

November 28th, 2022

Notice Of Meeting

You are requested to attend the meeting to be held on **Wednesday, 30th November 2022** at **7:00 pm** in **Council Chamber, Town Hall, The Castle, Bangor.**

Agenda

Agenda

[C 30.11.2022 Agenda.pdf](#)

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1. **Prayer**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
- 4 **Mayor's Business**
- 5 **Mayor and Deputy Mayor Engagements for the Month of November 2022**

(To follow)

- 6 **Minutes of Council Meeting held on 26 October 2022 (Copy attached)**

(Minutes attached)

[C 26.10.22 MinutesPM.pdf](#)

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7 **Minutes of Committees**

- 7.1 **Planning Committee dated 1 November 2022 (Copy attached)**

Copy attached.

[221101 PC MinutesPM.pdf](#)

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- 7.2 **Environment Committee dated 2 November 2022 (Copy attached)**

Copy attached.

[EC.02.11.22 Minutes PM.pdf](#)

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- 7.3 **Regeneration and Development Committee dated 3 November 2022 (Copy attached)**

[RDC 03.11.2022 MinutesPM.pdf](#)

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- 7.4 **Corporate Services Committee dated 8 November 2022 (Copy attached)**
📄 *221108 CS MinutesPM.pdf* *Page 93*
- 7.5 **Community and Wellbeing Committee dated 9 November 2022 (Copy attached)**
📄 *CWB 09.11.2022 MinutesPM.pdf* *Page 121*
- 7.6 **Minutes of Meeting of Special Corporate Services Committee dated 17 November 2022 (copy attached)**
📄 *CS 17.11.22 MinutesPM.pdf* *Page 170*

8. Consultation Documents

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

Consultation documents available: [Waterways Ireland | About Us | Public Consultations](#)

Consultation closes 10 January 2023 at 4.00pm (Correspondence attached)

- 📄 *8.1.Waterways Consultation.pdf* *Page 172*
- 📄 *8.1.Waterways Draft Disability AP23-25.pdf* *Page 174*
- 📄 *8.1.Waterways Draft Equality AP23-25.pdf* *Page 193*

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

The Draft Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 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.

 **8.2. DoJ - Draft Planning Fees.pdf** **Page 210**

 **8.2 Department of Justice Consultation on Fees Regarding Planning Appeals.pdf** **Page 212**

 **8.2 PACWAC Consultation.pdf** **Page 214**

8.3. DfI – Public Consultation on Miscarriage Leave and Pay

DfI – Public Consultation on Miscarriage Leave and Pay <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/dfe/miscarriage-leave-and-pay-consultation/>

Consultation closes 19 December 2022 at 5pm

 **8.3. MLP Consultation- Dear Consultee (Eq).PDF** **Page 232**

8.4. NIPB Corporate Plan 2023

NIPB Corporate Plan 2023 [Corporate Plan 2023-25 Consultation | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://nipolicingboard.org.uk)

Consultation closes 16 January 2023 at noon (Correspondence attached)

 **8.4. NIPB Consultation Form.pdf** **Page 234**

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

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/BVD-herd-restrictions>

Consultation closes 20 December 2022 (Correspondence attached)

 **8.5. DAERA Consultation.pdf** **Page 236**

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

[Abuse of Position of Trust Offences: Extension of the Law – A Call for Evidence | Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

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Consultation closes on 22 December 2022 at 12pm

 **8.6. DoJ Consultation.pdf**

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

[Public consultation on future of Muckamore Abbey Hospital | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Consultation closes on 24 January 2023 (Correspondence attached)

 **8.7. Muckamore Consultation.pdf**

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

Documents available
at: www.boundarycommission.org.uk/2023-review-parliamentary-constituencies

Consultation closes on 15 December 2022

(Correspondence attached)


 **8.8. Boundary Commission.pdf**

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9. Deputation Request from Ards and North Down Dance School

(Report attached)

 **9. Deputation Request Report - AND Dance.pdf** *Page 242*

 **9. Deputation - Proposal.pdf** *Page 243*

 **9.. Deputation Request Form - Ards and North Down Dance Club.pdf** *Page 251*

10. Deputation Request from Holywood Football Club


Report attached.

 **10. Deputation Request Report - Holywood Football Club.pdf** *Page 252*

 **10. Deputation Request Form - HFC November 23rd 2022.pdf** *Page 254*

11. Schedule of Meetings 2023

Report attached.

 **11. Schedule of Meetings 2023.pdf** *Page 260*

 **11 appendix 1 Schedule of Meetings ANDBC 2023.pdf** *Page 262*

12. Nomination to Northern Ireland Museums Council

Report attached.

 **12. Nomination to Northern Ireland Museums Council.pdf** *Page 265*

13. Grant of Entertainment Licence

Report attached.

 **13. