- Nitro Coffee Company

Five additional businesses took separate food-to-go trading spaces at the event:

- Glastry Farm Ice-cream
- Coffee Angels
- Simply Scampi
- Hellbent
- Olive Tree Bakes

In total the TASTE AND presence saw 13 of the 48 event food businesses being members of the Ards and North Down Food and Drink Network.

Feedback was broadly positive, rated 4.3 out of 5 on average by the 13 traders. Sales were excellent throughout the two days and five of the eight supported traders sold out by close on day two. The traders felt there was value in attending the event as Taste AND in 2023.

### **Summer Food Festival**

In the lead up to the Comber Earlies Food Festival we saw both directly delivered or third party supported activity for the sector across 14 activities with over 2,500 attendees combined. That included activity such as TASTE AND market in Ward Park, Local Suppliers' Artisan Market at No14 The Georgian House, Vegetarian Dinner and Music at Kylestone Nursery, Irish Spirits and cheese tasting at Echlinville Distillery, Comber Earlies guided historic lunch tour and "Time for Tea" at the Walled Garden Helen's Bay.

Unfortunately, Comber Earlies Food Festival was majorly impacted by bad weather (strong winds) which saw trader attendance on the day reduced. However, alternative arrangements facilitated a smaller number of local traders still being able to participate, with those on the day reporting mixed results.

### **Autumn Food Festival**

This year the autumn festival, culminating with the Tide and Turf event at Portavogie, was heavily impacted by the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. All Council managed activity up to the end of the mourning period was cancelled and resulted in only a small number of third-party providers being able to continue with three themed restaurant nights involving Harbour and Co and Bull and Claw (Donaghadee) and

Bull and Claw (Portaferry). That was primarily due to the fact they had healthy ticket sales before marketing was postponed. Two third party events and the main Council programmed artisan market were cancelled.

The Tide and Turf event on Saturday 24 September, saw over 20 local food and drink sector business involved. Feedback from the traders reported it was one of their most successful events of the year. Beef and Seafood cookery demos took place as part of the event throughout the day utilised and highlighted local produce. Footfall was estimated at circa 8000.

### **Award Winners 2022**

The 2022 Food Awards season had now drawn to a close and it had been another highly successful year for all AND producers. Throughout the year, the Food and Drink Officer had continued to encourage local businesses to enter local, national, and international awards through providing information and technical advice for entry.

The 'gold standard' food and drink awards were the UK's "Great Taste Awards" announced in August and Ireland's "Blas na hEireann Awards" announced in September. For the alcoholic drinks producers, the gold standard class of awards were the "International Wine and Spirit Competition (IWSC)", the "World Gin Awards" and the "World Whiskey Awards". Collectively, those were considered the "Food and Drink Oscars".

Other notable awards for food were the "Irish Quality Food Awards" and the "British Quality Food Awards" which were retail market focussed as well as the "World Bread Awards", "UK Bakery Awards", "UK Butchery Awards and the "UK Food Manufacturing Excellence Awards". Local food and drink businesses Awards of note were the Farming Life Awards and the Belfast Telegraph Business Awards,

In 2021, a total of 89 food and drink produce awards were won by 19 companies at the Local Food Hero Awards in April. So far, in 2022, 18 AND companies had lifted just under 70 awards with a few outstanding minor awards to be confirmed. Whilst the number of overall number of awards won was down in comparison to 2021 the quality and standard of awards won had shifted upward and indicated businesses were being more selective about the type of awards they entered.

The final number of awards would be known and verified with each business by the end of December in preparation for the next Local Food Hero Awards due to take place in February 2023.

### **Local Food Heroes' Honours Reception**

To highlight the achievements of local businesses the 'Local Food Heroes' Honours Reception with the Mayor of Ards and North Down would be held on 8 February 2023. Eighteen businesses would be presented with an award to recognise their achievements in 2022. Additionally, the annual award for the "Producer of the Year" named after the late Lady Dufferin in recognition of her support and work within the local food and drink sector would be presented to one winner. Format would be similar to last year's event. The winner would be decided by the trustee organisations of the Clondeboye Estate.



### **Food and Drink Network Committee**

In June 2022, the 114 members of the Food and Drink Network nominated representatives to a 13 Trade representative member Committee with a structure that was broadly reflective of the wider membership. There were six producer members, three restaurant members, two independent retailers, one food and drink associate member and a markets' representative. The Committee had now convened and would provide trade guidance to the Food and Drink Officer in developing plans and priorities over the coming year until the Committee term ended in January 2024.

### **Food and Drink Destination Development Plan**

The first Ards and North Down Food Destination Plan was published in 2018 with a lifespan of three years. The document set out the path to a single ambition where Ards and North Down Borough was established as a premier food tourism destination on the island of Ireland.

That plan was now in need of replacement to ensure it was fit for purpose. Its development would be informed by the businesses that had formed the Ards and North Down Food and Drink Network, external trade, internal Council colleagues and other third-party organisations involved within the sector.

The first phase of business consultation on the replacement plan was now open until 30 November 2023 via an online survey. Other internal and agency feedback was run in December and February. Results of the survey along with further consultation with the Network Committee would help inform the development of the draft plan. It was anticipated that the Plan would be submitted to the Council for approval by the end of March 2023. The new plan was envisaged to have a lifespan of four years to 2027.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council notes this report.

Proposed by Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Kennedy that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Adair commended officers for the comprehensive report which recognised that the Borough of Ards and North Down was the home of good food. He referred to Ballyboley Dexters in Greyabbey, Sea Scampi, Glastry Farm Ice Cream and the many other family run businesses based within the Borough. He commended the Council for its initiatives such as Dine at the Dock, Portavogie which showcased the town and its produce. That event was a sell out and the residents of the town had expressed much appreciation for that to the Council.

Councillor Kennedy wished to echo those comments and was aware that at the outset when the strategy had been drawn up it was a challenge to communicate what was required. The raw material was there and he offered congratulations for bringing the initiative together and communicating it.

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

## 12. ED SERVICE PLAN 12 PEROFMANCE REPORT 2022/23 (Appendix XIV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement the Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2, 2022-23 was attached.

### Key points to note:

- Performance in certain areas of service delivery had been affected as difficulties in recruiting staff to fill posts had continued into this year, as had some instances of staff illness. Work streams had to be prioritised in line with the resources available and therefore some targets in this quarter had been not met and budgets underspent.
- Following a joint meeting with DfE and the NI Audit Office (NIAO) it had been agreed that Councils should reference both the statutory targets and the *Go for It* programme targets. We are therefore reporting on the two sets of targets for Business Start-up activity: the original target set as part of transferring functions under RPA (referred to as NIBSUP2) and the revised target issued last year by DfE for *Go For It*. The new target would not be formally agreed to replace the original until the Executive was in place.

### Key achievements:

- Pickie Fun Park and Exploris were continuing to perform well and were attracting increasing number of visitors.
- Business start activity figures were typically lower during the summer months. Following discussions with LEAs officers were confident that the figures would be back on track and job creation targets being met in the next quarter.
- The Digital Growth programme take up had improved as businesses seek to optimise growth through better use of digital channels.
- Work had progressed to be able to take forward to the next stage the Marina and Pickie projects, which formed part of the Bangor Waterfront project

#### **Emerging issues:**

- The funding for Business Start programme would end on 31 March 2023. There was still no clarity on replacement funding streams for ERDF however, Officers continued to work with all other Councils, through the established working group, to seek funding and to prepare plans to provide continuity of support for business start-up and to prepare for a new programme.
- Work had continued with officers preparing the groundwork to be ready to roll out LMP supports which formed part of the Action Plan once the Letter of Offer, was received in early November. It would be challenging to implement all the planned activity within the remaining months of the year, but officers would work hard to achieve the delivery targets for the year.

#### **Action to be taken:**

- Officers would continue to work with HR to address staffing issues.
- Officers would continue to work in collaboration with other Councils and government departments to progress funding confirmations for the required work streams.
- Due to the issues in staff resources and budget allocations it was felt that some of the original targets for certain measures within the annual service plan needed to be revised as follows:

No of 1:1 business advice 115 to 100

No of research assignments 90 to 70

No of businesses supported through Digital Growth Programme 35 to 30

No of participants on Digital Transformation Programme 14 to 8

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report and approves the proposed changes to the annual targets.

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

### **13. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS ADAIR AND THOMPSON**

That Council task officers to work with The National Trust to source external funding to develop and regenerate the car parks at both Glastry Clay Pits and Knockinelder Bay for the benefit of residents and tourists alike in seeking to deliver the Council's Tourism Strategy for the Ards Peninsula.

Proposed by Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

Councillor Adair stressed that he hoped that both car parks would be developed and that it was his pleasure to bring forward the Motion. He had brought a similar one about Loughshore, Greyabbey where the Council had worked with the National Trust to transform the car park there and regenerate and open up the Loughshore to visitors. Therefore, the Council had a history of working with the National Trust and he hoped that similar collaboration could take place at the Glastry Clay Pits. That was a small site managed by The National Trust and during the Covid lockdown period many visitors became more aware of the area while discovering the great outdoors. He hoped that walking trails could be developed along with picnic tables and that the car parking could be resurfaced to made it more suitable for disabled access and coach parking.

He hoped that similar work could take place at Knockinelder, Portaferry car park which was also owned by The National Trust to improve access with the addition of a toilet block if funds permitted.

Seconding the Motion, Councillor Thompson agreed entirely and hoped that the tourism of the area could be improved by such facilities.

Councillor Adair thanked Members for their support for those 'hidden gems' and hoped that the development of those would bring more visitors to the Ards Peninsula.

**RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted.**

#### **14. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

There were no items of Any Other Notified Business.

#### **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

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

#### **15. PICKIE Q2 JULY – SEPTEMBER 2022**

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

**SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)**

**16. BANGOR MARINA Q2 JULY – SEPTEMBER 2022**  
(Appendix XV)

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

**SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)**

**17. EXPLORIS Q2 JULY – SEPTEMBER 2022**

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

**SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)**

**18. BANGOR WATERFRONT CONTRACT FOR FUNDING**  
(Appendices XVI & XVII)

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

**SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)**

**RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Kennedy, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.**

**TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The Chair wished Members and staff a Happy Christmas and noted that the Committee would be renamed Prosperity and Place in the New Year.

The meeting terminated at 8.59 pm



## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A virtual meeting of the Corporate Services Committee was held via Zoom on Tuesday 13 December 2022 at 7.00 pm.

### **PRESENT:**

**In the Chair:** Councillor P Smith

**Aldermen:** Girvan (via Zoom)                      McIlveen (via Zoom)  
Irvine    Gibson

**Councillors:** Cooper (via Zoom)                      Gilmour (via Zoom)  
Chambers (Via Zoom)                      Irwin (via Zoom)  
Dunlop    McKimm  
Douglas (via Zoom)                      T Smith (via Zoom)  
Greer (via Zoom)

**Officers:** Director of Finance & Performance (S Christie), Head of Administration (A Curtis), Head of Human Resources (R McCullough), Community Planning Manager (P Mackey) and Democratic Services Officer (R King)

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Alderman Keery and Councillor Blaney.

**NOTED.**

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest submitted.

**NOTED.**

### **3. DEPUTATION – IRISH LEAGUE OF CREDIT UNIONS** (Appendix I)

Mr Martin Fisher, Irish League of Credit Unions, and Mr Gordon Smyth, Ulster Federation of Credit Unions, outlined the attached presentation and Members were invited to ask questions.

Councillor McKimm reflected on the legacy of the late John Hume, describing him not only an architect of peace but also one of credit unions and noted the contribution that credit unions had made to the peace process in Northern Ireland. He pointed to the BBC Spotlight documentary that was highlighting the targeting of foodbank users by paramilitaries for illegal money lending and being drawn into

criminality. He asked what the Credit Union organisations were doing in order to reach out to communities affected and what Council could do to help.

Mr Fisher advised that there were three Credit Unions in the district and anyone in difficulty should be urged to make contact with their nearest one. That could happen through signposting, for example, through various public agencies or directly. He explained Credit Union interest rates were capped at 12.6% and therefore a small loan of £500 over six months would incur only £16 interest. A loan under £1000 was not available through many large banks so people would often turn to pay day lenders where interest rates were extremely high. And unlike those organisations, Credit Union loans did not incur any late payment fees or penalties.

He spoke of the other services offered including insurances around death and lifesavings and for those that saved money in the Credit Union there was a dividend rate available.

Concluding, he added that there was no financial support being requested from the Council, particularly in light of the financial climate, but he hoped that Members could help to promote and signpost people in financial difficulty to the Credit Union, particularly in those areas where people were exposed to paramilitary organisations as reported in the Spotlight programme that was due to be broadcast.

Alderman Irvine highlighted the tremendous work carried out by the Credit Union at Hamilton Road, Bangor, and asked for more detail on how foodbank users or others using support services could be reached and protected from illegal money lending and other methods of exploitation that had been highlighted.

Mr Smyth urged Members to encourage people experiencing financial difficulties to go and speak to their local Credit Union. He felt that agencies on the ground such as Housing Associations and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive could signpost people to avoid situations that were being highlighted on Spotlight. He added that the Credit Union had been there for many in difficult times over the years and had the flexibility that other banking institutions were unable to provide such as small personal loans.

Alderman Irvine pointed to a plethora of community and public organisations that provided frontline services that could assist in that respect.

Mr Fisher highlighted two pilot programmes that had demonstrated the need for small loans advising that in South Derry/Londonderry and South Antrim at year end 2021, around 10,000 individual loans had been issued under £1000.

Alderman Girvan asked what the uptake had been following the launch of a Credit Union branch in Comber and it was advised that there were currently 600 members.

Alderman Girvan asked if the organisation had the resource to cope with added demand if it was able to reach the higher number of people and Mr Fisher advised that while it wasn't just about recruitment of volunteers and complex time management of facilities – he pointed to rural branches, advising of a recent Credit Union office launching in Millisle which had shown a degree of confidence in the



organisation - but also about what was coming downstream, but he said the Credit Union was in a position to welcome all new members.

Alderman Gibson asked how secure the Credit Union was financially and Mr Smyth described it as a strong, vibrant organisation that had remained strong for people through some very difficult times. The Irish League of Credit Unions kept reserves above the recommended level and there was a protection scheme in place where the organisation would intervene if any individual branch was in financial difficulty.

The Chair thanked Mr Fisher and Mr Smyth for attending. Both left the meeting.

#### **4. PERFORMANCE REPORTS Q2 2022-23:**

##### **A) COMMUNITY PLANNING** (Appendix II)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED- Report from the Chief Executive detailing the undernoted:

##### **Context**

Members would be aware that Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
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- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

##### **Reporting approach**

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

**Key points to note:**

- Performance Score Cards and Performance Update report showed as red for quarter 2 but these were not due until quarter 3.
- Resources not available to produce Engage newsletter due to work undertaken on Here2Help app and the Social Supermarket.

**Key achievements:**

- In quarter 2 the co-design workshops to establish a Social Supermarket were taking place with a view to soft launch the project by September.
- Community engagement took place in collaboration with Parks and Cemeteries and Environmental Health & Wellbeing to undertake walkability audits of Ward Park under the Age Friendly Umbrella. Elected Members were involved in these as part of the Elected Member Development Programme Charter Plus initiative.
- Involvement in regional conversations and workshops regarding community planning and improving how it was promoted and embedded in partner and central government business operations.
- Increased the number of local groups who are registered on the Here2Help app and development of a marketing plan.

**Emerging issues:**

- Collection of data from Social Supermarket and establishing data sharing agreements with Food Banks and Community Advice to gather information that will provide evidence on levels of poverty across Ards and North Down. This project will look at reasons for poverty and the locations. Initial review of information has potentially suggested high levels of debt.
- Working with Parks and Cemeteries, Sustainable Development, Ulster Wildlife and National Trust to consider how a Big Conversation on Climate Change and Nature could work with communities across the borough.
- Via Communication and FOI, responding to queries about community support available to address cost of living crisis and higher energy costs.

**Action to be taken:**

- Scorecards and Performance Update Report for Strategic Community Planning Partnership meeting in November 2022.
- WARM Spaces campaign roll out
- Here3Help app roll out
- Collection and analysis of data from Social Supermarket, Food Banks and Community Advice.

**B) CORPROATE COMMUNICATIONS (CMR Q22223)  
(Appendix III)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED- Report from the Chief Executive detailing the undernoted:

**Context**

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### Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

### Key points to note:

- The period under review was dominated by events requiring promotional, graphic design and technical event support. This had been very resource intensive.
- During the period, HM Queen Elizabeth II died, requiring the enactment of the London Bridge protocol, which had significant communications implications.
- We had been unable to recruit to the post of Multi-Media Technician – a key role in the delivery of the service's technical support duties. Alternative options e.g., recruitment of a student/apprentice was currently being considered.

### Key achievements:

- Delivery of communications and marketing support for the Gary Lightbody Freedom of the Borough, which resulted in significant positive broadcast and press coverage.
- Emergency communications support for the Snow Patrol Acoustic and Let's Rock concerts.

- Communications and event support for Tide and Turf, Taste Autumn and the Aspects Literature Festival.
- Ongoing communications support for capital projects including Bangor Waterfront, Portaferry Public Realm and Whitespots.
- Promotion of the St Columbanus and Portaferry Heritage Trails via visit AND digital platforms.
- Delivery of the Rural COVID Recovery Campaign – supporting and promoting 80+ business that were part of Council's COVID Recovery Grant Scheme.
- Delivery of supporting communications for the Kinnegar to Donaghadee Greenway's Portfolio and Environmental Statement.
- Delivery of the tender for hybrid meetings.
- Series of investor promotion opportunities launched on LinkedIn.
- Development of a resident 'small steps' sustainability campaign, which was due to be launched in early 2023.
- Ongoing work with Organisational Development to prepare for Council's Investors in People Accreditation.

#### Emerging issues:

- Plans were in development for the 2022 cross-service Christmas campaign, which would promote Council events and Borough-wide switch ons, as well as promoting support local and providing information on help available to those who may have been struggling with the current cost-of living crisis.
- Work was being progressed on an integrated recycling campaign to explain and encourage full and proper use of the kerbside collection service and our household recycling centres. This would include direct mail to every household, outdoor advertising and social media messaging.
- Work was ongoing to develop a framework for more innovative and effective methods of consultation and engagement with residents that would be used, in particular, to support Council's regeneration work.
- The Communications and Engagement Plan for Bangor Waterfront was in development but had been delayed in line with ongoing work to agree the Contract for Funding for the Waterfront Scheme.

#### Action to be taken:

- A focused work plan had been developed to deliver on the 'discovery' stage of the new .gov.uk website. This would include engaging with internal services on their requirements, analysis of current trends and analytics, and benchmarking against other local authorities. This work would assist the development of the specification for the new website.

#### C) FINANCE (FIN76) (Appendix IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED- Report from the Director of Finance and Performance detailing the undernoted:

#### Context

Members would be aware that Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the

exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

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The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

### Key points to note:

- Attendance for quarter 2 had improved from the previous quarter but was still below the target of 95%. In addition, the number of vacancies had fallen from 4 in Q1 to 1.5 in the current quarter. This had had an adverse effect on performance in most other areas.
- Reactive workload pressures continued to dominate staff time constraining the time available to value added activities.

### Key achievements:

- Core transactional targets continued to be met.
- The audited financial statements were published on time having received a clean audit report, despite resource constraints.

### Action to be taken:

- Endeavour to gain more control of workload in order to complete an increased number of service development tasks.

### D) STRATEGIC CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT (Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED- Report from the Director of Finance and Performance detailing the undernoted:

### Context

Members would be aware that Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

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The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

### Key points to note:

- Attendance levels remained at 100% exceeding the 95% target.
- There continued to be good investment in staff briefings with regular fortnightly team meetings, alternating between Teams and in person.
- Professional development was also continuing as the unit continued to deliver a capital portfolio in excess of £170m over the next 10 years.
- There continued to be a good level of consultation with other Councils and Government departments through BRCD, Community Estates, the Greenways projects, and individual meetings.

### Key achievements:

- Continued to share capital knowledge and allow a holistic approach to all large, small and maintenance capital projects undertaken by a wide range of directorates through CPAG
- Working with CPD to produce tender documents which took account of social value on all funded project as council policy developed
- Successful recruitment exercise to fill the vacant Corporate Projects Officer post.

#### **Emerging issues:**

- Delays in statutory responses to planning creating knock-on delays in programming projects.
- NI Water's insistence on Council paying for infrastructure improvements outside of our project's red line.
- Very high construction inflation.

#### **Action to be taken:**

- Continue to review capital cost estimates
- Assist in the Estate Strategy development
- Assist in capital transformation project
- Address budget overspend

#### **E) STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION AND PERFORMANCE (260501)** (Appendix VI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED- Report from the Director of Finance and Performance detailing the undernoted:

#### **Context**

Members would be aware that Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

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The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

#### **Reporting approach**

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 1 2022-23 was attached.

**Key points to note:**

- This reported on progress against the Service Plan KPIs. It should be noted that some KPIs were reported on a half-yearly or annual basis and may therefore not have been reported against in every quarter. All KPIs would be reported against during the course of the reporting year.
- The Procurement Manager post had been filled on a temporary basis and the Procurement Assistant post had been filled on a permanent basis.
- The Procurement Service Unit continued to be under-resourced following unsuccessful attempts to recruit a Procurement Officer on a temporary basis.

**Key achievements:**

- On track for spend against budget.
- Attendance was well above the Council average at 99.88% with only 1 day lost to absence in the period.
- % time invested in staff development was higher than expected.
- The Digital Strategy project, a key strand of the Strategic Transformation and Efficiency Programme commenced in November 2022.

**F) ADMINISTRATION (ADM19)**  
(Appendix VII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing the undernoted:

**Context**

Members would be aware that Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

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The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

### Key points to note:

The majority of targets in the Administration Service Plan were measured annually.

**Table 1: Q2 performance update - Business as Usual activities**

Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2022/2023 (actions)	Q2 update
Monitor the implementation of the action plan in the Roadmap to Sustainability	Meeting target. 6 monthly updates were provided to Council.
Catalogue and digitise all PROWs (alleged and asserted) and investigate any encroachments where required	Meeting target. New Officer in post and was working their way through the queries on current database. Status update report would be presented before the year end.
EMS – Retain accreditation and use framework in all Council buildings to ensure best practice	Meeting target – The Council had retained accreditation.
Confer 2 Freedom of the Boroughs	Meeting target – Conferred the Freedom of the Borough on the Irish Guards in June 2022 and Gary Lightbody in August 2022.
All agendas circulated within 5-day notice period	Meeting target - 100% of Agendas went out 5 days in advance of all Committee and Council meetings.
Hold 4 Corporate Health and Safety meetings – with input from directorate	Meeting target. Group met on the 6 <sup>th</sup> May and 15 <sup>th</sup> August 2022 and meeting now scheduled on a quarterly basis.

Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2022/2023 (actions)	Q2 update																		
Health and Safety meetings																			
Deliver 'It Takes Allsorts' programme to address current identified issues of minority populations annually	Meeting target, programme had commenced.																		
FOI/EIR Information response times in compliance with legislation	<p>Missed Target – 99% This is a major improvement from 95% for same period last year and given the increased number and complex nature of many FOI requests this was an excellent compliance rate.</p> <p>A summary of this quarter compared with the same quarter last year is as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>1 July 2022 – 30 Sept 2022 (Q2 2022/23)</th> <th>1 July 2021 – 30 Sept 2021 (Q2 2021/22)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Number received</b></td> <td>148</td> <td>159</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Number responded to within 20 working days</b></td> <td>146</td> <td>151</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Responses issued within 20 working days – compliance rate (%)</b></td> <td>99%</td> <td>95%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Average time for a response to be issued</b></td> <td>10 working days</td> <td>11 working days</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>% change in number of requests received from Q2 2021/22</b></td> <td>-7%</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		1 July 2022 – 30 Sept 2022 (Q2 2022/23)	1 July 2021 – 30 Sept 2021 (Q2 2021/22)	<b>Number received</b>	148	159	<b>Number responded to within 20 working days</b>	146	151	<b>Responses issued within 20 working days – compliance rate (%)</b>	99%	95%	<b>Average time for a response to be issued</b>	10 working days	11 working days	<b>% change in number of requests received from Q2 2021/22</b>	-7%	
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<b>Average time for a response to be issued</b>	10 working days	11 working days																	
<b>% change in number of requests received from Q2 2021/22</b>	-7%																		
Train all CLT/HOST in emergency planning response protocol	Meeting target, new members of HOST to be trained in Autumn.																		
Have 2 emergency planning test activations	Meeting target: Scheduled																		
Hold 2 Emergency Planning Implementation Group meetings	Meeting target: Meeting held on 20 October 2022.																		
Continue review of the use of resources (paper,	Meeting target. Review underway. Customer Services Manager reviewing use of paper, postage and																		

Business as Usual activities we will deliver in 2022/2023 (actions)	Q2 update
postage, stationary) to ensure sustainability is paramount.	stationery and working with services to reduce use where appropriate.
DSAR response times in compliance with legislation	15 DSARs were processed in this period and all in compliance with legislative timeframes.

**Table 2: Q2 performance update - Service development/improvement activities**

What service development/improvement will we undertake in 2021/2022?	Q2 update
Pilot paperless filing for new files in 1 Directorate or Service Unit	This was now included in the larger digital transformation project.
Monitor complaints consistently via Tascomi across Council	Meeting target – Tascomi roll-out to all services was still ongoing. In the meantime, the Customer Services Manager now had oversight of other databases for customer complaints.
75% rate for resolution of issues or enquiries at first point of contact in Customer Service. Trend analysis to be carried out as part of this.	Of the management information that we held on Te-care (Tascomi) and Enquiries database, the resolution of issues at first point of contact was 97%.
E Learning module to be created for complaint handling/customer service and will form part of induction process for all new starts and mandatory training for all staff who deal with the public.	E-learning module had been developed and would be rolled out before end of December 2022.
Implement Screening App	Meeting target. This was now completed and was working well.
Screening 100% of all new and revised policies to ensure compliance with disability duties and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1988, Rural and Sustainability.	Complete. All existing policies were checked to ensure that they were screened and if not, screening was completed. All new policies were screened as they were being developed.

What service development/improvement will we undertake in 2021/2022?	Q2 update
Review participation and recruit members in/to the Consultancy panel	On target: Ongoing, awaiting a date to get them together – however constitution was agreed.
Develop Claims Management Policy	On target: Development underway.
Increase Participation and recruit members in the Council Disability Forum by 50%	Meeting target: This had been carried out and 2 new members had been recruited.
Complete Climate Adaptation and Action Plans	On target: This was progressing – all of the one-to-one meetings with service areas had been completed. These focused on actions based on the Risk Register. The council wide action plan was now being developed.

**Table 3: Q2 performance update – Corporate wide improvement activities**

Performance Measures	Q2 update
% Staff Attendance (95%)	Missed target – 94.1%
% Spend against budget (+/-5% of budget)	Missed target – 105.33%
% Staff reporting regular receipt of team briefings	100% - Teams meet at least once a month
Pride in Performance Conversations	Paused while being reviewed

## ITEM 7.4

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**Key achievements:**

The Conferment of the Freedom of the Borough to Gary Lightbody was a highlight in the civic calendar. The events were very well received, and thanks was extended to officers for all the hard work that went into this.

Freedom of Information requests had continued to be high in number and complexity. To see that the response rate had increased and the days for response turnaround decrease was a great achievement.

The Roadmap to Sustainability was continuing to serve as a great document to ensure that actions were continuing and constantly improving. The Council-wide awareness of their service's impact on all elements of sustainability had dramatically increased and projects now considered sustainability as a matter of course as opposed to an afterthought.

**Emerging issues:**

The effect of the pandemic remained evident in the workload of this service. There were many issues that had been noted due to the fact that this/other service(s) had historically been paper-based. The pandemic had demonstrated the need for systems to be digitised going forward so that information could be accessed in a timely manner as well as to ensure security of data. This required investment and would fall into the transformation programme that the Council had agreed.

**Action to be taken:**

We continued to work towards all of the KPIs.

**G) HUMAN RESOURCES**  
(Appendix VIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing the undernoted:

**Context**

Members would be aware that Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

### Key points to note:

- This reported on progress against the 19 Service Plan KPIs. Good progress was being made against the PIs with 15 currently being on target.
- 4 targets had not been achieved.

### HR successes

HR and OD had been successful in ensuring that there had been excellent communication with trade unions with regard to all HR issues. Resourcing were extremely efficient in informing candidates for employment of the outcome of recruitment exercises and 100% of candidates had been informed of the outcome within 2 weeks of a shortlisting meeting or attending interview. Good progress had been made on the People Plan with 55% of the actions having been completed in the second quarter. The HR and OD service was also within budget for the second quarter of the year.

### Ongoing targets

- The service was on target for the end of the year to have the following in place:
  - Formal Homeworking Policy
  - Training on Whistle blowing
  - Review of Flexible Working Policy
  - Development of a Workforce Strategy
  - Corporate Induction Programme

### Targets not achieved

- Council wide absence remained challenging with a YTD figure of 7.1 % against a target of 5.00% Detailed information on absence to be reported to committee on 13 December 2022.
- Visits to other work locations to discuss HR issues with managers had not taken place but it was anticipated that this would commence in the next quarter

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that items 4(a) to 4(g) be noted.**

## 5. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS & TREASURY MANAGEMENT - 2022/23 IN-YEAR REPORT (FIN159)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Finance and Performance detailing the following:

### Introduction

In February 2022, to comply with requirements of the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011, Council approved its annual Treasury Management Strategy and associated Prudential Indicators for the financial year 2022/23.

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with an in-year progress report on performance, measured against the Prudential Indicators set for the financial year 2022/23. The figures presented in this report were based on knowledge held as at 30 November 2022 and ignored the impact of the proposed change in accounting for leases which was yet to take effect.

### 1 Capital Expenditure & Financing

The aforementioned legislation and the CIPFA Prudential Code together required the Council to set and monitor a series of Prudential Indicators (PIs) for capital expenditure and financing. These PIs should ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the Council are affordable, prudent and sustainable. An update on the specific PIs which were set in February 2022 is provided below.

#### 1.1 Capital Expenditure PI

The following table summarised the current estimate of capital expenditure compared to the original estimates approved by Council:

	Original	Revised
Indicator	£'000	£'000
Capital Expenditure PI 2022/23 (Current Year)	17,152	5,052
Capital Expenditure PI 2021/22 (Previous Year)	8,230	4,873

For 2022/23, the original estimate of £17.152m had been revised to £5.052m, reflecting the capital expenditure that was now expected to be incurred by 31 March 2023. The reduction in the forecast was primarily due to delays in funding and the planning stages for works which were scheduled to commence in 2022/23. These budgets had now been re-profiled in line with revised plans and estimated funding flows.

The revised forecast, together with the recent review of project prioritisation, programming delivery timescales and capital financing implications had resulted in changes to the total estimated capital expenditure and financing requirements for the three-year period from 2022/23 to 2024/25, as summarised below:

	Revised				Original
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Expenditure	5,051	16,438	14,390	35,879	66,918
<b>Financed by:</b>					
Loans	3,069	8,394	9,048	20,511	38,234
Grants	1,188	7,071	5,121	13,380	26,592
Capital Receipts	796	942	220	1,958	2,062
Revenue/Reserves	-	30	-	30	30

## 1.2 Capital Financing Requirement and External Borrowings

The following table summarised the position on the Capital Financing Requirement and Borrowing PIs, resulting from changes to the Capital Expenditure PI and an assessment of the Council's current cashflow position.

Indicator	Original	Revised
	31/03/23	31/03/23
	£'000	£'000
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	80,481	76,969
External Gross Borrowing	66,860	63,725
Gross Borrowing within CFR	Yes	Yes

With revised external gross borrowing of £63.7m, the Council is forecast to remain well within both the Operational Boundary and Authorised Borrowing Limit set for the year as follows:

Operational Boundary for External Debt	£83.04m
Authorised Borrowing Limit	£88.17m

## 2 Treasury Management

### 2.1 Debt Activity

During the period from 1 April to 30 November, loan principal repayments of £1.56m were made against existing long-term borrowings, resulting in a level of long-term borrowings at 30 November 2022 of £65.3m.



The revised capital financing requirement showed that the Council could increase its level of external borrowings to £76.97m by 31 March 2023 (see table 1.2 above). However, an assessment of the Council's cashflow position forecasted that the current level of borrowings was adequate and therefore, no further borrowing would be required before the end of the financial year.

Therefore, after further repayments on existing long-term loans were made in February 2023 of £1.58m, the level of external borrowings at 31 March 2023 was forecast to be £63.72m.

### 2.3 Investment Activity

The objectives of the Council's investment strategy were safeguarding the repayment of the principal and interest on its investments on time, with the investment return being a secondary objective. The current investment climate continued to be one of overriding risk consideration, particularly that of counterparty risk. In line with advice provided by treasury management consultants, officers continue to implement an operational investment strategy of placing short-term investments with approved high-quality counterparties.

For the period from 1 April to 30 November 2022, Council had earned interest of £82,068 on investment deals with approved financial institutions as summarised below:

	Average Deposit Size	Average Term	Average Interest Rate	Interest Earned
CCLA	£3.3m	Call A/c	1.45%	£30,599
Santander	£3.0m	Call A/c	0.77%	£14,590
Barclays	£2.3m	Call A/c	1.12%	£15,123
Bank of Scotland	£3.0m	Call A/c	0.24%	£838
Lloyds Bank	£2.3m	Call A/c	0.15%	£455
Local Authorities	£3.0m	3 mths	1.09%	£24,860
<b>Total</b>				<b>£86,465</b>

The Council's limit for total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days was £500k. The Council had not entered into any such investments.

The total balance of funds held in investment accounts at 30 November 2022 was £12m.

### 2.3 Debt Related Treasury Activity Limits

The table below showed the position at 30 November 2022 of all debt related treasury activity limits.

Interest rate exposures	Limit set for 2022/23	Actual at 30/11/22
Quantity of debt held at variable interest rates - upper limit	30%	3%
Quantity of debt held at fixed interest rates - upper limit	100%	97%

Maturity structure of fixed interest rate borrowing	Lower Limit set for 2022/23	Upper Limit set for 2022/23	Actual at 30/11/22
Under 12 months	0%	15%	4.7%
12 months to 2 years	0%	15%	6.1%
2 years to 5 years	0%	20%	14.1%
5 years to 10 years	0%	30%	22.9%
10 years and above	30%	90%	52.2%

RECOMMENDED that Council notes this report.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Dunlop, that the recommendation be adopted.

## **6. BECOMING A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY BOROUGH**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Chief Executive detailing that in March 2018 Council agreed the following Notice of Motion.

*This Council acknowledges and expresses its gratitude for the work that is carried out on a daily basis by carers and healthcare workers across the Borough for those suffering from dementia; notes that in the 2017 data released by NISRA that Ards and North Down Borough Council had the highest number of people in Northern Ireland affected by dementia per 1000 registered patients; believes that this Council has an important role to play in improving the lives of people affected by dementia and their carers and that it can play a positive role in championing people affected by dementia; and hereby resolves:-*

- *to ensure the needs of people affected by dementia and their carers are considered in all aspects of the Council's work,*
- *to appoint a Dementia Champion, and*
- *to work with partners locally and the Alzheimer's Society, many of who are already working our make towns throughout our Borough dementia-friendly, towards becoming a dementia friendly Borough.*

A report was brought to Corporate Service Committee in June 2018 outlining the steps officers would take to move forward with this motion.

The recommendations adopted were:

- We would register the Council on the Alzheimer's Society website as aspiring to become a Dementia Friendly organisation

- We would nominate at least one member of staff (and probably 2 or 3 given the size of the council) to attend 2 days training and become Dementia Friendly Community Champions. This meant that they were trained to deliver the two-hour Dementia Friendly Community workshop within the Council which would ensure all employees could become Dementia Friends.
- We would continue to incorporate dementia friendly changes into all organisational policies

At October 2022 Council, during a discussion on an Age Friendly update paper, it was raised by a member that the update did not contain information on the original dementia friendly notice of motion and recommendations adopted. The Head of Environmental Health Protection and Development agreed to ensure Council was updated at a future meeting.

Internally, Council's Equality Officer (at the time) led some of this work, which was integrated within the Community Plan and in particular the Age Friendly agenda. The Community Plan included a priority that we need to make Ards and North Down Welcoming and Friendly to everyone. This is the priority under which Age Friendly falls. It was agreed by the Community Planning Partners and the Age Friendly Alliance that activities such as dementia friendly, autism friendly, brain injury friendly etc. should be grouped under the umbrella of 'welcoming to everyone' as the actions, training and awareness raising required is all similar. The use and promotion of Jam Cards was also incorporated under this umbrella. However, it was recognised that the grouping of these activities by the Age Friendly Alliance does not preclude individual organisations, such as Council, taking a more focused approach to one or more of the issues listed.

#### **Update on activities since 2018**

Following the adoption of the Notice of Motion there was momentum to incorporate dementia friendly practices within Council and to ensure it was recognised within the development of the Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan. As a result of this the following activities took place:

**Dementia Friendly training for ANDBC staff** – 82 members of staff underwent 'Dementia Friends' training. This voluntary training was provided by Radius at no cost to Council.

**Real Lives Event** – Dementia NI, in conjunction with Ards and North Down Borough Council, hosted a special event to give Dementia NI members the chance to tell their personal accounts of what it's like to live with dementia. The event ***Real Lives: Learning from Those Who Live with Dementia***, took place at Bangor Aurora on Thursday, 25 October 2018.

The event gave an insight into the signs, symptoms and challenges that a diagnosis of dementia brings. The aim of the event was to provide greater understanding of the condition so that communities will become more accepting, tolerant of the symptoms and helpful towards people living with dementia.

As a result of the event, Police Officers in Ards and North Down were Dementia Friendly trained, Elected Members were also given the opportunity to be Dementia

Friendly trained and Council's Arts Service ran Dementia Friendly Art sessions in early 2019.

**JAM Card accredited** – Following a notice of motion in March 2018, Ards and North Down Borough Council became JAM accredited. The JAM card was originally developed by and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities but had now expanded to include anyone with a hidden disability or communication barrier when they needed more patience and space in a given situation. A JAM Card allowed people with a learning difficulty, autism or communication barrier to tell others they need 'Just A Minute' discreetly and easily. To show we were Jam Friendly we had door stickers. We also had dementia friend's door stickers to show they public our commitment to being Dementia Friendly.

**Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan (2019-2022)** - this contained two actions specific to dementia:

- Support memories café and Dementia Friendly Libraries (Led by Libraries NI)
- Taking the lead in making Ards and North Down Dementia Friendly (Led by Alzheimer's Society)

**Dementia Friendly Working Group** - Alzheimer's Society and Dementia NI are both Community Planning Partners and are members of the Age Friendly Alliance as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Community Planning Partnership. In 2019, the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust took a lead in establishing a Dementia Friendly sub-group of the Age Friendly Alliance to help co-ordinate and raise awareness of dementia friendly activities across Ards and North Down. The group was Chaired by Alzheimer's Society, and an action plan was to be developed. Unfortunately, due to staffing changes across Council, the Trust, Dementia NI and Alzheimer's Society this group had not met since before Covid.

This group was following the steps to help Ards and North Down to become recognised as a Dementia Friendly Community. The steps (and progress) were outlined below:

<b>Dementia Friendly Community Steps</b>	<b>Progress/ Current Status</b>
Step ONE – Get a group together	Group formed in 2019. Not met since Covid and staff changes have happened across all partners.
STEP TWO – Agree a Leader	Alzheimer's Society chaired group
STEP THREE – Raise Awareness	Dementia Friends vinyl signage in ANDBC buildings ANDBC and PSNI officer trained as dementia friends
Step FOUR – Involve people affected by dementia	Real Lives Event Dementia audit of Ards Blair Mayne Leisure Centre
Step FIVE – Tell the world	Press promotion of Real Lives Event
Step SIX – Identify areas for local action	Strategic action included within Age Friendly Action Plan and partners encouraged to consider dementia within the delivery of their own services

	ANDBC and other CP Partners e.g., PSNI underwent Dementia Friends training
Step SEVEN – Monitor your progress	No progress
Step EIGHT – Apply for recognition	No progress

Conversations had restarted with the members of this group with a view to restarting the meetings to assess the best way to restart this work.

**StayWell Website** – the Employee Health and Wellbeing Group (EH&WG) has worked with the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) to give all employees access to an excellent website which covered a range of health topics, health and wellbeing related news and events, and allowed EH&WG to feature or publicise in-house activities. Launched in January 2022, there were over 82 articles and videos related to Dementia which provided relevant information and signposting to support organisations.

### Challenges

A specific internal resource had not been allocated to dementia friendly and the interest in it fell across different directorates. To achieve formal accreditation resources would need to be secured to develop a fully deliverable action plan. The work associated with monitoring and reporting may also have had a resource implication.

Guidance was needed for officers on how to consider health equity across all policies. This could include dementia but also apply to the Mental Health Charter and other section 75 groups. Some of this information is within the S75 screening form but it may need to be more explicit.

Due to its alignment with the Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan, future updates on Dementia friendly initiatives would be reported through Council's Community & Wellbeing Committee. The original Notice of Motion was referred to Corporate Services which was appropriate if our actions only concerned Ards and North Down Borough Council. However, our community planning action was wider than Council and committed our Community Planning Partnership to being a 'welcoming borough for everyone'. While Community Planning reports to Corporate Services, Age Friendly reports to Community and Wellbeing.

### Proposed way forward

- Contact Alzheimer's Society, SEHSCT and Dementia NI to encourage re-establishing the Dementia Working Group and develop an action plan. This would ensure that making a "dementia friendly" borough was back on the community planning partners agenda and have greater impact than the council working in isolation.
- Work with other "friendly" organisations such as autism, brain injury and JAM as well as the Dementia Working Group to identify and agree common training requirements to maximise the ability to deliver cost effective training across the range of organisations to make Ards and North Down a "friendly" borough for all.

- Consider expanding the remit of the internal Age Friendly Officers group to consider health equity across all policies including dementia, mental health, autism, brain injury etc, but recognise that this would require further training of this group's members for them to have the necessary competencies
- Agree reporting of dementia friendly activities alongside age friendly to Community & Wellbeing Committee.

RECOMMENDED that Council agree the following:

1. Move future reporting of dementia friendly to Community & Wellbeing Committee so it is reported alongside Age Friendly progress.
2. Agree that the lead for the delivery of Dementia Friendly work falls within the community planning process rather than with the council (as committed to by community planning partners in the Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan) and progress the work of the council as a partner within this workstream.
3. Explore the cost of new training (both in person and digitally) for staff and roll this out as part of Council's training programme.
4. With the internal Age Friendly Officers group, explore developing a written guidance/procedure for how to integrate health equity across all policies and to align with the current policy screening requirements and identify what additional resource would be required to implement this.

Proposed by Councillor McKimm, seconded by Alderman Gibson, that the recommendation be adopted.

Alderman McIlveen was not entirely happy with the report as he felt it did not fully reflect the Notice of Motion that he had brought in March 2018. He felt that the amendments referred to in the attached policy should have been separate with a dedicated focus on a dementia and Alzheimer's friendly Borough and how it could have been integrated in areas such as Planning, in the design of the public realm, for example, but instead he felt somewhere along the line the motion had been watered down and aligned with another strategy which took the focus away from getting the desired status and implementing it across Council services. There were welcomed elements from other Notice of Motions of the proposal that worked well with this, JAM cards for example, but more could have been done, he added, such as appointing a dementia champion to drive this forward but there was much more needed to help day to day living. Generally there were many Notice of Motions that were not fully implemented, he felt, and in this case, he would be tabling an amendment at full Council. Alderman Gibson agreed with those comments and spoke of the impacts and growing rates of dementia and the importance for Council to help in any way it could.

The Community Planning Manager responded that the Council did not have the expertise to implement that level of resource. This policy had been drafted in partnership with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust which had recommended establishing the proposed sub group within the Age Friendly Alliance and to take more of a regional NI-wide approach. It had also recommended some

internal mechanisms such as E-Learning and the Herbert Protocol, adopted by Belfast City Council in partnership with the PSNI, where people affected could pre-register in the event that they went missing.

Councillor T Smith indicated he wished to abstain from the decision until he got sight of the amendment that Alderman McIlveen intended to propose at the full Council meeting.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Alderman Gibson, that the recommendation be adopted.**

**7. QUARTERLY REPORT ON EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS (SECTION 75 OF THE N.I. ACT 1998) 1 AUGUST 2022- 31 NOVEMBER 2022 (FILE EQ33)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that in accordance with the Council's Equality Scheme, a progress report was required to be submitted on a quarterly basis to the Council's Corporate Services Committee. This ensured the Council complied with its obligations to meet its equality and good relations duties and responsibilities, as identified in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

This report listed the actions of Council Officers to meet the statutory duties since 1 August 2022.

**Screening of Council policies**

The Screening Panel met in August and November 2022. Officers from across the Council directorates screened 12 Council policies. This enabled comments to be received, considered, and addressed. All officers agreed with the outcome of all screening documents. The Jot form format is proving a valuable tool when completing screening. It was hoped that training would be provided to those officers involved with policy writing in February 2023.

**Quarterly Consultations**

The Council had a requirement within the Equality Scheme to publish the outcome of screened policies quarterly. A quarterly report would be uploaded onto the Council's website on 31 November 2022. The next agreed table and forms would be uploaded to the Council's website and circulated to all consultees in February 2023. At the time of writing this report there would be 12 completed screening forms to be made available on the Council website.

**EQIA**

Following the conclusion of the online public and staff consultation exercise on the Council's EQIA regarding the flying of the Union Flag at Church Street and on war memorials, further consultation took place during October 2022 through a staff meeting and three public meetings (two in person, one via Zoom). All feedback from the consultation exercises had been passed on to the Council's consultant and a final report would be brought back to Council in due course.

**Equality Action Plan**

The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) continued to review and ensure that items outlined in the plan are in place and on track, and Officers were reminded of their responsibilities during the quarterly Screening Panel meetings.

### **Consultative Panel**

The Compliance Officer Equality and Safeguarding has remained in contact with all existing members of the Panel throughout Covid and has been in touch with them with regard to reconvening meetings. There has been a delay in this due to difficulties with sourcing a suitable venue to accommodate all needs, but it is anticipated that the next meeting will take place in January 2023.

### **Disability Forum**

The Disability Forum has met twice in a hybrid meeting format during this reporting period. Speakers from Translink and Disabled Go were invited to speak to the members who raised various issues with them. Two new members had joined and were a welcome addition. Minutes for the previous meetings were available from the Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding)

### **AccessAble**

The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding Officer) continued to work with AccessAble, and this was proving a valuable tool. A new partnership manager had been recruited. She was already familiar with the Council locale and facilities and had agreed to attend the Disability Forum to see which areas of improvement were needed in the Borough.

### **Disability Action Plan**

The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) continued to work to deliver the Disability Action Plan. This was reported through the Internal Screening Group and the Disability Forum. At these meetings, any identified concerns may be added to the Plan to ensure appropriate actions are identified and undertaken in a timely manner to enable the Council to remain compliant with the relevant legislation.

### **Carers Event**

The Compliance Officer (Equality and Safeguarding) organised an event for Carers in September 2022 in conjunction with SEHSCT Carers Development Officer. 30 Carers attended a tour of the Walled Garden and later enjoyed a history talk on the Town Hall with tea and refreshments. This was well received by all who attended.

### **Complaints**

During this period no Section 75 complaints had been received.

### **It Takes Allsorts 2022**

The It Takes Allsorts programme had been running online via Teams in 2022. Four events had been organised

- September talk on Human Trafficking by Flourish NI attended by 12 members of staff and the public
- October talk on Money advice by Citizens Advice, attended by 25 staff and the public



- November talk on Unconscious Bias by John Kremer, attended by 16 members of staff and the public
- December talk on deaf Awareness by Anthony Sinclair, TBC

It had been noted that attendance to these events was low in comparison to previous years. The It takes Allsorts team had agreed to meet in January with the HR and OD manager to ascertain a way forward for 2023.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes this report.

Councillor Cooper proposed, seconded by Councillor T Smith, to note the report and that a further report be brought back with the composition of the consultative panel.

Proposing, Councillor Cooper stated that members were democratically elected and Council officers were not and Members had every right to know who was making decisions for this Borough.

Speaking in support, Councillor T Smith was aware that Councillor Cooper had asked for this information on number of occasions but it had not been forthcoming. He queried the make up of the consultative panel and the Head of Administration advised that it was made up of people representative of the Section 75 legislation and it was intended to bring back a report as requested. EQIA results were being finalised following extension to the consultation and would be returned as soon as possible.

Councillor T Smith queried the costs of running the All Sorts events, noting that only 25 members of staff and public had attended. He asked if it was providing value for money. The Officer advised that the costs were minimal due to the events running online. That format had followed the success of the online arrangements during Covid where attendance had been high. The sessions had been well promoted internally and externally, and all staff were encouraged to attend.

Alderman McIlveen queried the rationale behind the locations of the in-person consultation sessions which were held in Portaferry and Newtownards and not other areas of the Borough. The officer advised that the consultation survey asked people if they would like an in-person consultation and respondents were asked to provide the first part of their postcode. Newtownards had seen the highest level of interest followed by Portaferry.

Councillor Irwin queried the consultative panel and their role and asked for clarification that Council made the final decision and the officer confirmed that was the case.

The Mayor, Councillor Douglas, asked if there were any data protection issues to consider in providing the requested information and the officer advised she would need to seek clarity on that but a report would be provided in confidence.

On being put to the meeting with 5 voting FOR, 6 voting AGAINST, 1 ABSTAINING and 4 ABSENT, the proposal FELL.

Alderman McIlveen, who was attending the meeting remotely, indicated that he had missed the vote but intended to vote in favour of the alternative proposal. The Chair advised that his vote could not be accepted at this stage as the result had already been declared.

Councillor Irwin proposed, seconded by Councillor McKimm, that the original recommendation be adopted.

Alderman McIlveen proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Cooper, to note the report and that a list of the members of the equality consultative panel is made available to the next council meeting.

Councillor Greer challenged the amendment under Standing Order 18.1 and pointed to the statement that an amendment must relate solely to the proposal which it sought to amend, and not be, in effect, a new proposition on a different matter, and must not place a greater responsibility on the meeting than the original proposal. She felt that the addition of a timescale in Alderman McIlveen's proposal was in breach of that.

In response, Alderman McIlveen felt that the request was for information that was already in the Council's possession and did not pose any unreasonable demand.

The Chair considered Councillor Greer's comments but felt that the essence of any amendment was going to change the direction to a degree so was content for it to proceed.

In summary, Alderman McIlveen felt that the request initiated by Councillor Cooper was reasonable given that he had not been provided the information to date.

On being put to the meeting with 6 voting FOR, 6 voting AGAINST, 0 ABSTAINING and 3 ABSENT, the Chair used his casting vote in favour of the amendment, and it was declared CARRIED.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Cooper, that the report be noted and that a list of the members of the equality consultative panel is made available to the next council meeting.**

**8. REQUEST FROM COMBER DISTRICT LOL TO USE PARKWAY, COMBER AS A DEMONSTRATION FIELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**  
(Appendix IX)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that the Council had received a request from Comber District LOL to use Council Land at Comber Parkway (gravel pitch, grass pitch and car park) as a demonstration field for the annual parade on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023. They required use of land at Comber Parkway from the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> July and all day on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023 – see Appendix.

They had advised of the following plans:

- Approximately 15 vendors including food vendors and stalls selling memorabilia.
- Inflatables – 3 types to suit different age groups.
- 2,000 to 3,000 expected to attend.
- Live / recorded music & PA system.
- This area was used in 2016 for the demonstration field.

Council officers had been consulted and had advised that all documents relating to the event should be submitted no later than 6 weeks in advance to allow time for review and comment. Also, a site visit must be carried out in advance with the event organisers and relevant Council officers to agree the final details and discuss the impact on the pitch. There were concerns about the impact on the grass pitch, but these could be addressed by limiting usage of this area to pedestrians and inflatables only with any vehicles and vendors limited to the gravel pitch.

Permission would therefore be subject to the following:

1. The organisers meeting with Council officers at least 3 weeks before the event to discuss arrangements and finalise the designated areas of use, and
2. Agreeing to the following conditions:
  - I. Paying the relevant fee for traders as per the Councils current policy. (£30 for up to 3 traders, and £10 per trader after this)
  - II. A bond of £500.00 must be paid prior to the event, which will be refunded following a satisfactory inspection of the area by a Council officer after the event has left the site.
  - III. Provide a risk assessment and event management plan.
  - IV. Display public notices for at least two weeks before the event to notify the public that said event is due to take place in the area. Signage to be agreed in advance with appropriate Council officer.
  - V. Public notices must be removed after the event within seven days.
  - VI. Provide appropriate welfare facilities at own cost. Number to be agreed with appropriate Council officer in advance.
  - VII. Provide evidence of relevant insurances and fully indemnifying Council against all risks associated with the use of land or property.
  - VIII. Make good any damage caused during the to the satisfaction of Council officers. Should the Council have to undertake remedial works the costs will be recovered from the organiser.
  - IX. Put in place protective measures for areas where important natural heritage is present.
  - X. Arrange for the collection and subsequent removal of all litter and other debris from the main event and adjacent areas during the event, as well as once the event had concluded, however, should the Council have to do any additional cleaning the costs will be recovered from the organiser.
  - XI. Organiser to put in place arrangements for recycling waste from the event.
  - XII. Arrange for the prompt removal of any items used in connection with the event.

- XIII. Put in place plans to limit any negative impact on the public using the land at the same time as the event.
- XIV. Obtain and provide evidence of permits/licences/registrations and approvals.
- XV. Indemnify the Council against all claims which may result from the event or use of the area, and to provide the Council with a copy of the relevant insurance policy.
- XVI. Ensure that only the designated area, or areas specified by Council officers, are used for the event – grass pitch to be limited to pedestrian and inflatables use only with vehicles and vendors limited to the gravel pitch.
- XVII. Ensure that adequate marshals are placed throughout the designated area to ensure that members of the public are not endangered by the event.
- XVIII. Where electrical supplies are being used, this must be agreed in advance with Council officers. Additional costs may apply depending on the services required.
- XIX. No petrol generators are to be used.
- XX. Provide the Council with a list of any suppliers/food providers for the event at least six weeks in advance of the event taking place.

RECOMMENDED that the Council accedes to the request subject to the organisers agreeing to the conditions detailed above.

Proposed by Alderman Gibson, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.

Alderman Girvan welcomed the recommendation and was looking forward to another successful event in 2023. Councillor Cooper asked if toilet facilities would be provided and the Head of Administration confirmed that those were in the terms and conditions when an event met a particular scale.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **9. ROADMAP TO SUSTAINABILITY (SUS1)** (Appendix X)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that the Roadmap to Sustainability was agreed by Council in March 2021. It had been developed to formalise, within one document, the Council's commitment to becoming more sustainable and to act as a key enabler in this regard.

The Roadmap ran from the period 2021 to 2028 to coincide with two Corporate Plan phases. It would be updated periodically, with the accompanying Action Plan reviewed and updated on an annual basis, and update reports provided to Council on a quarterly or six-monthly basis depending on progress.

The first update report summarising progress against the key actions agreed in the Roadmap was provided to Council in December 2021 with a further update provided in June 2022. As six months have now passed, a further update against actions had been prepared for Members and was attached to this report.

In addition to the updates provided in the appendix, Members should have noted that the Council had maintained its position of Silver at the Annual Business in the Community Environmental Benchmarking Survey. The Survey had grown to become Northern Ireland's leading environmental benchmarking exercise, attracting organisations from numerous industry sectors. It was recognised as a positive influencer that was helping organisations throughout Northern Ireland to achieve more sustainable ways of doing business. Four Councils took part in this year's survey, including Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon (Silver), Mid & East Antrim (Platinum) and Antrim & Newtownabbey (Platinum).

RECOMMENDED that Council notes this report.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop, seconded by Councillor Douglas, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Dunlop asked if the training for staff could also be opened to Members to enhance their knowledge in terms of decision making and the Head of Administration confirmed that Members would be welcome to avail of the training which was an online resource through the e-Learning portal.

In a further query, Councillor Dunlop noted that there was reference to a newly appointed Tree Development Officer and he asked if the appointment was subject to agreement in the rate setting process, given recent discussions around vacancy management. It was confirmed that the officer had already been appointed in October 2022.

The Officer would clarify a further query in relation to the Climate Act (Item 6 of the appendix) and she advised that the Energy Management Strategy (referred to at Item 7 in the attachment) sat with Assets and Property Services but was aware that analysis and scoping had taken place and that a draft of strategy was due to follow.

In a final comment, Councillor Dunlop wondered if would be possible for officers to provide a briefing note exploring the implications of the Climate Act and how it may impact on future decisions within the Council. He felt it would be beneficial.

The Mayor, Councillor Douglas, welcomed the number of projects that were coming forward, as highlighted in the attached appendices and recommended some of the training opportunities to Members advising that she had benefited from a number of training opportunities herself which was beneficial towards strategic and robust decision making.

The Chair asked how Council could improve on the Silver status in terms of benchmarking and the Officer advised that while Silver had been a solid achievement it required a significant amount of additional resource to achieve that next level. She pointed out that there was only one Sustainability Officer in place and

that benchmark had only been achieved by one other Northern Ireland Council. However it was a standard that the Council aspired to.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Dunlop, seconded by Councillor Douglas, that the recommendation be adopted.**

**10. REQUEST TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE NI RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMY'S CONSULTATION ON ITS ENERGY ONE STOP SHOP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SUS1)**  
(Appendix XI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that In December 2021, the NI Executive launched the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy "Path to Net Zero Energy," a roadmap to deliver a 56% reduction in the NI energy-related emissions by 2030 and setting out its vision for net zero and affordable energy by 2050. The strategy was followed in January by the publication of a 22-point Action Plan outlining some of the main actions to be taken forward.

Among the key actions was support for the public on the journey to affordable, net zero carbon energy by 2050 through accessible and impartial information, independent and trusted advice and the right level of protection. This would be facilitated through the energy "one stop shop" as the focal point for all consumers.

Economy Minister Gordon Lyons had launched a public consultation on the development of this Energy "One-Stop Shop" (OSS). The One Stop Shop would work with partners to consolidate advice, guidance and support in energy-related matters in an effort to simplify the energy decarbonisation journey for consumers, whether they needed impartial advice on what to do and how to do it, or protection along the decarbonisation journey.

This would be a vitally important pillar on the journey to energy decarbonisation and would provide a gateway for consumers seeking information, advice and guidance on energy-related matters. The commitment to developing this service was included in the Path to Net Zero Energy Strategy, launched by the Minister in December 2021 and formed part of the Energy Strategy Action Plan for 2022.

As one of the councils' key partners for sustainability, Sustainable NI had drafted the attached response to the Energy 'One Stop Shop' consultation.

RECOMMENDED that the Council directly responds to the consultation in line with the SNI response.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Dunlop, seconded by Councillor Douglas, that the recommendation be adopted.**

**11. SUSTAINABLE FOOD PLACES – OPEN LETTER ON HEALTHY START SCHEME (SUS1)**  
(Appendix XII)

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:-** Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that Ards and North Down Borough Council became a member of Sustainable Food Places (SFP) in April 2022 (as reported to Corporate Committee in May 2022).

The ambition of SFP is to create a transition to a healthy, sustainable, and more equitable food system. Not only does this require strong national policy, but also collaborative action between policy makers, businesses, and society at the local level. It promoted a systems approach that involved and connected key actors at all levels and across all parts of the food system.

As part of this membership the Ards and North Down Food Partnership had been asked by Sustain/Sustainable Food Places to support an open letter addressed to the Department of Health and Social Care, Department of Work and Pensions, and the NHS Business Services Authority to address issues within the Healthy Start Scheme.

Healthy Start was a UK-wide scheme providing a nutritional safety net to those who were pregnant and children under four in low-income families in receipt of qualifying benefits. All those who were pregnant and under-18 years of age qualify, whether or not they were in receipt of benefits.

Healthy Start supported public health policies by encouraging breastfeeding and a healthy diet.

The Healthy Start scheme provided a prepaid card for eligible applicants which could be used at local shops to buy plain liquid cow's milk, infant formula milk based on cow's milk, and fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables. Free Healthy Start vitamins could also be provided for those who were pregnant, who were breastfeeding, and children aged from six months to four years. The scheme currently supported around 13,500 households in Northern Ireland.

The Department of Health was responsible for the legislation of Healthy Start policy in Northern Ireland.

A copy of this open letter was attached.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council agrees to add the Ards and North Down Sustainable Food Partnership signature to this letter.

Proposed by Councillor McKimm, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor McKimm was alarmed by the statistics and commented that some of the reported health conditions should not be affecting children while Alderman Irvine spoke of the importance of Council providing this support.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## 12. **RESPONSE TO NOTICES OF MOTION:**

### (a) **NOM 166 – SPEED LIMIT, A48 COTTON ROAD** (Appendix XIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that a Notice of Motion was debated at Corporate Committee in October 2022 and subsequently ratified by Council which stated:

“That this Council writes and calls on the Minister for Infrastructure to **reduce the speed limit down to 30mph at the A48 Cotton Road** after the latest road accident and fatality.”

A letter was sent from the Chief Executive on 22 November 2022 to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Infrastructure and a reply email was received on 25 November 2022 and a copy was attached.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes the response to the Notice of Motion.

Proposed by Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor Chambers, that the recommendation be adopted.

Having proposed the Notice of Motion, Alderman Irvine was disappointed by the DfI's response and felt it had not taken in to account the number of incidents and safety concerns that had been raised.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Councillor Chambers, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## 13. **NOTICES OF MOTION.**

It was noted that there were no Notices of Motion.

## 14. **ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

There were no items of any other notified business.

NOTED.

## **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted items of confidential business.**

## 15. **ABSENCE REPORT Q2 2022/23** (Appendix XIV)



**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**16. BLAIR MAYNE BURSARY AWARDS 2022 (ADM24)**  
(Appendix XV)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**17. REQUEST FROM NI WATER TO EXTEND THE LICENCES FOR A SITE COMPOUND AT BROMPTON AND STRICKLANDS GLEN**  
(Appendix XVI – XVIII)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**18. CONWAY SQUARE, NEWTOWNARDS**  
(Appendix XIX – XXII)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**19. REQUEST FROM HENDERSON GROUP TO PURCHASE MOSS ROAD CARPARK IN MILLISLE**  
(Appendix XXIII – XXIV)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**20. RENEWAL OF LEASE TO DONAGHADEE FOOTBALL CLUB OF PREMISES ABOVE THE PUBLIC TOILETS AT THE PARADE, DONAGHADEE (LP468)**

(Appendix XXV – XXVI)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**21. PURCHASE OF LAND ADJACENT TO 9 HARBOUR ROAD GROOMSPORT**

(Appendix XXVII – XXIX)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**22. REQUEST FROM NI WATER FOR A LEASE AT QUEENS PARADE, BANGOR**

(Appendix XXX – XXXIII)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**23. REQUEST FROM PORTAVOGIE RANGERS FOOTBALL CLUB FOR A LICENCE OF THE PITCH AT NEW HARBOUR ROAD, PORTAVOGIE**

(Appendix XXXIV)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**24. REQUEST FROM COMBER GP SURGERY TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL LAND AT BRIDGE STREET LINK CAR PARK**

(Appendix XXXV – XXXVII)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

25. **REQUEST FROM GRAHAM CONSTRUCTION FOR A SITE COMPOUND AT UPPER CRESCENT, COMBER**

(Appendix XVIII – XXXX)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

26. **REQUEST FROM HOLYWOOD SHARED TOWNS FOR A LICENCE TO USE COUNCIL LAND AT REDBURN AS PART OF A COMMUNITY GARDEN**

(Appendix XXXI – XXXXII)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

27. **REQUEST FOR A LEASE RENEWAL FROM BANGOR AMATEURS FOOTBALL CLUB**

(Appendix XXXIII)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

28. **REQUEST FROM CURRY'S AMUSEMENTS TO USE THE SPACE AT THE MCKEE CLOCK ARENA BANGOR FOR A SPRING FUNFAIR (LP502)**

(Appendix XXXXIV)

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**29. EXTENSION OF CLEANING SERVICES CONTRACT (PRO164)**

**\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\***

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

**RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor McKimm, seconded by Councillor Dunlop, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.**

**TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting terminated at 9.33pm.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A virtual meeting of the Community and Wellbeing Committee was held via Zoom on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 7:00 pm.

### PRESENT:

**In the Chair:** Councillor Edmund

**Alderman:** Wilson  
W Irvine

<b>Councillors:</b>	Boyle	McRandal
	Chambers	Moore
	S Irvine	Smart
	Johnson	Thompson
	MacArthur	Woods (8.45 pm)

**Officers:** Director of Community and Wellbeing (G Bannister), Head of Community & Culture (J Nixey), Head of Leisure Services (I O'Neill), Head of Parks & Cemeteries (S Daye), Head of Environmental Health, Protection & Development (A Faulkner) and Democratic Services Officer (H Loebnau)

### 1. APOLOGIES

The Chairman sought apologies and those were received from the Mayor (Councillor Douglas) and Councillor T Smith. Councillor Woods gave apologies for lateness.

**NOTED.**

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman asked for any Declarations of Interest and the following declarations were made:

Alderman W Irvine and Councillor Chambers both declared an interest in;  
Item 26 – Northern Community Leisure Trust Quarter 2 2022-23  
Item 28 – Repairs to Aurora

**NOTED.**

### 3. DEPUTATION

Members were advised that the deputation had withdrawn

Proposed by Councillor S Irvine, seconded by Councillor Boyle, to note.

**NOTED.**

#### **4. NORTHERN IRELAND AGREEMENT FOR LIAISON – INVESTIGATION OF WORK-RELATED DEATHS**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing the purpose of the report was to seek Council agreement to the Investigation of Work-Related Deaths Northern Ireland Agreement for Liaison.

##### **Background**

District councils and the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) were both responsible, under Article 20 of the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, for making adequate arrangements for the enforcement of health and safety legislation with a view to securing the health, safety and welfare of workers and protecting others, principally the public. That was unrelated to the Council's statutory duty to protect its own employees and users of services, but rather was the responsibility of authorised Environmental Health officers to regulate health and safety in workplaces as designated by legislation.

The division of enforcement responsibilities between the Council and HSENI was determined by the premises sector.

The agreement for liaison was between Northern Ireland district councils, HSENI, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI).

The agreement was an existing arrangement, and the current version updates the previous agreement (dated 2007) which was signed off by a Chief Environmental Health Officers Group (CEHOG) representative on behalf of the 26 Councils at the time. Due to the increased scrutiny of governance arrangements, it was agreed by EHNI that when the agreement was reviewed, each Council should agree to it with individual Chief Executive's signing the document, rather than it being signed off by Environmental Health Northern Ireland (EHNI), which had replaced CEHOG.

The agreement was designed to emphasise the importance of the appropriate investigative agencies working together to ensure that a thorough investigation was carried out of work-related deaths in Northern Ireland.

It set out the principles for effective liaison between the parties. In particular, it dealt with incidents where, following a death, there was a suspicion that criminal

offences such as manslaughter and breaches of health and safety legislation, may have been committed.

The agreement was not intended to cover the operational practices of the signatory organisations.

A copy of the Investigation of Work-Related Deaths Northern Ireland Agreement for Liaison was attached.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council agrees to the attached Investigation of Work-Related Deaths Northern Ireland Agreement for Liaison.

Proposed by Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor McRandal welcomed the report and asked how much this area of work added to officers' time. The Head of Environmental Health Protection and Development replied that this requirement had been in place for a considerable length of time adding that work related deaths for fortunately very low. However, it was important to have this agreement in place as a guide and protocol.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

## **5. AFFORDABLE WARMTH SCHEME SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT 2022-2023**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Department for Communities (DfC) issued a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to Councils for the Affordable Warmth function. The attached document "Draft INTERIM SLA AWS" which was shared with Councils in October 2022, was provided at a recent senior official meeting with a request from Donna Knowles, Head of Affordable Warmth & Energy Branch, DfC, that it was signed and returned as soon as possible. Failure to sign the agreement could have audit implications for DfC and potentially financial implications for the Council if payment was refused by the Department of Finance/DfC due to a signed SLA not being in place.

Elected Members should note that the detail of the financial payments (amount, method, etc) which had been the subject of concern in previous reports, was not contained within the SLA, only the general overview of quarterly payments and monies to be ringfenced for Affordable Warmth.

The SLA did contain, under section 3 detail that this interim arrangement between the Department and Councils was pending the BCS review report and further consideration of the way forward in the development of a future SLA. Elected

Members should note that a meeting had been requested with DfC officials following on from the October 2022 committee meeting.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council approve the signing of the Affordable Warmth Service Level Agreement 2022-2023.

Proposed by Councillor Thompson, seconded by Alderman Wilson, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Thompson welcomed the agreement being signed and the criteria led out to make sure that the funding would go to those in greatest need.

Alderman Wilson supported that since this was an incredibly valuable scheme which was needed now more than ever with energy prices so high and the cost-of-living crisis.

Councillor MacArthur asked about the review of the programme which had been undertaken by the Department of Communities and the Head of Environmental Health Protection and Development replied that the review was complete but the recommendations were yet to be put in place. The Council had written to the Department recently to ask them to meet to discuss the recommendations and delay in implementation.

Alderman W Irvine queried the financial payments that had been made and when that information would come before Members. It was explained that payments had not been detailed in the report because it was made on a performance basis and a change in that had been made by the Council in its recommendations to the Department.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Alderman Wilson, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **6. BUTANE TEST PURCHASING UNDERAGE SALES**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing:

### **Background**

Anyone experimenting with inhalation of volatile substances such as butane was at risk of sudden death. Death may occur at the first attempt or following many attempts – it could happen at any time.

The causes of death included:

- Choking on vomit.



- Suffocation or asphyxiation – when someone was unable to breathe in sufficient oxygen. That could occur if someone choked, or if they had a bag or mask over their nose and mouth.
- Burns injuries, as volatile substances were highly flammable
- Fatal accidents, such as being hit by a car or train as your judgement and mobility was impaired
- A heart condition called 'cardiac arrhythmia' – also known as 'Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome' (SSDS). Most deaths from solvent abuse were caused by SSDS. Inhaling the volatile substances caused the heart to beat irregularly. The heart could then fail if the person experienced a sudden rush of adrenaline – e.g., if they were excited, frightened or if they engaged in physical activity. Unless a defibrillator was available, death could result within minutes.

Source: <https://www.re-solv.org/volatile-substance-abuse/butane-and-other-gases/>

It was illegal to supply butane or part butane gas cigarette lighter refills to anyone under the age of 18. Prosecution for that offence could lead to a fine of up to £5,000, and/or 6-months imprisonment.

To prevent butane products being available to children, the consumer protection team was committed to a programme of work aimed at raising awareness amongst retailers that the above legislation made it an offence to sell products containing butane to any person under the age of 18 years.

### **Action**

The Environmental Health department recently wrote to 145 relevant retailers in the district, informing them of their legal responsibilities and to advise them that the Council, would be conducting test purchases to prevent the sale of butane products to children under 18 years of age.

Subsequently, 32 retailers were visited by officers to confirm receipt of letters, provide age restricted products sale prevention advice and to ensure relevant staff were aware of the possibility of a butane test purchase.

To ascertain the level of compliance with the law, on 2 November 2022 officers undertook a spot check survey of retailers in the form of test purchases. The test purchase involved a young person of under 18 years of age, entering the premises to attempt to purchase butane cigarette lighter refills. 11 premises were visited on 2 November and all 11 premises refused to sell Butane containing products to the minor.

To conclude the initiative, the 11 tested retailers were revisited to inform them of their no sale result and further feedback and advice was offered if required.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council notes the Butane Test Purchasing Underage Sales initiative in this report.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the recommendation be adopted.

Proposing the recommendation Councillor MacArthur stressed the importance of keeping young people safe from dangerous substances that could cause serious illness and sometimes death. She was pleased to note that in tests they were not being sold to young people and asked if there were plans to revisit with similar tests going forward. The officer advised that there were no plans for the current financial year.

Councillor McRandal shared those concerns although he had also been pleased to see that there had been 100% compliance by retailers. The Head of Environmental Health Protection and Development confirmed that testing occurred annually.

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

## **7. 6 CHURCH AVENUE, HOLYWOOD**

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:** - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Environmental Health Protection and Development Service received a complaint from a member of the public in March 2021 about the condition of 6 Church Avenue, Hollywood. The complaint related to the general condition of the property and alleged that it was attracting pest activity involving rodents and pigeons. An Officer inspected the site and was satisfied that the premises were causing a statutory nuisance. As such a Notice was issued on the property owner to carry out works to abate the nuisance. The property owner made no effort to engage with the Council at this time.

Several visits were made to the property to assess compliance with the Notice, but the Investigating Officer found no evidence of works having been carried out. As such the owner occupier was prosecuted on 15 October 2021, having pleaded guilty at the court hearing. Despite that, no improvements were made to the property.

As the nuisance had not been abated, the Council tried to engage again with the property owner to carry out the works specified on the notice. That was unsuccessful once more, and the matter was brought before the Magistrates' Court for a second hearing. The case was heard on 17 June 2022, with the property owner fined in his absence.

Following the second prosecution hearing, the Council's solicitor suggested that it may be appropriate at this time to consider exercising its powers under Section 67(5) of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, which

read *"Where an abatement notice has not been complied with the district council may, whether or not it takes proceedings for an offence under section 65(9), abate the nuisance and do whatever may be necessary in execution of the notice."*

As such, the Council requested a quotation from the Council's approved contractor to carry out the works required to abate the nuisance. The contractor had estimated that the works could be carried out for approximately £1,770.

We would ask then that Members consider recommending that the Council exercises the powers referred to above and direct the Council's contractor to carry out works in default, as the nuisance still existed despite two successful prosecution hearings and considering that the property owner had made no effort to engage with the Council. The legislation enabled the Council to attach the costs of works as a statutory charge.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council approves the process of carrying out works in default to abate the statutory nuisance at 6 Church Avenue, Holywood and affixes a statutory charge to the property.

Proposed by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Johnson was pleased that action had been taken in respect of the nuisance which had been a problem for some considerable time, and he was happy to support the recommendation. Seconding that Councillor MacArthur said that she had read in the press about rats and vermin in the homes nearby and wondered if the Council could reclaim its cost in relation to the property in time.

The Head of Environmental Health, Protection and Development informed Members that a contractor to make right the work necessary would cost around £1,700 and if the property was sold or repossessed there would be an opportunity to reclaim the costs. The works necessary would be clearing of the garden, pest proofing the property and repairing the windows. That work had been included in the cost.

Councillor Smart congratulated officers on the work that had been undertaken to get to this stage. He sought clarity on whether legal costs which the Council was responsible for could also be recouped and the officer stated that they could be as well.

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

## **8. CONSULTATION ON THE FOOD LAW CODE OF PRACTICE (NORTHERN IRELAND)**

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:** - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Food Standards Agency (FSA) was currently seeking comments on the proposed revision of the statutory Food Law Code of Practice (Northern Ireland). The Code set out the criteria that local authorities needed to follow when planning and carrying out food law regulatory responsibilities.

The proposed changes to the Code would implement a new food standards delivery model, including increasing the flexibility local authorities had to use official control methods and techniques, and directing District Council resource to where it was most needed to tackle risk in the food chain. Food Standards work included ensuring that food was labelled correctly, that any claims could be substantiated and were not misleading, that allergens were managed appropriately and that foods were not being substituted with cheaper alternatives.

Environmental Health Northern Ireland (EHNI), which had representation from all 11 Councils, had considered the proposals and had formed some initial views which were incorporated into the attached response.

Generally, the Environmental Health Department was supportive of the change to the code to implement the food standards delivery model, however, there were concerns that there could be a substantial amount of officer time required to map data from the current model to the new model. That would also require a change to the Tascomi software package. While FSA had indicated that they would bear the costs associated with that the Council was seeking clarification on that as it was understood that cost implications may depend on the type of contract ANDBC held with IDOX.

The full consultation document could be accessed at: -

<https://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/consultations/consultation-on-proposed-changes-to-the-food-law-code-of-practice-northern-ireland-in-relation-to-a-new-food-standards-delivery>

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council approves the process of carrying out works in default to abate the statutory nuisance at 6 Church Avenue, Hollywood, and affixes a statutory charge to the property.

Proposed by Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted.

Alderman W Irvine stressed the importance of good food standards and had full confidence in the officers to continue to do that work on behalf of the Borough. Councillor Thompson was in agreement with those comments.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted.

## 9. Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT 2022/23

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 1 2022-23 was attached.

### Key points to note:

- Staff absence rates continued to be detrimentally affected by long term sick whilst short term absence rates continued to remain low.
- The % Private Tenancy Order (PTO) inspections target had not been achieved during Q2 as officers had been inspecting properties that were not able to be accessed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Officers were working hard to clear that backlog while also completing new applications in a timely manner. All applications received during the reporting period were being completed within the target timeframe. The performance % had reduced from Q1 (70.5%) as during Q2 the Council had more success in accessing older applications and had received fewer new ones alongside the peak leave

period in July and August. It was anticipated that the annual target would be met by the end of the year, however, that was dependent on gaining access to properties that remained beyond the control of the officers.

- Premises in priority sectors inspected and permits issued target was reduced by agreement from the Council from 90% to 50% for the current financial year. Work on the area was well underway with scoping exercises and letters sent to previously permitted and newly identified premises. Officers would be visiting the premises within the current year with a view to completing the application process and issuing permits to at least 50% by the beginning of the next financial year. It was proposed to commence charging application fees for permits that were newly issued during that time. In the case of existing permits requiring updates due to RPA, it was proposed that lapsed subsistence payments would be waived until April 2023.
- The % of quarterly targets achieved as determined by Service Level Agreements was slightly under target due to staff recruitment and lateness of funding agreements and targets set by partners and funders.

**Key achievements:**

- The Service had generally performed well against the KPI's for Q2.

**Emerging issues:**

- Staffing levels remained a challenge in Q2 with long term sick and temporary vacancies in officer and administration posts proving difficult to cover. Those posts had now been filled and six senior posts had been recruited internally increasing capacity and leadership within the unit.

**Action to be taken:**

- Targets and monitoring was being undertaken by the newly appointed Senior Officers in all areas with a specific focus on the KPI's which were below target.
- An improvement plan was being developed following Covid-19 recovery sessions with "Heads together" which would contribute to the continuous improvement approach being taken within the service.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Councillor McRandal, seconded by Alderman W Irvine that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor McRandal and Alderman W Irvine thanked officers for the work which had been undertaken and the recruitment exercise that had been carried out.

Councillor Boyle noted that long term absence was a problem in some areas and asked what the definition of that was for Council purposes. It was clarified that long

term absence was four weeks or more. The Head of Environmental Health and Protection indicated that the situation of absence should improve in the next quarter.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor McRandal, seconded by Alderman W Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.**

#### **10. REQUEST FOR QR CODES ON COUNCIL STATUES/MONUMENTS RESPONSE TO NOM**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the following Notice of Motion was agreed by the Council:

**“That officers bring back a report with a view to widening the Council's use of digital technology (in particular QR codes) to promote and provide information about statues, built heritage and monuments in the Council's ownership and care as well as points of interest throughout the borough.”**

The Arts and Heritage department of the Council had a dedicated website: [ANDCulture.org.uk](http://ANDCulture.org.uk) under which there was a page for Cultural Heritage in the Borough.

That page could host links to the information and the QR codes were relatively easy and cheap to produce. The time and resource would be in auditing the sites and researching the background information to ensure it was both concise but accurate and that had not been possible until now due to other pressures.

Officer's would commence the research for the project in January 2023 starting with the statues and monuments, as a priority. A wider audit of the Council's heritage assets would follow and once the scope of the project was identified, to include research requirements, the preparation of content, the cost of placing QR codes on appropriate buildings and associated planning application costs, (required to place QR codes on listed buildings/monuments) a further report on the project timetable and costs would be brought to the Committee for consideration.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this progress report.

Proposed by Councillor Thompson, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Thompson welcomed the progress report based on the earlier Notice of Motion from Alderman McIlveen and hoped that further progress would be made in the new year. Councillor MacArthur agreed and suggested that the parks section and North Down Museum could collaborate and share experiences of this initiative.

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

## **11. GOOD RELATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Good Relations Annual Report for 2021-2022 was attached outlining the work of the section in delivering the Good Relations Action Plan for 2021-2022.

The Good Relations section was externally funded 75% from the Executive Office and 25% by the Council. The total Good Relations budget for 2021-2022 was £226,738.

The Good Relations Strategy (2019-2022) informed an annual action plan, which was submitted to the Executive Office for assessment. The Action Plan was based on the four key themes of the Executives Strategy Together Building United Communities:

- Children and Young People
- Shared community
- Safe Community
- Cultural Expression

The Good Relations sections worked closely with PCSP, PEACE and Community Development sections to avoid duplication and ensure a cohesive delivery of programmes to the community.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

Proposed by Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor S Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.

Alderman W Irvine welcomed the report and the work of the Good Relations section was ongoing. Councillor S Irvine agreed that the programme did good work and shared education would encourage young people to show respect to one another in the future. Councillor Thompson concurred with those comments.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor S Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **12. PEACEIV MINUTES 26<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Minutes of PEACEIV meeting dated 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Councillor Thompson thanked Councillor Smart for a job well done in chairing the programme to a close recently.



**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the minutes be noted.**

**13. PEACEPLUS MINUTES 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Minutes of Meeting dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Alderman W Irvine, that the minutes be noted.**

**14. CROSS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS VISIT TO FRANCE AND BELGIUM**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Good Relations Action Plan 2022/2023, children and teachers from St Comgall's, Bangor and Grange Park, Bangor primary schools would be travelling on a cross community educational programme visiting the battlefields in Belgium and France to increase their understanding of shared history. The project would promote an understanding of the sacrifices made by men from all sections of the community during WWI.

Officers had engaged with primary 7 pupils at each of the schools, which were different from those who participated in the programme in previous years.

44 young people, 6 teachers, and 1 ANDBC Good Relations Officer would travel together, along with a guide. The total cost to include travel and accommodation was £26,000. The cost of the project would be met from the Good Relations budget which was funded by The Executive Office and Council. The project was included in the agreed Good Relations Action Plan (2022/23) and had received approval from The Executive Office, to proceed in the current financial year.

Members would be aware that 75% of the funding for the Action Plan and associated initiatives was provided from the Executive Office with 25% being met by the Good Relations budget of Ards and North Down Borough Council.

Prior to the visit all P7 children from both schools would have talks about WWI followed by a visit to the Somme Centre, Newtownards.

The project would involve visits between 21 March 2023 to 24 March 2023 to sites of the 36<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Divisions while also visiting the Canadian trenches and tunnels. It would give the children the opportunity to visit cemeteries, museums and battle remains. On their return it was proposed that the participants would hold an assembly to share the knowledge they had gained from the programme. Invites would be extended to the parents of the children who attended. The information would be presented to parents, staff and pupils from all schools.

Although the Good Relations team was not directly responsible for shared education, the visit and learning gained from the project would improve attitudes between children from different backgrounds as they moved into post primary education. The Education Minister launched a similar programme for year 10 post primary schools and it was believed that by introducing the children to the programme at an earlier age, would assist in helping Northern Ireland and the Peace process move forward.

It was proposed that the Council's Good Relation Officer (GRO), Mrs Donna MacKey, would attend but would not be responsible for the children. That would enable the attending officer to monitor and evaluate the project. It would also enable the officer to build relationships with the schools in order to develop further cross community work.

**Outcomes:**

The joint project would deliver the following outcomes and links to the TBUC Children and Young People strategy:

- An increase in the percentage of participants who had a greater understanding of shared history.
- An increase in the percentage of attendees who had a greater understanding of shared history.
- Two schools engaged in a joint cross community project.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves that:

1. The project detailed above at a total cost of £26,000 in undertaken, and
2. The Council's Good Relations Officer, Donna Mackey, be permitted to attend the cross community educational visit.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur considered that the children from the two schools would experience probably a once in a lifetime opportunity to view at close hand the sacrifice that many people had made during the First World War. She herself had visited along with the Mayor and had found it to be very moving personally. The impact on the children would be immense and would remain with them throughout their lives.

Councillor Boyle agreed that this was an excellent scheme for schools to come together and in turn realise that they had a shared history. The benefits lasted longer than the visit itself with schools remaining in contact. It was a worthwhile project funded by the Executive Office. He gave credit to the Council's Good Relations team for the dedication they showed to organising these trips. Councillor Thompson said that the scheme was well worth the money and good learning from the past had been achieved. The Chair commented how new friendships had been formed between children in the Borough which could last a lifetime.

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

## **15. Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT COMMUNITY AND CULTURE**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
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- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### **Reporting approach**

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

### **Key points to note:**

- Staff attendance was below target due to a number of staff being off on long term sick
- Community Consultation for PEACEPLUS commenced in this Quarter.
- The Community Safety team had exceeded their target in relation to attendance at multi agency meetings. Those meetings included key stakeholders e.g., PSNI, EA, Street Pastors etc who monitored and tackled Anti-Social Behaviour.

### **Key achievements:**

- The Community Development team in partnership with the Community Planning team had supported the development of a Social Supermarket in Ards, run by North Down Community Works. The Social Supermarket branded as "Well Fed" was fully operational and was supporting clients through this period of austerity.
- The number of Creative sessions delivered by the Arts Centre had already exceeded its target and attendance numbers were growing.

#### **Emerging issues:**

- The number of people volunteering within the service was below target, however volunteering numbers were building slowly after the pandemic.

#### **Action to be taken:**

- Staff attendance and spend would be closely monitored and managers would work with the Human Resources Team to support staff back to work.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the report.

Proposed by Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.

Alderman W Irvine asked for an update on the Ards and North Down social supermarket and the Head of Community and Culture reported that the initiative had been running well since August and that it was nearly at capacity in terms of its clients. A lot of data was being generated which indicated success on many fronts.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **16. COST OF LIVING CRISIS RESPONSE TO NOM**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Development detailing that Members would be aware that the Council agreed the following Notice of Motion in August 2022:

**"That this Council notes with concern the significant impact rising energy costs are having on households across Northern Ireland; recognises the need for ongoing intervention from every level of Government and agrees to write to Her Majesty's Treasury to impress upon them in the absence of a functioning Northern Ireland Executive the need to urgently deliver the energy bills support scheme to households here.**

**That Council also resolves to write to the Department for Communities to request a special fund for Councils in relation to the Cost-of-Living crisis in order to-**

- a. provide for the direct provision of localised responses; and
- b. assist local community and voluntary organisations

**Any such support would be additional to that provided by the Westminster Government and at Northern Ireland level”.**

Subsequently, the Chief Executive wrote to the Department of Communities on 3 October 2022 (appendix) and received a reply from the Sharron Russell, Director of Voluntary and Community Division, dated 27 October 2022 (appendix).

RECOMMENDED that the Council considers the correspondence attached.

Proposed by Councillor Boyle, seconded by Alderman W Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Boyle expressed concern about the constrained position due to the lack of an agreed Executive budget and with the normal running of society. He urged for everyone involved to get the Northern Ireland Executive back up and functioning.

Alderman W Irvine shared that frustration that the energy payment grants had not been paid to the people of Northern Ireland. He hoped that progress would be made from the Secretary of State in the absence of the Executive.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Boyle, seconded by Alderman W Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **17. PARTNERSHIP PANEL SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that in November 2022 the Chief Executive received an email from NILGA advising that at a Partnership Panel meeting in August 2022, detailed clarifications were requested from The Executive Office on the roles and responsibilities of different bodies in relation to supporting refugees and asylum seekers. That was in recognition of it being a very complex operating environment and that Elected Members were often being asked for information from constituents.

The Executive Office undertook to prepare a detailed written briefing for the Partnership Panel meeting at the end of October 2022 providing those clarifications.

The written briefing was attached, and NILGA had asked that the information was shared with Members for reference.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

Proposed by Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur referred to the Borough having no assistance centre for refugees and wondered if the Council would lose out on the allocation of resources as a result of that. In response the Head of Community and Culture said that no formal centre was in place, however the North Down YMCA was working informally with The Link and Council in much the same way as the formal form of assistance centre.

The Council was submitting a bid to the government to try to recoup its costs in relation to setting that up and delivering support to the asylum seekers.

The Member asked a further question about the Ukrainian settlers to the Borough and if there was any data available on how successful they had been in gaining employment locally. The officer did not have that information to hand but would try to find out and report back.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.**

#### **18. ARDS AND NORTH DOWN SPORTS FORUM GRANTS (WG NOVEMBER 2022)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that on the 26 August 2015, the Council delegated authority to the Ards and North Down Sports Forum, in order to allow it to administer sports grants funding on behalf of the Council. £40,000 had been allocated within the 2022/2023 revenue budget for that purpose.

The Council further authorised the Forum under delegated powers to award grants of up to £250. Grants above £250 still required Council approval. In addition, the Council requested that regular updates were reported to Members.

During October 2022, the Forum received a total of 11 grant applications: 1 Coaching, 5 Goldcard and 5 Individual Travel/Accommodation. A summary of the 8 successful applications were detailed in the attached Successful Coaching, Goldcard and Individual Travel & Accommodation Appendices.

For information, the annual budget and spend to date on grant categories is as follows:

	Annual Budget	Funding Awarded October 2022	Remaining Budget
Anniversary	£1,000	£0	£250

Coaching	£3,000	*£146.25	<b>£892.50</b>
Equipment	£11,000	£0	<b>*£3,535.14</b>
Events	£6,000	£0	<b>£1,700</b>
Seeding	£500	£0	<b>£250</b>
Travel and Accommodation	£14,500	*£400.00	<b>*£1,180.31</b>
Discretionary	£1,000	£0	<b>£1,000</b>
New category under development	£3,000	£0	<b>£3,000</b>
Goldcards proposed during the period October 2022 is 4.			

\* The proposed remaining budget for Coaching of **£892.50** was based on a proposed award of **£146.25** for Noting. \*The proposed remaining budget for Equipment of **£3,535.14** was based on reclaimed costs of £128.30. The proposed remaining budget for Travel and Accommodation of **£1,180.31** was based on a proposed award of **£400.00** – for Noting, and withdrawn costs of £96.22.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the applications approved by the Forum (valued at below £250).

Proposed by Councillor Thompson, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Thompson was aware that this was a regular report to the committee and welcomed the work which went in to preparing it.

Councillor Boyle was pleased to hear of the sporting prowess within the Borough and had attended a celebratory event with the Mayor for Rhys McClenaghan recently. He referred to unsuccessful applications for the Gold Card and the reasons why it was not happening here. He also asked about the Swim event and if the officer was aware who the applicant was representing.

The Head of Leisure Services referred to the Gold Card and stated that the Council would communicate with the applicant about documents from the governing body. In respect of the Swim event this was for a training need and the applicant had already received funding from the Mary Peters Trust. It was not within the criteria to award further funding as it was not a competition where the applicant was representing a country.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Councillor Boyle, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **19. Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT LEISURE SERVICES 2022-2023**

**PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:** - Report from Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement the Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
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- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the Corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### Reporting approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Quarter 1 (Q1)	April – June	September
Q2	July – September	December
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

The report for Quarter 2 2022-23 was attached.

### Key points to note:

The service was still building back up after the pandemic. During the summer period it returned to its normal summer programme of activities and provision although somewhat reduced as it continued to seek operational stability and customer confidence. The building issues at Aurora became a significant problem during that period.

### Key achievements:

The most significant achievement had been the continued success in securing a return to normal (pre Covid-19) operations despite the uncertainty in the market caused by the general economy, Covid awareness and the cost of living impact which was beginning to affect families during this period. To return a net benefit of 35% on budget was incredible and one that should be highlighted as a great achievement by the inhouse leisure team.



The sport development team also had a very successful period across a range of their programmes. The number of grants given out, the online enquiries, the number of affiliated clubs and the number of participants in coach education courses were all much higher than anticipated and very encouraging for sport in the Borough. The period also included significant success on the international stage for some of the Borough's finest sportspeople who achieved amazing success in their chosen sport having been supported on their journey by the Council over the previous years. The upcoming sport awards would be a wonderful evening to recognise the success that brought so much positivity to the Borough and its citizens.

The local Community was beginning to return to utilise Community Centres and it was encouraging to see bookings increase above target during the period.

**Emerging issues:**

Staff sickness was above target during the period. It was critical that the Council addressed the ongoing issues around staffing levels, recruitment, rates of pay compared to other sectors and pressures placed on the leisure team around the uncertainty of the operating model.

Concerns over footfall at Aurora during the period would continue until the ongoing issues of the pool floor unreliability were permanently dealt with. The period had been very difficult for colleagues in Serco, sport clubs who used the facilities and the Council's partners in Swim Ulster and the Council's reputation had been damaged. The additional Aurora roof issues that had emerged also needed to be addressed as a priority.

**Action to be taken:**

Staff resilience had been fully utilised and the Council needed to ensure it supported those leisure staff who had performed so well over such a long and difficult period. That should help us address the staff attendance levels which had fallen below normal very high standards.

The Aurora issues, namely, pool floors, roof failings and main sports hall floor defects all needed to be resolved as expediently as possible to ensure the Council could facilitate Serco to provide the service as agreed under the contract. The damage to the Council's reputation regarding those matters was significant and could result in a further loss of confidence both by the operator and the general public.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council note the report.

Proposed by Councillor McRandal, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor McRandal recognised that the report outlined a difficult period for leisure services and so he offered congratulations on the performance to the team. He had

some questions on the actions to be taken in terms of staff resilience and what that meant in practice. The Head of Leisure Services explained that some staff were seeking job re-evaluations and there were also challenges like in other services of recruiting into vacancies. That all placed pressure on those who were trying to maintain the service.

The Member went on to query why there was a much greater than expected footfall at Queens Leisure Complex, Holywood. The officer could not explain that and suggested that perhaps colleagues at SERCO had set a very low target or were more successful than they had expected to be.

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

## **20. FRIENDS OF GROUPS AND VOLUNTEERING IN PARKS AND CEMETERIES**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Parks and Cemeteries Service had responsibility for the maintenance and development of approximately 292 hectares of Parks and other open spaces including cemeteries and other burial grounds within the Borough. That also included the maintenance of all outdoor sports facilities, car parks, amenity beaches and associated promenades along the Council leased foreshore.

In addition, the Parks and Cemeteries Service helped to enhance the appearance of the Borough through floral displays and other plantings at selected high-profile locations. The work of the Parks and Cemeteries Service also helped to raise the profile of the Borough through competitions such as Green Flag, Ulster in Bloom and Best Kept Awards. The Service also had responsibility for the Council's statutory duty for Biodiversity, the provision of allotments, and Outdoor Recreation. The Parks and Cemeteries Service carried out its activities on Council owned property and, in some cases, property owned by other agencies, for example DfI Roads roundabouts and verges.

There had been 'Volunteering' and 'Friends' type Groups associated with Ards and North Down Borough parks for many years. Those groups had developed on an ad hoc basis and no formal guidance on the establishment and running of a Volunteers or Friends Group currently existed. The existing individuals and groups were active in organising events in their respective parks and carried out some maintenance tasks. Parks staff worked closely with each group when opportunities arose, however, there was no capacity to extend beyond what already existed, despite a clear interest to do so. Due to the increased interest in Friends Groups; and based on best practice from elsewhere, it was clear there was a need to put in place formal guidance on the setting up and management of Friends Groups. To meet the need, a draft policy document had been developed, and was shown in an attached appendix.

It was widely accepted that Friends Groups were beneficial to a Park or other Open Space such as Cemeteries and experience from elsewhere in Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom, suggested that they played a vital role in protecting and enhancing local parks, woodlands and greenspaces. The setting up of a group gave the local community and other interested parties the chance to develop their Park or Open Space in partnership with the Council and in line with the needs of the community.

In July 2016, the Communities and Local Government Select Committee conducted an inquiry to examine the future of public parks, with a specific focus on asking why parks mattered, what challenges the parks sector was facing, and how a sustainable future could be secured for parks. The inquiry received a huge response reflecting the vital role that parks and green spaces played in the everyday lives of so many people. The Government acknowledged within the 2017 White Paper 'The Future of Public Parks' the value of parks in providing vibrant and inclusive green spaces that helped to foster the health and well-being of diverse communities. Key reasons for encouraging volunteering and establishing 'Friends' Groups:

- Gave people an interested in their local park and a means of meeting the needs of the local community.
- Can work to improve a local park or green space with practical tasks such as litter picks, tree planting, enhancing biodiversity and organising events etc.
- Groups can work in partnership with the Council and other organisations to represent local views and improve and develop the park and green spaces.
- Friends Groups can make and secure grant applications to improve the park or green space. Fundraising for improvements was a key purpose of those groups which could access grants unavailable to Councils.
- Volunteers can act as eyes and ears of the park or green space thus protecting the park by encouraging an increase in the use of the facility and discouraging misuse.

The Parks and Cemeteries Service recognised that a Volunteer Policy currently existed within the Council, designed to involve individuals in organisational activities. While that was a valuable initiative, development of 'Friends' Groups provided a range of further opportunities as outlined above. 'Friends' Groups also removed the need for a complex and often time-consuming recruitment and selection process, as participation was open to all willing and able volunteers. The connection between Friends Groups and specific Parks and Open Spaces provided an increased feeling of civic pride and contribution, through engaged and empowered communities.

The proposal was conceived following discussions with some of the existing local groups as a way of expanding the scale and impact of their improvement work by harnessing the ideas and resources of groups working (sometimes in isolation) on horticultural and environmental projects across the Borough. By adopting a more

coordinated approach everyone would be working towards common objectives and activities could align with community area plans.

To encourage the development of 'Friends' groups it was proposed that the Council would provide a venue, free of charge for up to four meetings per year. Requests for venues for other meetings could be submitted by the 'Friends' Groups and would be granted based on operational and budgetary constraints. It was also proposed that the Council would provide a start-up grant of £300 to newly established 'Friends' Groups and an annual payment of £300 to each 'Friends' Group for the next three years then annual payment reviewed thereafter. The money would only be used to assist the 'Friends' Group in the holding of an event or activity.

To coordinate the initiative, it was proposed that a central 'Friends of' committee should be formed and made up of one representative from each constituted group that presently existed, and officers from the Council Parks Service who would act as the Committee's secretariat. Other Services within the Council would attend when necessary such as Community and Cleansing. As new 'Friends' groups formed, they could be added to the membership. Through capacity building, participation from across the Borough would be encouraged. It was envisaged that the committee would meet three times a year. The committee would be tasked with getting the whole Borough involved in environmental improvements by working with statutory bodies, local groups, organisations, businesses and residents to stimulate interest in looking after their local greenspaces, develop and support ideas, facilitate partnerships and help make things happen.

In order to deliver the strategy, the following would be required:

**Resources:** Parks and Cemeteries Service had been working within the existing staffing structure and resources supplied by the Council. However, it was envisaged that an additional member of staff was required to progress an expansion of the volunteer and friends' programme within the Borough. It was envisaged that this role would be part of the agreed Parks Transformation programme and therefore at no additional cost as the proposed internal restructuring progressed.

**External Funding:** The proposed additional groups and Ards and North Down 'Parks Friends Forum' would be able to apply for additional external funding from various grant and sponsorship sources. Demonstrating community involvement assisted the Council in applying for external funding through improvement grants and maximising revenue opportunities from within its facilities.

**Community:** Promoting and investing in the Borough's green spaces was important to provide good service for the rate payer. The initiative was a visible demonstration of the hard work the Council and the volunteer community put in to managing and maintaining its green spaces and visibly demonstrated to the local community and councillors that the Council was committed to improving the health and wellbeing of

its citizens. The initiative would encourage civic pride and support community development.

**Marketing & PR:** The initiative gave excellent opportunities for publicity and was a good way to promote the Council and provide positive news stories. The initiative could provide opportunity for the Council to visibly demonstrate its continued commitment to climate mitigation and adaptation through the promotion of environmentally themed projects.

**Health and Wellbeing:** Volunteering could reduce social isolation and loneliness and was particularly important for those who were retired, were marginalised in society and those who had low wellbeing and mental health. It could also enhance physical health through the adoption of healthy behaviours such as exercise. Gardening was a very therapeutic activity good for body and mind and in this very health-conscious age gardening provided wonderful exercise in fresh air.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the 'Friends of' Groups Policy and endorses the initiative in order to progress 'Friends of' Group volunteering activities throughout the Borough.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur broadly welcomed the report in terms of the success of friends of groups and wondered how many there were in the Borough and if those would apply. The report also mentioned applications for funding and she was unclear about that. She expressed concern for groups that did not want to be formalised in this way and hoped that the Council was not discriminating against them. She wondered what would happen after the three years and hoped that the Council would continue to provide the support necessary. The Council had a huge duty in terms of maintenance of its parks and that would be an add on and not a replacement for work that the Council did not intend to carry out in the future.

The Head of Parks and Cemeteries thanked the Member for her comments and reported that currently there was only one Friends group within the Borough that was recognised. The report was beginning afresh and would formalise that group and others. The policy had come from a number of requests by the public to form groups and those groups were waiting for the report to be finalised. It was not discriminating so they could take full advantage of what was on offer. The three years was simply a review period and he was aware of similar groups in other areas that had now been running for more than twenty years. Volunteering was a further opportunity and that would continue to exist such as the group of eleven volunteers working in the Walled Garden in Bangor.

Councillor McRandal also welcomed the report and considered it to be a step in the right direction. He asked what would happen if there was a split in aspiration

between what the Council wanted and what the groups themselves desired and if elected Members would sit on these groups.

In response Members were informed that different views were often a good thing and different views could be challenging to the established way of doing things.

In response to a further query, he said it would be up to the groups themselves whether or not they would invite elected representatives to sit on them or the overarching group, however they often did.

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

## **21. FEED THE DUCKS INITIATIVE**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that an important and valuable asset within the Ards and North Down Borough Council portfolio, Kiltonga Nature Reserve, was a well-used amenity close to the residential areas of Newtownards. Kiltonga was well known for the abundance of wildfowl with large portions of the site designated a nature reserve, much of which was managed in conjunction with Strangford Lough Wildfowling. Viewing and feeding of the wildfowl on-site was an activity enjoyed by many visitors each day.

Although done with the best intentions, the use of bread and similar products to feed ducks and geese was cause for concern. Nutrient pollution caused by large amounts of bread and other food being thrown into the ponds could cause harmful algal blooms, which depleted oxygen levels within waterways and killed off aquatic wildlife. The risk of blooms increased in warm, sunny weather when algae could reproduce exponentially. Excess bread was also harmful to ducks and could cause malnutrition, disease and bad behaviour, and could be an attraction to undesired pests. The use of breads and similar foods also contributed to silt build-up within ponds, an issue identified at the site.

Wildfowl naturally eat a wide range of aquatic insects, snails, worms, pond weed and other vegetation. While important at all times, a natural and balanced diet was especially important during the breeding season, when there was a need to provide young with appropriate food.

Feed the Ducks was an environmental initiative aiming to reduce the amount of bread and incorrect feed being fed by the public to wildlife in parks. The scheme worked in partnership with Councils across the United Kingdom and Ireland to install Duck Feeders in the Parks where that was the case. It provided an alternative for the public to use, rather than bringing unsustainable and unhealthy amounts of feed such as bread when they visited to feed the ducks. Feed was available 24/7 and was a preventable measure to issues like silt build up or blue algae which was life threatening to local wildlife.

Designed as a green initiative, the feeders were contactless, solar powered and made of recycled plastics (each feeder recycled the equivalent of 20,000 water bottles). The feed was dispensed to hand, helping to reduce plastic litter waste. The feed was also a special high protein-based feed that was suitable for the diet of Ducks, Geese and Swans.

Dispensers provided two sizes of feed to cater to different family sizes at a cost of £1.00 for 100g and £2.50 for 300g. Members should note, there was no cost to the Council and feeders were managed entirely by the Feed the Ducks initiative. That included topping up feed, cleaning and maintenance of the dispenser. 10% of all proceeds were paid back into a local community project or group, at the discretion of the Council.

Each feeder aimed to provide a source of education and included a sign notifying the public about the issues of bread feeding, what food they could feed should they not use the dispenser and a QR code that linked to a website, specifically built for each location. The website included fun facts about the park, the local habitat and content that children could engage with on habitat conservation.

RECOMMENDED that the Council supported the installation of a 'Feed the Ducks' dispenser at Kiltonga Nature Reserve.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Alderman W Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **22. PLAY PROVISION IN LOUGHRIES RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would recall the following Notice of Motion was agreed by Council in October 2022:

**“That Council task officers to carry out a review of Play Provision in Loughries with a view to its inclusion in the Councils Play Strategy going forward.”**

The Councils [Play Strategy](#) was finalised in 2021 and outlined the strategic approach to play provision in the Borough until 2032. Loughries was assessed, but no specific actions in relation to the settlement were included. Loughries was classified as a Small Settlement (in the Ards and North Down Area Plan 2015) and therefore the approach to play provision for Small Settlements and rural areas was outlined in the Council's agreed Play Strategy and was therefore Council policy as followed:

### **Rural Provision**

Providing fixed play areas in rural settings needed to be measured and balanced against a range of factors including those outlined above in terms of demographics, distance to other settlements and playparks, as well as the need for land acquisition and budget constraints. In rural areas households tended to be generally dispersed within the landscape. In some cases, clusters of dwellings were defined as Small Settlements in terms of the settlement hierarchy which was outlined in the relevant Local Development Plan. The approach in other Council areas in Northern Ireland was to only provide formal fixed play provision in settlements which were classified as Villages and above. In planning terms, the need for play areas was outlined under Planning Policy Statement 8, Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation (Policy OS 2, Public Open Space in New Residential Development). That was a useful benchmark to consider along with the previously mentioned considerations when determining the need for play provision.

Therefore, a fixed play area would be considered if a Small Settlement had:

- More than 100 residential units within the defined settlement limit (as delineated by the Area Plan) or
- Minimum of 100 residential units within the catchment radial of the play area

If a Small Settlement met the criterion and in conjunction with the other considerations as outlined above then the installation of a play area would be considered if suitable land could be acquired if the Council did not have any other land available within the settlement. If a play area was deemed necessary, then it was considered that a Tier 3/Doorstep Facility would be appropriate.

Alternatives to fixed play provision could be deployed in rural areas such as exploration of Play Partnerships with schools (if they had play areas), Play Events and Play Pods which had been discussed previously within the Play Strategy. That would be progressed on the appointment of a Play Development Officer.

The Settlement Limit for Loughries as defined by the Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 was shown below.



**Settlement Limit of Loughries (Ards and North Down Area Plan 2015)**



Using the Council's GIS (Geographical Information System) all addressed points registered in the Borough were shown. That information was updated on a regular basis using Address Pointer Data received via Land and Property Services. There were currently **98** addresses registered within the Settlement Limit of Loughries as was shown below.



**Address Points in Loughries**

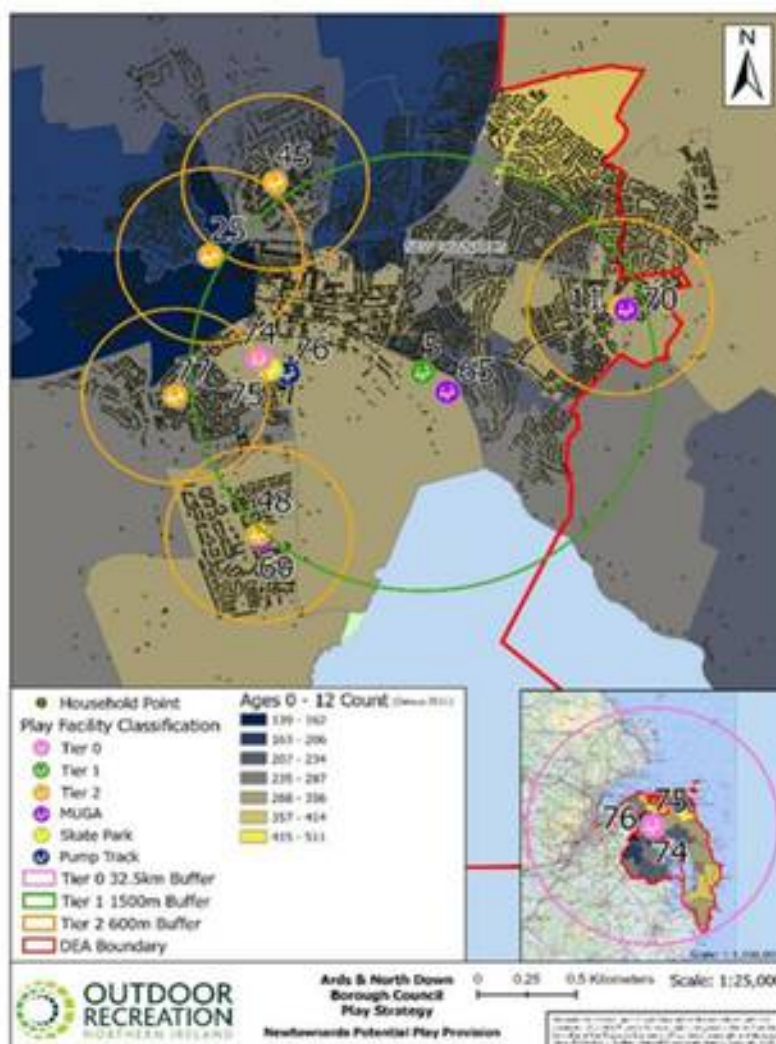
The Council currently had no land holdings within or out with the settlement limit so therefore land acquisition would be required to deliver any play provision in Loughries using its land.

Currently the threshold of 100 dwellings had not been reached and there was no land available, therefore Loughries would not meet the criteria as outlined in the Play Strategy.

It should also be noted that there were other playgrounds which were close to Loughries, with Londonderry Park (Tier 1) being 2.4 miles (by road) and ABMWLC Tier 0 which had an even wider catchment area as shown on the map insert below as well as Abbot Gardens Tier 2.



Nearby Playgrounds



Catchment Areas of Playgrounds in Newtownards

A site meeting took place at the request of a local elected representative with the principal of Loughries Primary School to discuss those points on 15 November 2022. At that meeting it was agreed that other organisations outside of Council would be approached concerning a potential role in play provision for the area.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council review the potential for play provision for Loughries in the future when the thresholds as outlined above had been met unless provision was made as a result of the planned discussion with others outside of the Council.

Proposed by Councillor Thompson, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Thompson welcomed the report which was in response to a Notice of Motion that he had brought forward with Councillor Adair. The report had indicated that Loughries did not yet meet the criteria for a playpark but he welcomed that there would be a review in time.

Councillor Boyle believed this to be an excellent report and noticed that officers had covered every aspect. It was a developing area and would be encouraging if it did meet the criteria in time.

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

## **23. Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR PARKS AND CEMETERIES 2022-2023**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that the Council was required, under the Local Government Act 2014, to have in place arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. To fulfil that requirement Council approved the Performance Management Policy and Handbook in October 2015. The Performance Management Handbook outlined the approach to Performance Planning and Management process as:

- Community Plan – published every 10-15 years
- Corporate Plan – published every 4 years (Corporate Plan Towards 2024 in operation)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) – published annually (for publication 30 September 2022)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2022)

The Council's 18 Service Plans outlined how each respective Service would contribute to the achievement of the corporate objectives including, but not limited to, any relevant actions identified in the PIP.

### Reporting Approach

The Service Plans would be reported to relevant Committees on a quarterly basis as undernoted:

Reference	Period	Reporting Month
Q1	April – June	September
<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>July – September</b>	<b>December</b>
Q3	October – December	March
Q4	January - March	June

### Key Achievements:

- Recruitment: Two Apprentices in Horticulture started in September 2022.
- A volunteer programme in Bangor Castle Walled Garden was started with 11 volunteers recruited to date.
- Biodiversity events took place over the summer period including Wild Days Out and Big Butterfly Count.
- Donaghadee and Comber success in Translink Ulster in Bloom Awards.
- Working with the Age Friendly Team on a Walking Audit at Ward Park
- Event held to mark International Play Day in August, event held in Platinum Jubilee Park in Ballygowan.
- £3.2 million of funding awarded by DFI Minister for the Comber-Green Road Bangor Greenway development.
- New Play Park in Castle Park (Portaferry) delivered.
- The use of shallow graves for cremated remains had been approved by the Council, that had increased the number of available graves throughout the Borough.

### Action to be Taken:

- Draft Local Biodiversity Action Plan would be completed in Autumn 2022.
- Plans underway for of a programme of Winter Events including Plans underway for 2022/23 ANDinBloom and **STAND4TREES** initiatives underway
- Orienteering trails for Cairn Wood to be progressed.
- Play Parks to be refurbished: Johnny the Jig, Tower Park Conlig, Aurora, Upper Crescent Comber. Plus new splash pads at Groomsport, with an older children facility in Holywood (public consultations are underway for both Holywood and Upper Crescent).
- Orienteering trails for Cairn Wood to be progressed for inclusion on Outdoor Recreation webpage and promotion event.
- Works ongoing to Play Parks to be refurbished: Aurora, Johnny the Jig, Cloughey, Tower Park Conlig, Upper Crescent Comber (Consultation was

undertaken and Upper Crescent was the preferred location so the playground will be delivered at that site). Playground signage refresh ongoing.

- Upgrade to paddling pools at Groomsport and inclusion of Splash Pad.
- Older children facility in Holywood was progressing through consultation.
- Upgrade to Nugent's Wood path in partnership with National Trust.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

Proposed by Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur asked officers why there had been an omission about the potential for closing of parks in the evenings. The Head of Parks and Cemeteries informed that this was a quarterly report on the service plan set for the current year and was therefore a snapshot of what was happening in the service and it would not include such information. The Director confirmed that any tasks agreed in year by Members after budgets and service priorities were set were on a list of actions to be taken and would be carried out as soon as possible when time and resources permitted.

**AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman W Irvine, seconded by Councillor MacArthur, that the recommendation be adopted.**

## **24. NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

### **24.1 Notice of Motion Submitted by Councillor Moore and Alderman McDowell**

That this Council recognises the important contribution of Strangford Integrated College to Integrated Education in the Ards and North Down Borough, and writes to the school offering congratulations on the event of their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Proposed by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

Councillor Moore explained that Strangford Integrated College had been started 25 years ago, as an independent school, which had grown from local parents' desire to educate their children together.

It had opened in 1997 with just 64 pupils and 6 full-time members of staff. After 3 years it was awarded grant-maintained status and had since grown from strength to strength until the present day when it was currently oversubscribed.

The school was very much a part of the Borough, with Carrowdore Castle providing early accommodation. The school had most recently been awarded capital funding through the Fresh Start Agreement. She went on to say that the school had a healthy balance of pupils - of all faiths and none; abilities; and from across the Borough's social demographics - epitomising the new legislation on Integrated Education.

Strangford College brought together young people from every part of the Ards and North Down Borough, many of whom went on to study locally at SERC or at local universities.

The original generation of pupils were now sending their own children to the school. It was a centre of excellence, with strong links to St Columba's and Glastray College.

One of the school's current pupils, Andrew Hamilton, from Bangor was a member of the Youth Parliament and had debated in both the Assembly and Westminster Chambers.

Strangford Integrated College was delivering on this Council's commitment to shared education. Through her Notice of Motion she hoped that the Council would write to the school on the occasion of its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to congratulate the Chair of the Board of Governors - Ray Murray; and Head Teacher Claire Foster, their team and the pupils themselves on all that had been achieved over the past twenty-five years.

Councillor McRandal reserved his right to speak at this point in the meeting.

Councillor MacArthur said that she would be delighted to support the Notice of Motion and was familiar with the school, through her time working in education. Many of the children at her primary school had gone on to attend Strangford College.

Councillor Boyle also congratulated the school which had educated his own daughter and wished it well for the future.

In closing, Councillor McRandal thanked Members for their positive comments and had nothing further to add to what had already been spoken.

**Proposed by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.**

#### **24.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Alderman McIlveen and Councillor Cummings**

That Council officers open discussions with Historic Environment Division regarding the return of the 13<sup>th</sup> century 'Movilla Stones' to the Borough and the provision of a suitable site for these to be located. Officers are also tasked with promoting these

extremely important archaeological artefacts in the local community and local schools when the stones have been returned.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

Alderman McIlveen began by explaining the background to the stones and his desire that they be returned to Newtownards. The Member said that he had a passion for the history of built heritage and considered it important for residents and visitors to learn and celebrate that history. These stones were fine examples of carved artifacts in Ireland of their time, coming from one of the most important monasteries in Ulster and a seat of the Christian faith and learning over 1000 years.

St Columba had studied in that place and the Member had a particular fondness for that Saint. However, the Abbey had fallen into disrepair and it was at that time that the stones, which were a collection of seven coffin lids, were left. Those had been dated between 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> Century and were considered to be one of the most important examples of their kind in Ireland.

In the present day the stones were removed for protection some years ago and were being restored by the Historic Environment Division (HED) and were currently stored in Moira, Co Down. The Motion was calling for the Council to negotiate with the HED to have the stones returned, in time, to Newtownards and housed appropriately for public display. He suggested that could be in the cemetery where they had been found, in the Town Hall or the newly built library. It was time to open up that conversation and increase public awareness of the importance of this archaeological resource. The Motion was talking about conversation only at the moment and he urged the Committee to support it.

Seconding the Motion Councillor Cummings thanked Alderman McIlveen and wished to focus on the learning aspect of the stones. That represented a great opportunity to engage in conversation to recover history with something tangible that would stimulate learning and conversations. It would provide an insight and a focus on the range of skills and industry that happened in that period in history and the industrious spirit of those who lived in this area of Ireland before us.

He went on to explain that Monasteries had been learning centres and provided a social insight on how our ancestors lived. We had a rich tapestry of history and this would be something to stimulate conversation. He encouraged Members to support the Motion.

Councillor Chambers reported that he had been unaware of the stones but enjoyed local history and he would be delighted to support the Motion.

Councillor Smart commended his Council colleagues for bringing the Motion. He agreed that the stones should be treasured given their significance. He hoped that the Council could work on this with the HED.

Councillor Thompson and Councillor Moore were also enthusiastic about the need to have the conversations now so that when the stones were ready they could be transferred to an agreed place for protection.

Alderman McIlveen thanked Members for their comments and support.

**Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.**

## **25. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

There were no items of Any Other Notified Business.

### **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor S Irvine, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the public/press be excluded from the meeting.**

(Having declared an interest in Item 26 Alderman W Irvine and Councillor Chambers left the meeting at 8.43 pm)

## **26. NORTHERN COMMUNITY LEISURE TRUST QUARTER 2 2022-2023**

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)**

(Alderman W Irvine and Councillor Chambers, were readmitted to the meeting at 8.45 pm)

## **27. FUTURE CEMETERIES PROVISION PROJECT BRIEF UPDATE**

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)**



(Having declared an interest in Item 28 Alderman W Irvine and Councillor Chambers left the meeting at 8.54 pm)

## **28. REPAIRS TO AURORA**

**\*\*\*IN CONFIDENCE\*\*\***

**SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)**

(Alderman W Irvine was readmitted to the meeting at 9.02 pm)

### **RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS**

**AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.**

### **TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The Chair wished Members and Council officers a very Happy Christmas and looked forward to the meeting in the new year.

The meeting terminated at 9.04 pm.

Unclassified

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**ITEM 8.1****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	21 December 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Planning
Date of Report	07 December 2022
File Reference	160051
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below.
Subject	Department for Communities - Advance Notice of Listing - 'Former First Trust Bank, 74 High Street, Holywood'.
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Advance Notice of Listing - DfC- Council Consultation Appendix 2 - DFC Consultation - Report and Map

The Historic Environment Division of the Department for Communities (DfC) has written to the Council to seek views on the proposed listing of 'Former First Trust Bank, 74 High Street Holywood, County Down'. The detail of the consideration used by DfC from the 'Second Survey Report' is appended at Appendix 2.

If the Council does not return a response within 6 weeks of the date of the letter, the Department will assume the Council agrees to the listing of the building.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council considers responding to the Department for Communities' consultation on the proposed listing of 'Former Trust Bank, 74 High Street, Holywood' expressing support for the B2 listing.



## ADVANCE NOTICE OF LISTING

Chief Executive  
Ards and North Down Council  
Town Hall  
The Castle  
BANGOR  
BT20 4BT

Historic Environment Division  
Heritage Buildings Designation  
Branch  
Ground Floor  
9 Lanyon Place  
Town Parks  
Belfast  
BT1 3LP  
Direct Tel No: 9056 9281

Our Ref: HB23/20/079

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: HB23/20/079 FIRST TRUST BANK, 74 HIGH STREET, HOLYWOOD, CO  
DOWN, BT18 9AE**

### LISTING OF BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST

At present, the listing of the above-mentioned property is being considered under section 80(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

I would welcome receipt of the views of your Council on the proposed Listing within 6 weeks of the date of this Letter. *If there is no reply to this correspondence within the stated timescale we shall assume that you agree to the listing of the above building. Where this letter refers to building(s), this term includes all types of structures.*

I enclose a copy of the Second Survey Report and location map of the building(s) for your information.

I would advise that there is no right of appeal against listing. However, an owner or occupier can write to the Department or their local Council at any time, if they consider that the building is not of special architectural or historic interest sufficient to justify its listing. Where the owner, or council acting on their behalf, is indicating that it will be supportive of any opposition to the proposed listing, then any such view must be supported by factual evidence relating only to the *special architectural or historic interest* ascribed to the building in the list description. The Department may then reassess the building's merit in light of the information supplied.

Yours faithfully



**TINA CLARKE**

Enc: Second Survey DC Report  
Location Map

**Second Survey Database  
District Council Consultation Report**

HB23/20/079

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<b>Address</b> Former First Trust Bank 74 High Street Holywood Co Down BT18 9AE	<b>HB Ref No</b> HB23/20/079
<b>Extent of Listing</b> Former bank & railings	
<b>Date of Construction</b> 1920 - 1939	
<b>Townland</b> Holywood	
<b>Current Building Use</b> Shop	
<b>Principal Former Use</b> Bank	

<b>Conservation Area</b>	No	<b>Survey 1</b>	Not_Listed	<b>OS Map No</b>	130/04
<b>Industrial Archaeology</b>	No	<b>NIEA Evaluation</b>	B2	<b>IG Ref</b>	J3979 7912
<b>Vernacular</b>	No	<b>Date of Listing</b>		<b>IHR No</b>	
<b>Thatched</b>	No	<b>Date of Delisting</b>		<b>SMR No</b>	
<b>Monument</b>	No			<b>HGI Ref</b>	
<b>Area of Townscape Character</b>	Yes				
<b>Local Landscape Policy Area</b>	No				
<b>Historic Gardens Inventory</b>	No				
<b>Vacant</b>	No				
<b>Derelict</b>	No				

**Owner Category** Financial

### Building Information

#### Exterior Description and Setting

An almost symmetrical four-bay two-storey red-brick attached former bank; built c.1920 and located on the east side of High Street in Holywood town centre. Square on plan with single-storey entrance porch to NW and a large single-storey flat-roof extension to SE. The building was decommissioned as a bank c. 2008 and presently houses commercial offices to first & second floor with restaurant to ground floor.

Hipped natural slate roof with blue/black angled ridge tiles; square red-brick gabled chimneystacks with terracotta pots on sandstone plinth. Cast-iron ogee rainwater goods with original cast-iron hoppers. Walling is English garden wall-bonded red brick with sandstone plinth and quoins; sandstone egg-and-dart frieze with dentilled cornice and continuous sandstone sills. Windows are one over one single-

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glazed timber sliding sash (apart from principal NW and rear SE ground floor elevations) with horns in moulded surrounds with sandstone keyblock and continuous sandstone sills; paired 3/3 timber-framed dormers to roof.

The principal (front) NW elevation is almost symmetrically arranged, comprising raised parapet with projecting sandstone cornice and four hardwood double-glazed replacement windows aligned on ground floor and first floor levels. Painted signage onto brick above first floor windows. Entrance porch to left and entrance to right of ground floor. Projecting sandstone porch with channelled rustication accessed via four stone steps, containing double-leaf six-panelled timber door with ornate spider-web transom light, flanked by pilasters with moulded architrave and keyblock, surmounted by cornice and blocking course on ornate console brackets. Entrance to right is accessed via four stone steps, comprising six-panelled timber door with brass door furniture and transom light. Sandstone surround with carved grape and vine detail to upper section; decorative moulded lintel with keyblock surmounted by dentilled cornice.

The side NE elevation of the front block has three windows at ground floor (those to either side are slenderer) and two windows to left of centre at first floor. Painted signage onto brick above cornice. Two-storey hipped roof return to rear of front block has two window openings close together to ground floor and a blank wall above (obscured beneath signage). Further single-storey flat-roofed return to rear of hipped roof section has two window openings.

The rear SE elevation, at second floor level, has a dormer window to left of centre; abutted at left and right by hipped roof square bay returns (that to left, containing the accommodation stairwell, is narrower). At first floor level, window and brick chimney to left return; right return has two windows at southwest elevation; two windows to northeast elevation. Between returns is glazed double leaf access door that appears to be a modern replacement in existing opening. At ground floor level, to single storey return, original toilet windows have been replaced with large, glazed panel and access door with roller shutter over and awning above. Original door to N replaced with glazing and accommodation door to S remains as access to kitchen G08.

The SW elevation is abutted by adjoining building; the exposed section is blank.

### Setting

Situated at the centre of High Street, with High Street Presbyterian Church (HB23/20/012) to north and attached to four-bay two-storey rendered building to south. Set back from the road, with dwarf wall comprising red brick with sandstone coping and cast-iron railings and decorative latch gates to entrances to form boundary. Ramp rising from ground level to entrance porch. Tarmac access to rear car-park at left, bounded to neighbouring church by rubble-stone wall having large sandstone pier with pointed cap.

Roof: Natural slate  
Walling: Red brick  
Windows: Timber  
RWG: Cast iron

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### Interior Overview

Interior layout partially changed. Detailing substantially altered.

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### Architects

Ferguson, G.W (of Belfast)

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### Historical Information

No. 74 High Street, a two-storey redbrick building, was constructed c.1920 when it first appears on the fourth edition Ordnance Survey map (1920-21) as a square-shaped building situated on the south side of High Street. This bank was originally constructed for Northern Bank by Godfrey William Ferguson (c. 1855-1939) who was architect to the Northern Banking Co. designing many of their branches throughout

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Northern Ireland (Chatterton; Dictionary of Irish Architects). The current edition of the Ordnance Survey map indicates that the rear extensions were constructed between 1921 and 1957-58.

Joanna Martin records that there was a resurgence of growth in Holywood in the early 20th century during which time a number of business and professional premises were constructed (Martin, p. 16). Crosbie includes a c. 1910 photograph of High Street in her pictorial history of North Down which shows that a number of two-storey cottages occupied the site of the current bank (Crosbie, pp 72-73). Merrick records that these cottages, were part of an L-shaped enclave called Gray's Court, dated c. 1840, and stood until they were demolished to make way for the construction of the bank building which, according to the Dictionary of Irish Architects, was built in 1921. In 1986 Merrick records that occupation of the bank had passed to T.S.B. which became First Trust Bank in 1991 (Merrick, p. P. 27). A Solicitors firm occupied offices on the first floor of the bank building.

The building was decommissioned as a bank circa 2008 and presently houses commercial offices to first & second floor with restaurant to ground floor.

Field inspection has found that the interior of the bank has been significantly renovated resulting in the loss of much original fabric, however the historical character of the building remains unaltered.

### References

#### Primary Sources

1. PRONI OS/6/3/4/1 – First Edition Ordnance Survey map 1834
2. PRONI OS/6/3/4/2 – Second Edition Ordnance Survey map 1858
3. PRONI OS/6/3/4/3 – Third Edition Ordnance Survey map 1902
4. PRONI OS/6/3/4/4 – Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey map 1920-21
5. PRONI OS/6/3/4/5 – Fifth Edition Ordnance Survey map 1931
6. F. Chatterton's 'Who's Who in Architecture' (1923)
7. Ordnance Survey Map 130-4 (1957-58)
8. First Survey Record HB23/20/079 (1993)

#### Secondary Sources

1. Crosbie, J. E. M., 'A tour of North Down: 1895-1925' Belfast: Friars Bush Press, 1989.
2. Merrick, T., 'Holywood: An illustrated history and companion' Donaghadee: Cottage Publications, 1993.
3. Merrick, T., 'Buildings of Holywood' Holywood: Holywood Advertiser, 1986.

#### Online Resources

1. Dictionary of Irish Architects - <http://www.dia.i.e>.

### **Criteria for Listing**

NB: In March 2011, revised criteria were published as Annex C of Planning Policy Statement 6. These added extra criteria with the aim of improving clarity in regard to the Department's explanation of historic interest. For records evaluated in advance of this, therefore, not all of these criteria would have been considered. The criteria used prior to 2011 are published on the Department's website under 'listing criteria'.

#### **Architectural Interest**

A. Style  
B. Proportion  
C. Ornamentation  
J. Setting  
H-. Alterations detracting from building  
I. Quality and survival of Interior

#### **Historical Interest**

R. Age  
S. Authenticity  
V. Authorship  
Y. Social, Cultural or Economic Importance  
X. Local Interest

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District Council Consultation Report**

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**Evaluation**

A four-bay, two-storey, red-brick attached former bank building; built in 1921, designed by architect Godfrey William Ferguson who was architect to the Northern Banking Co., designing many of their branches throughout Northern Ireland. Located on High Street, Holywood, Co Down, the former bank is sited in a row which contains two other listed buildings, High Street Presbyterian Church (HB23/20/012) on the Northeast side, and the Public Library (HB23/20/013) on the Southwest side. This former bank building is representative of Edwardian freestyle architecture with a loosely classical style, and retains fine stonework detailing to the exterior. Although the interior has been refurbished, some interior historic fabric and detailing remains. A good example of commercial architecture and representative of the period, the former bank building retains historic character adding to its local interest.

**Replacements and Alterations**

Inappropriate

**If inappropriate, Why?**

Loss of internal banking hall and associated detail, loss of some original interior walls and therefore change in planform, loss of some original windows - detracting from the original historic character

**General Comments**

FILE PA'd 16/04/15

**Monitoring Notes – since Date of Survey**

As of 2008, building decommissioned as bank and under new ownership of development company who occupy first floor. Second floor is rented office space and ground floor converted to restaurant. Minor internal alterations to first floor with wall removed at F04, and none to second floor. On ground floor, vault removed and surrounding walls partly demolished for installation of pizza oven, Toilets at rear remodelled and repositioned from rear wall to internal position at G09 & G10, and rear wall partly glazed at G11.

Front NW elevation windows at ground & first floor replaced in hardwood DG sliding sash; rear doors and windows at G11 replaced in aluminium/steel. All other windows and doors are original.

No evidence of original banking hall remain apart from terrazzo flooring in G04 & G03.

Note added 30/09/2022 following Internal inspection, JOC 13/09/2022.

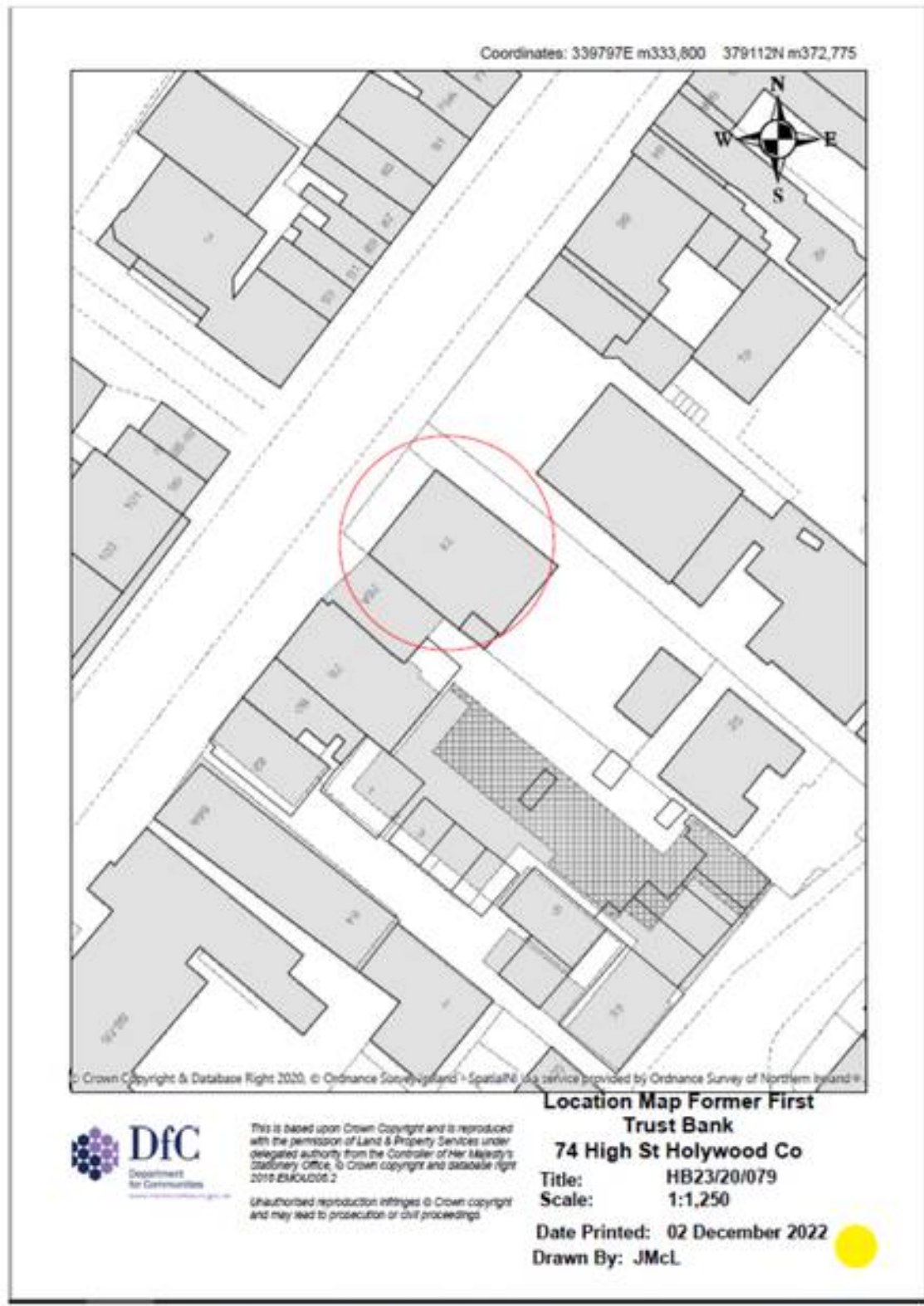
**Date of Survey**    21/02/2011



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Unclassified

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**ITEM 9****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	21 December 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Organisational Development and Administration
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	08 December 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Commonwealth Day - 13 March 2023
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Commonwealth Day 2023 Guide

The Royal Pageant master has written to the Council to invite the City of Bangor to participate in the celebration, as part of Commonwealth Day 2023, of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the Commonwealth by the late Queen Elizabeth II.

If it is agreed to participate, the Pageant master will provide Council free of charge with the Commonwealth of Nation's Flag of Peace, featuring the White Dove of Peace in its bottom right-hand corner. As detailed on the attached Guide (Appendix 1), it is envisaged that participating cities would have a short 30-minute ceremony on the morning of 13 March 2023 which would end with the raising of the Flag of Peace. The Pageant master's office have offered to assist with sourcing a Town Crier, Cornet Player and Bugler for the ceremony, which they have suggested would be at no cost to Council because these individuals want to be involved in this occasion on the day as well.

The ceremonial aspect would require minimal budget which can be covered in existing civic event budget.

The Pageant master does advise in his correspondence that some cities have just asked to receive their free flag as they are unable to have a ceremony, but want to

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ensure their city, residents etc, are still represented in this important anniversary, and this 'Commonwealth tribute' to the late Queen.

As regards the flying of the Flag of Peace by Council on 13 March 2023, this would be permissible under the current Council Flag Policy (July 2021) which provides:

Flags commemorating specific days or events (to include Commonwealth Flag, Armed Forces Day Flag or Red Ensign) be flown at Castle Park, Bangor and Conway Square, Newtownards. Additional flags may also be considered that have a national significance at one or both sites. (Council approval will be required for these on a case-by-case basis).

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council:

1. Agrees to fly the Commonwealth of Nation's Flag of Peace on 13 March 2023 at Castle Park, Bangor; and
2. Holds a ceremony for Commonwealth Day in the City of Bangor on 13 March 2023.

# *The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace*

13th March / Commonwealth Day 2023



YOUR GUIDE TO TAKING PART

## Foreword



*The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC, Secretary-General, Commonwealth of Nations*



**The Charter of the Commonwealth, signed on 11 March 2013, is a landmark document.**

**It is the definitive expression of our values and aspirations - and the essential commitment of all Commonwealth countries.**

It holds that we believe in peace.

That we abhor injustice and we believe that the disparities in our world are too great to be tolerated.

That we believe dialogue and cooperation can remove the causes of war, promote tolerance, combat injustice, tackle climate change and secure development among the peoples of the world.

That we aspire to equality between races and genders, and remain committed to delivering access to affordable health care, education, clean drinking water, sanitation and housing for all citizens.

And that the specific and special qualities of small and vulnerable states, and young people everywhere, deserve special recognition and attention.

These values are the Commonwealth's collective North Star. They stand tall across our family of nations and helped to pave the way for the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted globally two years after the Charter of the Commonwealth was signed.

The values expressed in the Charter transcend cultures, borders and generations. They will always be relevant. But they are tested by the complexities and challenges of the real world.

The measure of the Charter's ongoing importance is how we respond to those tests: in the way we connect, innovate, and transform in order to facilitate a full recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; respond to conflicts and crises in ways that increases resilience; and speed ever-closer to our common future, underpinned by sustainability, peace and prosperity for all the people of the Commonwealth.

Assessed against our own history, and against the vast history of human struggle and progress, the Commonwealth is closer to those values than ever before.

Keeping them active in our minds and hearts is vital, so it is right that, in the United Kingdom and across the Commonwealth, we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the Commonwealth. The Flag for Peace is a fitting initiative which has my full support and I hope it forms part of a comprehensive programme of activities to celebrate Commonwealth Day and promote peace across our family of 56 nations.

I am confident that Commonwealth Day will offer people everywhere the chance to reflect on the progress we are making together, the tools our Charter gives us to face the challenges of the world, and the continued importance of our shared moral, ethical and practical framework for the advancement of the Commonwealth's common welfare.

*Patricia Scotland*



## Introduction



*Bruno Peek LVO OBE OPR, Pageantmaster, The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace*



**13th March 2023 marks the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Commonwealth Charter by our late Queen Elizabeth II, one of the most important documents in the long history of this family of nations.**

**The Charter sets out the values and aspirations that unite the Commonwealth's 56 independent countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and the Pacific, and the 2.5 billion people who live there.**

To commemorate the occasion in the UK, a 90" x 54" **The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace** featuring a white dove of peace in the bottom right hand corner will be sent to every City within the United Kingdom, the raising of which at **11am** on Monday 13th March - Commonwealth Day 2023, will symbolise the UK's commitment to the shared values and principals of the Commonwealth, including co-operation in economic and social development, diversity, respect, friendship and the promotion of peace around the world.

Starting at **10.30am**, the raising of the flag will form part of a brief ceremony in each city during the early morning of 13th March 2023.

### THE CEREMONY

**10.30am:** Guests assemble

**10.35:** Mayoral party including a Town Crier, Bugler/Cornet player or Trumpeter, Piper, Bishop or Mayor's Chaplain and other invited guests, including the Lord-Lieutenant - (where there is more than one city in a county, a DL), form up on the steps of the city or town hall, or another location of choice.

**10.40am:** Town Crier or other community representative steps forward, rings his or her bell and reads out the Commonwealth Proclamation, words of which can be found on **page 4** of this Guide To Taking Part.

**10.45am:** Town Crier steps back and the Bugler or Cornet player steps forward and undertakes the Fanfare, the music of which can be found on **page 6**.

**10.50am:** On completion of the fanfare, the Bugler/Cornet player steps back. The Lord Mayor or Mayor holding the pre-folded Commonwealth flag, accompanied by the Bishop or Mayor's Chaplain, step forward. Bishop or Mayor's Chaplain blesses the flag using the words found on **page 5**. Following the blessing, the Lord Mayor or Mayor thanks the Bishop or Chaplain on behalf of the city and says a few words confirming the importance of the Commonwealth Charter and of the Commonwealth itself.

**10.55am:** A 'lone' Piper steps forward to play Highland Cathedral which was a favourite of The Queen Mother - see **page 7**.

On completion of the Piper, the flag is to be given to the council representative responsible for raising it, in readiness for its raising. We would request that all the 74 cities raise their flags together at **11am** that morning, uniting the cities of the United Kingdom at one moment in time in this celebration of the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Commonwealth Charter by Her Majesty The Queen as Head of the Commonwealth. (We would hope that your designated guests would be accompanied by the city's Sword and Mace bearers and any other civic relia that would add to the colour and pageantry of the occasion).

**11am:** The Commonwealth Flag is raised on the designated council flagpole within their city.

With the support and generous involvement of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, the day's anniversary celebrations will culminate with the ringing of Church bells within the cities of the UK at **8pm**. (See **page 8**).

The sound of bells is synonymous with celebration and marking important moments in history and bells are some of the oldest musical instruments in the world, and certainly the loudest that can be heard for miles across land and sea.

To commemorate their involvement, each city, Town Crier, Cadet, Piper, Lord Lieutenant, DL and those ringing bells will be sent a Certificate of Grateful Recognition enabling them to download, print, frame and keep it, acting as a permanent reminder of their involvement in this historic event, see **page 10**.

Please go to **page 9** to confirm/register your involvement as soon as possible, but no later than **1st December 2022**, enabling us to include your council in this event.

Yours sincerely,



*Bruno Peek*

Bruno Peek LVO OBE OPR  
Pageantmaster  
The Commonwealth of Nations'  
Flag of Peace



# Proclamation / Town Criers



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## Proclamation

Wording by Jane Smith



*Oyez Oyez Oyez*

*Greetings good citizens of this fine city. Ten years ago our late, great glorious Queen Elizabeth II signed the Commonwealth Charter.*

*A Charter based - in our Splendid monarch's words - on "friendship, loyalty and the desire for freedom and peace"*

*Today, the citizens of the member countries of our glorious Commonwealth remain loyal to the ideals contained in the Charter.*



*The need to challenge intolerance and inequality. The right of all humankind to health, education, food and shelter.*

*The Charter demands that we tackle climate change and stop the pollution of our oceans.*

*But as Her Majesty had so graciously and eruditely referenced, at its core the Charter seeks peace. Peace both now and for the generations to come.*

*It is therefore most appropriate that on this tenth anniversary of the signing of the Commonwealth Charter our fine city receives The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace, symbolising this ongoing commitment to the vision embodied in the Charter.*

*God Save The King.*



# Blessing of the Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace



## The Blessing

### The Blessing by The Very Revd Jane Hedges

*God our creator, you long for peace between people of every race and language.*

*Send down your blessing upon this flag that it may be a sign of hope for us and all the nations of the Commonwealth.*

*May it inspire in each one of us the desire to celebrate the diversity of gifts you have showered upon us and to treasure all that binds us together.*

**Amen.**





# Fanfare

Majesty



## Majesty

2021 copyright A. W. Carlisle



*Brass Bands England Chief Executive Officer, Kenny Crookston, commented:*

"In providing this special service of the playing of 'Majesty' for their respective cities, cornet players nationwide will also bring their own bands, and brass bands in general, to the public's attention in a very positive way, celebrating this unique moment in the history of the Commonwealth.

We would like therefore, to encourage cornet players within the cities of the UK to get involved in this important occasion."



As we celebrate Commonwealth day in union with friends and colleagues around the World I feel privileged, along with many musicians who are participating, in sharing and recognising the importance of the rich and diverse histories of those member Countries and Territories of the Commonwealth together with the value of being within the framework of such an august and important organisation.

The talented uniformed cadet musicians from the United Kingdom feel honoured in taking part and performing, and will cherish the memory of having done so.

On behalf of those cadets taking part, I salute the ideals of the Commonwealth and look forward to seeing it progress and evolving in harmony with the rest of the World.

*Wing Commander Gil Singleton RAFAC  
Principal Director of Music (Royal Air Force Cadets)*





## Highland Cathedral

by Michael Korb and Ulrich Roever

4/4 Slow Air



"This is a fantastic opportunity for pipers to be involved in a remarkable and unique event. There is a long tradition of pipers in the Commonwealth, with many of the 56 countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and the Pacific having pipers. The chosen tune, Highland Cathedral, is a well-known and fitting one, inspired by events under the reign of King James I when clan chiefs met and pledged to live in peace. A favourite of The late Queen Mother, the tune has been heard at prominent events from the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo to the Flag Lowering Ceremony at Government House in Hong Kong," said Robert Proctor, Principal Piper, the Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace.



# Ringling of Cathedral, Minster or Church Bells



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Central Council of Church Bell Ringers



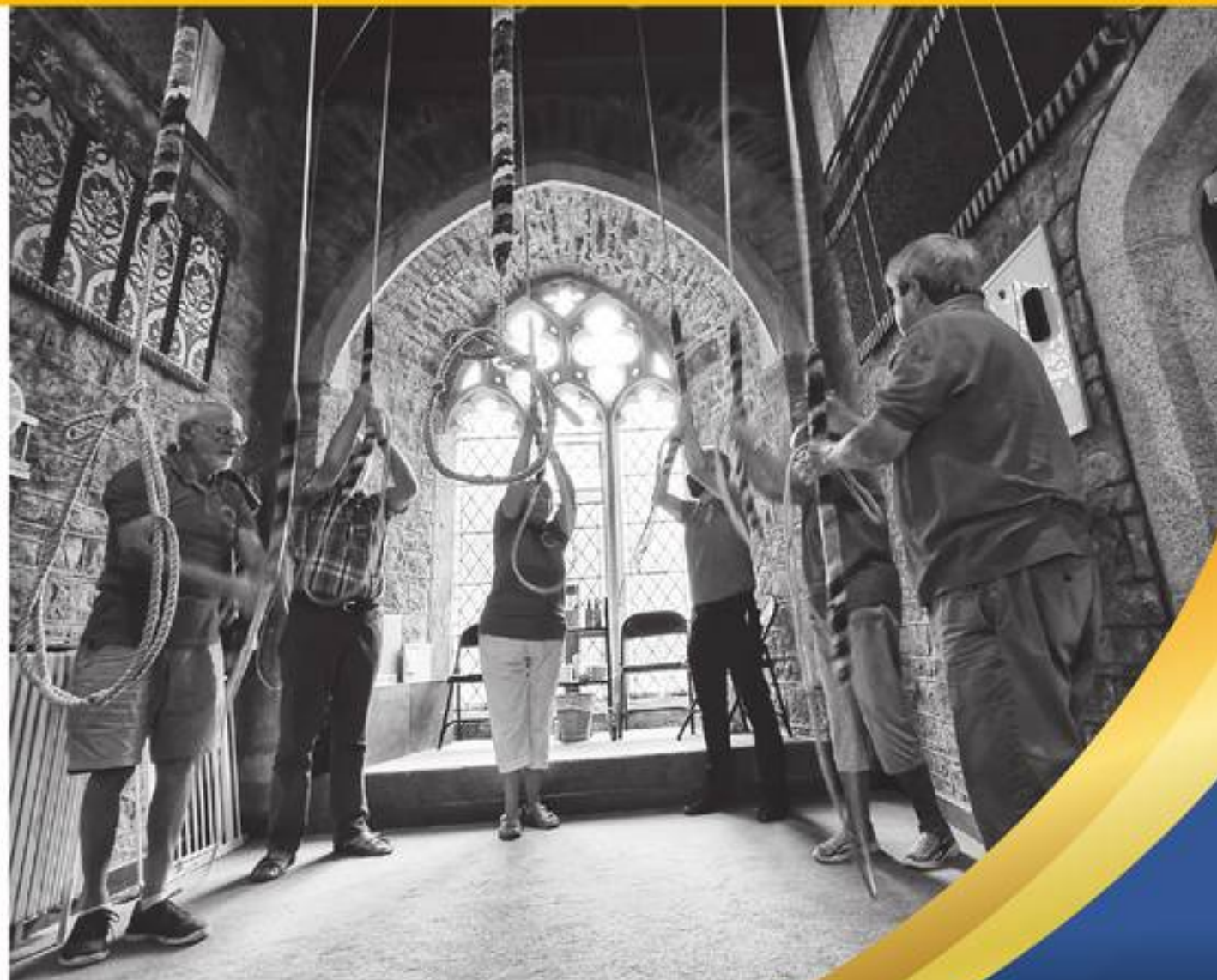
THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH  
BELL RINGERS

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers is pleased to support the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Commonwealth Charter on 13th March 2023 by encouraging bell ringers throughout the 76 UK cities and those affiliated bell ringing societies of other Commonwealth countries including Australia, New Zealand and Canada, to ring at 8pm (local time) on that day, to include a minimum of 10 whole pulls of Queens (to mark each year since the Charter was signed). Queens can be rung on any number of bells in the order of descending odd bells then descending even, and would look like this written out for 12 bells: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12.

The sound of bells is synonymous with celebration and marking important moments in history and bells are some of the oldest musical instruments in the world, and certainly the loudest that can be heard for miles across land and sea.

Bell ringing is an activity that combines physics, music, maths and performance but you don't need to be good at any of those to be able to learn to ring. Anyone can learn to ring from age 8+. It's a great team activity with many vibrant young ringers groups across the UK. It's something that transcends age groups, ethnicity, social, economic or educational status. Bell ringing is great for keeping both mind and body active and a great family activity.

To find out more visit us at  
<https://cccbr.org.uk/bellringing/learn/>



# Event Registration



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## Event Registration

### Step 1:

Please confirm your involvement as soon as possible, providing the following information, enabling us to register your participation and communicate with you over the next few months, sending it direct to – Bruno Peek LVO DBE OPR, Pageantmaster, The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace – email: [brunopeek@mac.com](mailto:brunopeek@mac.com)

### Step 2:

Name of Country – England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland.

Name of County.

Name of City.

Name of Cathedral, Minster or Principal Church within the City.

Name of Contact – *(It is important, however, that we have only one point of contact for the duration of the event)*

Telephone - landline.

Telephone - mobile.

Email address.

Name of Lord Mayor or Mayor.

Name of Leader of Council.

Email address.

Name of your City Council media representative.

Email address.



# The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace

## Certificate of Grateful Recognition

13th March - Commonwealth Day 2023

With sincere thanks for your contribution to  
The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace



*Bruno Peek*

Bruno Peek LVO OBE OPR  
Pageantmaster

The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace



# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following organisations for their generous support and involvement in this event



**PROCLAMATION**  
Jane Smith  
Principal Town Crier  
The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace

**FANFARE**  
**BRASS BANDS ENGLAND**  
Kenny Crookston  
Chief Executive  
**AIR TRAINING CORPS**  
Wing Commander Gil Singleton

**MUSIC FOR PIPERS**  
Robert Proctor  
Principal Piper  
The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace

**RINGING OF CATHEDRAL & CHURCH BELLS**  
**THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS**  
Vicki Chapman – Public Relations Officer

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC OFFICERS**  
Tracy Frisby – Chairman

**BLESSING FOR COMMONWEALTH FLAG**  
The Very Revd Jane Hedges  
Acting Dean of Canterbury Cathedral

**ONE VOICE WALES**  
Lyn Cadwallader - Chairman

**GUIDE TO TAKING PART**  
Nick Marshall



# *The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace*

13th March / Commonwealth Day 2023



## **PAGEANTMASTER**

The Commonwealth of Nations' Flag of Peace  
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PA to Bruno Peek LVO OBE OPR  
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Unclassified

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**ITEM 10****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	21 December 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Organisational Development and Administration
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	08 December 2022
File Reference	LP37
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Request to light up Council buildings for "Dry January, Feel Good February" campaign
Attachments	

**Requestor**

Paul Wolfe – South Eastern Connections Team (ASCERT)

**Reason for request**

To raise awareness of the Public Health Agency campaign – "Dry January, Feel Good February"

**Dates and colours**

Lighting up Ards Arts Centre / Ards Town Hall and McKee Clock purple on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and annually thereafter.

**Background information**

"Dry January Feel Good February" is a Public Health Agency campaign which is run annually to promote abstaining from alcohol during the month of January to promote better health during February. This campaign is delivered within the South Eastern Trust area by the South Eastern Connections team which is part of ASCERT. The Connections Team are employed by ASCERT, a drug and alcohol charity.



Unclassified

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ASCERT started in 1998 as a community response to concerns about drug misuse in the Lisburn area of Northern Ireland, growing over the years to become a regional service provider.

In the following years the charity expanded its work into other areas across Northern Ireland. They developed services that focused on community development approaches, education and training and then interventions for young people and families. Over the years they have established a broad range of projects and services that have been targeted towards young people, adults and families in the greatest need.

ASCERT is now one of the leading and best-known charities addressing drug and alcohol and other related social issues, with services across all Northern Ireland. They have accumulated an extensive experience of evidence-based service development, planning and delivery across a range of disciplines and provide direct services to more than 10,000 people each year. Those services are providing support to communities, young people, adults and families throughout Northern Ireland, helping them to deal with the impact of their own or someone else's alcohol or drug use or other issues like mental health, suicide prevention or offending. Alongside this direct support, they are the main provider of training services in the areas of drugs, alcohol and suicide prevention, supporting the professional development of practitioners within the statutory and community/voluntary sectors.

They have advised that they will be working with several organisations within Ards and North Down to promote this particular campaign and will be set up in Bangor train station on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to engage with local people.

#### **Does it meet policy requirements**

Yes - request has been received from a non-profit making organisation based in the Borough to mark a significant occasion.

Members should note that an existing fault with the lighting system has meant that the current light up schedule cannot be amended, and no new light ups can be added. Officers are currently working with external partners to determine costings for repairs to the system and a further report will be brought back on future options in the new year for Members consideration.

However, Members should note that there is a possibility that none of the lights on Council buildings will be working at the time of the request.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council accedes to the request to light up Council buildings purple on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in support of the "Dry January Feel Good February" campaign, and annually thereafter.

Unclassified

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## Item 11

## Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	21 December 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	13 December 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below.
Subject	Place and Prosperity Committee and Corporate Services Committee - Terms of Reference
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Update Terms of Reference for 5 Standing Committees - December 2022

**Background**

Following agreement at the meeting of the Council on 24 August to commence a minor restructure at Director level, it was agreed that there would be limited amendments to the responsibilities and the Terms of Reference of the Committees, and their titles as follows:

- Corporate Services Committee (removal of capital projects)  
*Finance, Human Resources & Organisational Development, Transformation and Administration*
- Place and Prosperity Committee (new title for the Regeneration and Development Committee)  
*Regeneration, Capital projects, Economic Development and Tourism*

Unclassified

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**Terms of Reference**

With regard to the Place and Prosperity Committee, the Terms of Reference will be updated to reflect the name change. A small change will also be made to the Committees overall purpose and objectives to incorporate Capital Projects.

With regard to the Corporate Services Committee, the only change to its Terms of Reference will be the removal of Capital Projects from its list of overall purpose and objectives.

A revised version of the Terms of Reference can be found at Appendix 1.

Members will be aware that the Planning Committee, Community and Wellbeing Committee and Environment Committee remain unchanged.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council approve the changed wording to the Terms of Reference as outlined in the report.

# TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR 5 STANDING COMMITTEES

DECEMBER 2022

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR 5 STANDING COMMITTEES**

There are five standing committees plus one other additional committee which reports directly to Council:

- Corporate Services Committee
- Environment Committee
- Regeneration and Development Committee
- Community & Wellbeing Committee
- Planning Committee
- Audit Committee (not a standing committee but reports directly to Council)

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

246

### 1. Corporate Services Committee

#### **Authority**

Under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 11 (1) *"for the purpose of discharging any functions in pursuance of arrangements made under this part*

*(a) a Council may appoint a committee of the council ...*

*... Subject to this Act the number of members of a committee appointed under subsection (1), their term of office and the area (if restricted) within which the committee is to exercise its authority must be fixed by the appointing council .."*

#### **Overall Purpose and Objectives**

The Corporate Services Committee will assist Council in fulfilling its role in the areas of:

- Administration
- Audit and risk management
- Asset management
- Business Continuity
- Community Planning
- Corporate strategy
- Corporate Plan
- Corporate Communications
- Customer Service
- Efficiency and Transformation
- Emergency Planning
- Health and Safety
- Human Resources
- ICT
- Legal
- Organisational Development
- Performance Management
- Policy and Governance
- Procurement
- Special Projects
- Sustainable Development
- anything else appropriate delegated to it by Council
- Equality
- Finance

In reaching its decisions, the Corporate Services Committee will have due regard to its impact on, and implications for the Council's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and, where possible and practicable, to ensure that the actions of the Committee are proactive in this respect.

The Committee is a main committee of the Council and is independent of all other operational committees of the Council. The Committee will report to Council and accordingly Council authorises the Committee, within the scope of its responsibilities, to:

- Seek any information it requires from any Council employee or external party.
- Obtain external legal or professional advice as appropriate; and
- Ensure the attendance of Council Officers at meetings as appropriate.

Correspondingly, all employees are directed by Council to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

247

### **Membership**

The Corporate Services Committee will comprise 16 members who are appointed by Council on an annual basis. Council will appoint the Chair of the Corporate Services Committee on an annual basis in accordance with the procedures for appointing positions of responsibility.

### **Meetings**

The Corporate Committee will meet in Church Street, Newtownards at 7.00pm on the second Tuesday of each month except during July and August. Special meetings may be convened as required.

The Corporate Services Committee will comply with the Council's standing orders.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

248

### 2. Environment Committee

#### **Authority**

Under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 11 (1) *"for the purpose of discharging any functions in pursuance of arrangements made under this part*

*(b) a Council may appoint a committee of the council ...*

*... Subject to this Act the number of members of a committee appointed under subsection (1), their term of office and the area (if restricted) within which the committee is to exercise its authority must be fixed by the appointing council .."*

#### **Overall Purpose and Objectives**

The Environment Committee will assist Council in fulfilling its role in the areas of:

- building control
- building maintenance
- borough inspection
- car parks
- estate management/maintenance
- licensing
- marinas and harbours
- markets
- public conveniences
- recycling
- waste management and cleansing
- anything else appropriate delegated to it by Council

In reaching its decisions the Environment Committee will have due regard to its impact on, and implications for the Council's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and, where possible and practicable, to ensure that the actions of the Committee are proactive in this respect.

The Committee is a main committee of the Council and is independent of all other operational committees of the Council. The Committee will report to Council and accordingly Council authorises the Committee, within the scope of its responsibilities, to:

- Seek any information it requires from any Council employee or external party;
- Obtain external legal or professional advice as appropriate; and
- Ensure the attendance of Council Officers at meetings as appropriate.

Correspondingly, all employees are directed by Council to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

#### **Membership**

The Environment Committee will comprise of 16 members who are appointed by Council on an annual basis.



## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

249

Council will appoint the Chair of the Environment Committee on an annual basis in accordance with the procedures for appointing positions of responsibility.

### **Meetings**

The Environment Committee will meet in Church Street, Newtownards at 7.00pm on the first Wednesday each month except during July and August. Special meetings may be convened as required.

The Environment Committee will comply with the Council's standing orders.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

250

### 3. Place and Prosperity Committee

#### **Authority**

Under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 11 (1) *"for the purpose of discharging any functions in pursuance of arrangements made under this part*

*(c) a Council may appoint a committee of the council ...*

*... Subject to this Act the number of members of a committee appointed under subsection (1), their term of office and the area (if restricted) within which the committee is to exercise its authority must be fixed by the appointing council .."*

#### **Overall Purpose and Objectives**

The Place and Prosperity Committee will assist Council in fulfilling its role in the areas of:

- Crafts
- Economic Development
- EU Funds and Projects
- Local Area Plan
- Regeneration
- Rural Development
- Tourism Development and Marketing
- Tourism Facilities (including Exploris)
- Capital Projects
- anything else appropriate delegated to it by Council

In reaching its decisions the Place and Prosperity Committee will have due regard to its impact on, and implications for the Council's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and, where possible and practicable, to ensure that the actions of the Committee are proactive in this respect.

The Committee is a main committee of the Council and is independent of all other operational committees of the Council. The Committee will report to Council and accordingly Council authorises the Committee, within the scope of its responsibilities, to:

- Seek any information it requires from any Council employee or external party;
- Obtain external legal or professional advice as appropriate; and
- Ensure the attendance of Council Officers at meetings as appropriate.

Correspondingly, all employees are directed by Council to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

#### **Membership**

The Place and Prosperity Committee will comprise of 16 members who are appointed by Council on an annual basis. Council will appoint the Chair of the Place and Prosperity Committee on an annual basis in accordance with the procedures for appointing positions of responsibility.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

251

### **Meetings**

The Place and Prosperity Committee will meet in Church Street, Newtownards at 7.00pm on the first Thursday each month except during July and August. Special meetings may be convened as required.

The Place and Prosperity Committee will comply with the Council's standing orders.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

252

### 4. Community and Wellbeing Committee

Under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 11 (1) *“for the purpose of discharging any functions in pursuance of arrangements made under this part*

*(d) a Council may appoint a committee of the council ...*

*... Subject to this Act the number of members of a committee appointed under subsection (1), their term of office and the area (if restricted) within which the committee is to exercise its authority must be fixed by the appointing council ..”*

#### **Overall Purpose and Objectives**

The Community and Wellbeing Committee will assist Council in fulfilling its role in the areas of:

- Arts and Museum
- Biodiversity
- Cemeteries
- Community Development
- Countryside
- Environmental Health
- Good Relations
- Leisure facilities
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Peace IV
- Playgrounds
- Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)
- Sports development
- anything else appropriate delegated to it by Council

In reaching its decisions the Community and Wellbeing Committee will have due regard to its impact on, and implications for the Council's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and, where possible and practicable, to ensure that the actions of the Committee are proactive in this respect.

The Committee is a main committee of the Council and is independent of all other operational committees of the Council. The Committee will report to Council and accordingly Council authorises the Committee, within the scope of its responsibilities, to:

- Seek any information it requires from any Council employee or external party;
- Obtain external legal or professional advice as appropriate; and
- Ensure the attendance of Council Officers at meetings as appropriate.

Correspondingly, all employees are directed by Council to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

253

### **Membership**

The Community and Wellbeing Committee will comprise of 16 members who are appointed by Council on an annual basis.

Council will appoint the Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee on an annual basis in accordance with the procedures for appointing positions of responsibility.

### **Meetings**

The Community and Wellbeing Committee will meet in Church Street, Newtownards at 7.00pm on the second Wednesday of each month except during July and August. Special meetings may be convened as required.

The Community and Wellbeing Committee will comply with the Council's standing orders.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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### 5. Planning Committee

#### **Authority**

Under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 11 (1) *"for the purpose of discharging any functions in pursuance of arrangements made under this part*

*(e) a Council may appoint a committee of the council ...*

*... Subject to this Act the number of members of a committee appointed under subsection (1), their term of office and the area (if restricted) within which the committee is to exercise its authority must be fixed by the appointing council .."*

#### **Overall Purpose and Objectives**

The Planning Committee will assist Council in planning development control and enforcement.

The Committee will have delegated responsibility from the Council to carry out its roles and responsibilities.

In reaching its decisions the Planning Committee will have due regard to its impact on, and implications for the Council's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and, where possible and practicable, to ensure that the actions of the Committee are proactive in this respect.

The Planning Committee has full council powers delegated to it.

#### **Membership**

The Planning Committee will comprise 16 members who are appointed by Council on an annual basis.

Council will appoint the Chair of the Planning Committee on an annual basis in accordance with the procedures for appointing positions of responsibility.

#### **Meetings**

The Planning Committee will meet in Church Street Newtownards at 7.00pm on the first Monday of each month (**summer arrangements to be confirmed**). Special meetings may be convened as required.

The Planning Committee will comply with the Council's standing orders.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

255

### Additional Committee Reporting Directly To Council - Audit Committee

#### **Authority**

Under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 11 (1) *"for the purpose of discharging any functions in pursuance of arrangements made under this part*

*(f) a Council may appoint a committee of the council ...*

*... Subject to this Act the number of members of a committee appointed under subsection (1), their term of office and the area (if restricted) within which the committee is to exercise its authority must be fixed by the appointing council .."*

#### **Overall Purpose and Objectives**

The Audit Committee will assist Council in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities. The Committee will review the system of internal control and management of risks; the financial reporting process; the audit process and the Council's processes for monitoring compliance with laws and regulations and compliance with its own Standing Orders, policies and procedures.

In reaching its decisions the Audit Committee will have due regard to its impact on, and implications for the Council's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and, where possible and practicable, to ensure that the actions of the Committee are proactive in this respect.

The Committee is a main committee of the Council and is independent of all other operational committees of the Council. The Committee will report to Council and accordingly Council authorises the Committee, within the scope of its responsibilities, to:

- Seek any information it requires from any Council employee or external party;
- Obtain external legal or professional advice as appropriate; and
- Ensure the attendance of Council Officers at meetings as appropriate.

Correspondingly, all employees are directed by Council to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

#### **Membership**

The Audit Committee will comprise 10 Members who are appointed by Council for a four year term for the purposes of continuity of expertise and knowledge plus one independent member, appointed through public advertisement;

Membership should not include Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Committee or Sub-committee chair or vice-chairs.

Council will nominate the Chair of the Committee in accordance with the procedures for appointing positions of responsibility.

#### **Meetings**

The Audit Committee will meet quarterly in Church Street, Newtownards at 7.00pm in March, June, October and December.

## ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

256

Special meetings may be convened as required.

The Audit Committee will invite the External Auditors to attend and such other persons as it deems necessary, who may be asked to make presentations to the Committee as appropriate.

The Audit Committee will comply with the Council's standing orders.



Unclassified

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## Item 14

## Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	21 December 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	12 December 2022
File Reference	[CX file number (if there is one)]
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below.
Subject	Local Government Conference 2023
Attachments	Appendix 1 - Letter to the Chief Executive

The 2023 Local Government Conference organised by NILGA and SoLACE NI will be held on 23 February in the Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh.

The theme for the conference is Responding to Future Challenged and will focus on how local government should innovate and collaborate across all sectors to achieve its ambitions. NILGA and Solace NI encourage Councillors and Officers to attend.

Tickets are priced at £99 for Councillors and Officers.

Members who are currently represent Ards and North Down Borough Council on NILGA are: Councillor Boyle, Alderman Carson, Councillor Dunlop, Alderman Gibson, Councillor MacArthur, Alderman McDowell, Councillor Cummings and Councillor Wilson.

The Chief Executive will be attending and does not require separate approval by the Council.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Unclassified

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It is recommended that Council consider nominating a Member(s) to attend the Local Government Conference 2023.



*the voice of local government*

Mr Stephen Reid  
 Chief Executive  
 Ards and North Down Borough Council  
 Town Hall  
 The Castle  
 BANGOR  
 BT20 4BT

8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Dear Stephen,

The 2023 Local Government Conference will be held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February in the Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh.

The theme for the conference is **"Responding to Future Challenges"** and will focus on how local government should innovate and collaborate across all sectors to achieve its ambitions. The conference programme is available [here](#). Dedicated workshops for councillors and officers will take place on the afternoon of the conference.

This will be the first in person conference for our sector since February 2020 and offers an opportunity for councillors and officers to learn from each other and proactively engage in shaping the strategic direction of the local government sector. We have confirmed participation from some of the most up and coming, expert speakers in their fields, who will challenge us and share their insight into how councils can effectively respond to the challenges ahead.

NILGA and Solace NI encourage councillors and officers from the 11 councils to attend this conference, the main event of the 2023 local government calendar. To support this, we are offering competitively priced tickets at £99 for councillor and officer attendance.

To confirm your council's places and for further information, please email [events@nilga.org](mailto:events@nilga.org).

We are looking forward to a great event!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R Wilson".

**Roger Wilson**  
 Chair, Solace NI

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alison Allen".

**Alison Allen**  
 Chief Executive, NILGA

Solace NI

c/o Craigavon Civic & Conference Centre  
 Lakeview Road  
 CRAIGAVON  
 BT64 1AL  
 Tel: 0300 0300 900

Northern Ireland Local Government Association  
 Bradford Court,  
 Upper Galwally,  
 Castlereagh,  
 BT8 6RB  
 Tel: 028 9079 8972 email: [office@nilga.org](mailto:office@nilga.org)  
 web: [www.nilga.org](http://www.nilga.org) twitter: @NI\_LGA

**ITEM 15****Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	21 December 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	12 December 2022
File Reference	CG 12172
Legislation	Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Notices of Motion
Attachments	Notices of Motion - Status Report

Please find attached a Status Report in respect of Notices of Motion.

This is a standing item on the Council agenda each month and its aim is to keep Members updated on the outcome of motions. Please note that as each motion is dealt with it will be removed from the report.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council notes the report.

**NOTICE OF MOTIONS UPDATE – DECEMBER 2022**

<b>TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b>							
<b>DATE RECEIVED</b>	<b>NOTICE</b>	<b>SUBMITTED BY</b>	<b>COUNCIL MEETING DATE</b>	<b>COMMITTEE REFERRED TO</b>	<b>OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED</b>	<b>MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE</b>	<b>OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN</b>
31/05/15	Permanent recognition of Rory McIlroy in Holywood	Councillor Muir	24/06/15	Corporate Services Committee – October 2015	Agreed	June 2022	Update sought at Jan 22 Council – To be reported to CSC in June 2022. Further report to follow in 2023.
21/1/19	Shelter at slipway in Donaghadee	Councillor Brooks & Cllr Smith	Council – January 2019	Environment Committee	Agreed	TBC	
25/9/19	Report on feasibility of holding annual remembrance service for those lost to suicide	Councillor Martin	Council – October	Corporate Services – November 2019	Agreed	Reported to CSC January 2020. Further report to come back.	On draft agenda for CSC March 2023.

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
						(September 2022).	
16/01/20	Closing of a public right of way at Andrew Shorefield, Groomsport	Alderman Keery	Council – January 2020	Corporate Committee – February 2020	Agreed	Reported to CSC in March and October 2020. Further report to come back (September 2022).	On draft agenda for CSC March 2023.
20.10.20	"I would like to task officers to produce a report to consider what could be a more environmentally friendly and benefit the wellbeing of the community for the use of the disused putting green on the Commons and play park at Hunts park in Donaghadee. Following the success of the Dog park in Bangor and the demand for a Dementia garden, both should be	Councillor Brooks	Council October 2020	Community & Wellbeing Committee – December 2020	Agreed	TBC	Officers to liaise with Regeneration and consideration of Masterplan and also take into account play strategy local consultation when it takes place in Donaghadee

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	considered as options in the report. The process should involve consultation with the local community."						and bring back a report thereafter.
19 April 2021	Flying of Union Flag on all Council buildings and war memorials all year round. Flags at half mast on death of any monarch or any other member of the Royal Family or Prime Minister of the UK for the period of mourning.	Councillor Cooper	Council April 2021	Corporate Committee – September 2021	NOM as amended agreed at March 2022 Council	CSC - October/Nov 2022	Report to be brought back to future committee.
10 May 2021	That officers are tasked to bring back a Report on how the Council might approach a Climate Change Action Plan and perhaps including - but not limited to - a review of all Council long-term investment, a Borough-wide engagement via an Innovation Lab, a Conference of Ideas, and	Councillors Walker & Egan	23 June 2021	Environment Committee – October 2021 (deferred from September Committee)	Agreed	TBC	

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	values-based recommendations for next steps.						
20.10.2021	That officers bring back a report to consider the option of transferring responsibility for bins which are currently the responsibility of the Parks Section into the Environment Directorate.	Alderman McIlveen & Councillor Cathcart	Council November 2021	Community & Wellbeing December 2021	Agreed	Report to C&WC April 2022.  Report to October 2022 C&WC	Further consideration by Officers update report to future C&W Committee
3.11.2021	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	Councillor Douglas & Alderman Wilson	Council November 2021	Regeneration & Development December 2021	Agreed	Report update to Place & Prosperity Committee – Feb 2023	Urban Team working up a scheme which will be forwarded to DfI for approval.



TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	Council addressing how this can be achieved as a pilot for the Borough.						
31.12.21	Coastal and Storm Damage to Ballywalter Harbour, repair costs and reinstatement costs	Councillors Adair and Edmund	Council January 22	Environment February 2022	Agreed	TBC	Report to be brought back to future Committee - TBC
09.03.22	Calls for Council responsibility for a devolved Regeneration Budget	Councillor Walker and Alderman McDowell	Council - March 22	Regeneration and Development Committee – April 22	Agreed	Reported to Oct R&D Committee	Ratified by Oct Council. Ltr to be issued to Perm Sec as DfC Minister not in place.
13.04.22	Environmental damage caused by modern day packaging	Councillors McRandal and Douglas	Council – April 2022	Environment Committee – June 2022	Agreed - ratified by June Council		Report to be brought back - TBC.
14.04.22	Locking up schedule for Playparks	Alderman Irvine and Alderman Keery	Council – April 2022	Community & Wellbeing Committee May 2022	Agreed (to be ratified by April Council)	Report to Oct 2022 C&WC	Local Consultation to be undertaken by Officers and further report to be brought back

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
							to future C&W committee
10.05.22	Discussions with EA re redevelopment of the play area fronting Victoria Primary School as a potential Peace Plus project for Ballywalter	Councillors Adair and Edmund	Council – May 2022	Community and Wellbeing June 2022	Agreed	TBC	Waiting Ratification at Council.
17.05.22	2028 Centenary of the internationally renowned Ards TT races. Asking Council how best to commemorate this important sporting anniversary.	Alderman McIlveen and Councillor Kennedy	Council – May 2022	Community and Wellbeing June 2022	Agreed	TBC	Officers considering report to be brought back to future C&W Committee
19.05.2022	Business case for redesign of the parallel sports pitches and facilities at Park Way, Comber	Councillors Cummings and Johnson	Council – June 2022	Community and Wellbeing Committee – September 2022 – deferred to October 2022		TBC	Officers considering report to be brought back to future C&W Committee

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
20.06.2022	Review of health and safety process re community groups	Councillors MacArthur, Brooks, T Smith and Kennedy	Council – June 2022	Corporate Services Committee – Sept 2022 - deferred to October 2022	Agreed		Subject to ratification at October Council, further report to follow.
20.06.2022	Report exploring the possibility of introducing a policy that shows commitment to supporting the wellbeing of our workforce by ensuring appropriate support is available to anyone undergoing IVF.	Councillor Greer and Councillor McKee	Council – June 2022	Corporate Services Committee – Sept 2022 – deferred to October 2022	Agreed		Subject to ratification at October Council, further report to follow.
21.06.2022	Widening the Council's use of digital technology (in particular QR codes) to promote and provide information about statues, built heritage and monuments	Alderman McIlveen and Alderman Armstrong-Cotter	Council – June 2022	Community and Wellbeing Committee – September 2022 – deferred to October 2022		Report to December C&WC	
21.06.2022	Engagement with relevant community stakeholders to	Councillors Kendall,	Council - June 2022	Community and Wellbeing Committee			Officers considering

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	ascertain community need and desires in respect of the Queen's Leisure Complex	McRandal and McClean		- September 2022 - deferred to October 2022			report to be brought back to future C&W Committee
5.07.2022	<p>That this Council changes the name of Queen's Parade to Queen's Platinum Jubilee Parade in honour and recognition of the 70th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne.</p> <p>*** Amendment Received from Councillor Cathcart</p> <p>That this Council, in recognition of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee and her conferment of City Status upon Bangor, agrees to name an appropriate place or building within Bangor in her honour and that future Council Bangor entrance</p>	Alderman Irvine & Keery	Council - July 2022	Environment Committee - September 2022	Amdt agreed.		Sept 2022 - Recommendation to Council that item is referred to CSC and Report to be brought to a future meeting

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	signs make reference to Bangor being a Platinum Jubilee City.						
19.07.2022	<p>This Council notes with concern that a number of planted trees in urban settings along roads which have died or have been removed but not replaced; Notes the importance of environmental and social benefits of such trees in the built environment;</p> <p>Notes that DfI Roads formerly had a partnership arrangement with Belfast parks for the replacement of trees but that this partnership ended some time ago;</p> <p>That Council officers are tasked with opening</p>	Alderman McIlveen & Councillor Cathcart	Council – July 2022	Community and Wellbeing Committee – September 2022 Deferred to October 2022		TBC	Meeting with DfI Roads and DAERA to be organised. Officers will bring back a report thereafter.

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	discussions with DfI Roads and DAERA with a view to exploring the possibility of a partnership which will involve the supply and replacement of lost trees in the Borough and then providing a report to Council for further consideration.						
22.06.2022	That Council task officers to carry out a review of Play Provision in Loughries with a view to its inclusion in the Councils Play Strategy going forward.	Councillor Adair and Councillor Thompson	Council – August 2022	Community and Wellbeing Committee – September 2022 – deferred to October 2022		Report to December 2022 C&WC	
29.6.2022	That this Council notes with concern the significant impact rising energy costs are having on households across Northern Ireland; recognises the need for ongoing intervention from every level of Government and agrees to write to Her	Councillor P Smith and Councillor Smart	Council – August 2022	Agreed to accept NOM to be heard at Council and amended to include:  This Council also resolves to write to the Dept. for Communities to	Letters sent from CEx to SoS and Minister. Response received from DfC.	Report to December 2022 C&WC	

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
DATE RECEIVED	NOTICE	SUBMITTED BY	COUNCIL MEETING DATE	COMMITTEE REFERRED TO	OUTCOME OF COMMITTEE WHERE NOM DEBATED	MONTH IT WILL BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMITTEE	OTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	Majesty's Treasury to impress upon them in the absence of a functioning Northern Ireland Executive the need to urgently deliver the energy bills support scheme to households here.			request a special fund for Councils in relation to the Cost-of-Living crisis in order to-  a. provide for the direct provision of localised responses; and  b. assist local community and voluntary organisations  Any such support would be additional to that provided by the Westminster Government and at Northern Ireland level.			

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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5.7.2022	That this Council writes and calls on the Minister for Infrastructure to reduce the speed limit down to 30mph at the A48 Cotton Road after the latest road accident and fatality.	Aldermen Keery and Irvine	Council – August 2022	Corporate Committee – September 2022 – deferred to October 2022	Agreed	Letter sent by CEx to DfI and response considered at December CSC.	Subject to ratification at December Council.
29.07.2022	That this council withdraws all funding to any sporting organisations with any political objectives or named references to terrorism in their constitution, club names, stadiums or competitions, and tasks officers to bring back a report outlining the specific relevant council policy.	Cllrs Cooper, T Smith and Councillor Irvine	Council – August 2022	Corporate Committee – September 2022 – deferred to October 2022	Agreed with amdt		Further report to follow – details which will come via C&WC  Meeting with Proposer requested to discuss and C&W Officers awaiting a response
3.08.2022	We ask this council to consider the urgent provision of sea rescue	Cllrs	Council August 2022	Environment Committee – September 2022	Agreed	Report brought to EC Dec	Subject to ratification at



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	equipment to Cove Bay beach, known locally as the third beach, in Groomspont. A review into other locations around the Borough, should also be considered.	Chambers and Brooks				2022 and agreed	December Council
14.08.2022	That this council notes the widespread move to low traffic neighbourhoods in city centres across the UK and Europe and tasks officers with producing a report detailing the steps involved in progressing a project for Bangor City Centre. The report should highlight the benefits that a low traffic neighbourhood can bring, including how it could support the Council's ambitions to revive local retail and hospitality, encourage active travel,	Alderman Wilson and Councillor Douglas	Council August 2022	Corporate Committee – September 2022 – deferred to October 2022	Agreed		Further report to follow via the Environment Committee

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	support families, and play a positive role in tackling climate change. A preliminary consultation should also take place to obtain views and ideas directly from City Centre businesses, residents, and other relevant stakeholders.						
22.08.22	Street Clutter Audit for the Borough	Councillor Dunlop and Councillor Douglas	September 2022	Environment Committee – October 2022	Agreed	Reported to October 2022 EC Committee and ratified at October 2022 Council.	Report to be brought to future Committee
14.09.22	Care Workers and Penalty Charge Notices for Parking	Councillor Cathcart and Councillor Gilmour	September 2022	Corporate Services Committee – October 2022 - deferred to November 2022		To be considered at CSC November 2022	TBC
19.09.22	Establishment of an Animal Abuse Register for the Borough and write to the	Councillor T Smith and	September 2022	Environment Committee October 2022	Agreed	Reported to October 2022 EC Committee	Report to be brought to

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	DAERA Minister to ask for the introduction of Lucy's Law and Reggie's Law for Northern Ireland.	Councillor Cooper Amendment received from Councillor Woods				and ratified at October 2022 Council.	future Committee.
21.09.22	Humane control of Pigeons in Conway Square, Newtownards	Alderman McIlveen and Alderman Armstrong-Cotter	September 2022	Environment Committee 2022	Agreed	Reported to October 2022 EC Committee and ratified at October 2022 Council.	Report to be brought to future Committee.
21.09.22	That this Council notes with concern the situation regarding Priory Surgery, with the potential of services ceasing from February 2023 affecting over 14,000 patients across Bangor West and Holywood.	Councillor McRandal and Alderman Wilson and Councillor Irwin	October 2022	Corporate Services Committee – November 2022			Subject to ratification –  Letter to be sent - TBC

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	We ask that this Council calls for a deputation from the Department of Health and British Medical Association alongside the Royal College of Surgeons to discuss options for the practice should partners not be found to take over the contract. Given the urgency of the situation, this should happen at the earliest possible opportunity.						
7.10.22	That this Council opts out of the Service Level Agreement Commitments, under Item 5, in the Community and Wellbeing Committee in January 2022 and subsequently ratified in Council in January and will write to all other Councils in Northern Ireland to urge them to follow our lead.	Councillor Cooper and Councillor S Irvine	October 2022	Community & Wellbeing Committee – November 2022			Deferred and awaiting confirmation from proposer on next steps

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12.10.22	In light of the fact that the Coronation of King Charles III will take place on 6 May 2023, this Council tasks officers to make provision for community celebrations across the Ards and North Down Borough Council area, and tasks them to allow for this in the forthcoming rate setting process.	Councillor MacArthur and Councillor Gilmour	October 2022	Corporate Services Committee – November 2022			Officers considering report to future C&W Committee.
17.10.22	This Council reviews its policies in relation to the Northern Ireland Protocol; Provides a list to Members of what measures are currently undertaken in the implementation of that Protocol;  Highlights which of these measures being taken by	Alderman McIlveen and Alderman Armstrong-Cotter	October 2022	N/A	Heard and Agreed at Council October 2022		Consultation has taken place with Councils solicitors and a draft report has been submitted to John Larkin. Awaiting feedback and

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	<p>the Council are obligatory and which are discretionary;</p> <p>And in the meantime, ceases actions which relate to the now expired Service Level Agreement with Casueway Coast and Glens Council and reverts to actions undertaken pre-Service Level Agreement.</p> <p>Council requests that officers action these matters with due urgency in order that Members may take any necessary actions without undue delay.</p>						<p>consultation meeting to discuss.</p> <p>Report to be brought back to C&amp;W Committee as soon as possible.</p>
18.10.22	That this Council recognises the important contribution of Strangford Integrated College to Integrated Education in the Ards and	Councillor Moore and Alderman McDowell	October 2022	Community & Wellbeing Committee – November 2022			TBC

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	North Down Borough and writes to the school offering congratulations on the event of their 25th anniversary.						
9.11.22	That Council task officers to work with The National Trust to source external funding to develop and regenerate the Car Park at both Glastry Clay Pits & Knockinelder Bay for the benefit of residents and tourists alike in seeking to deliver the Councils Tourism Strategy for the Ards Peninsula	Councillors Adair & Thompson	November 2022	Regeneration and Development Committee - December 2022	Agreed – awaiting ratification at Dec Council		Further report to be brought back.
10.11.22	That this Council requests officers bring back a report on the possibility of serving an Urgent Works Notice on the owners of Ballyrolly House, Millisle, in light of its status as a Grade B2 listed building which is in a perilous state.	Councillors Irwin and McAlpine	November 2022	Planning Committee - February 2023			

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15.11.22	That this Council recognises the difficulties faced by local businesses during this 'cost of doing business crisis' especially on business cash flow. The Council will therefore review the current requirement or advanced payments for Council bin collection services to help ease cash flow issues. An officers' report will be brought back to the appropriate committee.	Councillors Cathcart and Councillor Gilmour	November 2022	Environment Committee - December 2022	Agreed	To be ratified at Council - December 2022.	
16.11.22	That Council officers open discussions with Historic Environment Division regarding the return of the 13th century 'Movilla Stones' to the Borough and the provision of a suitable site for these to be located. Officers are also tasked with promoting these extremely important archaeological artefacts in the	Alderman McIlveen & Councillor Cummings	November 2022	Community & Wellbeing - December 2022			



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	local community and local schools when the stones have been returned.						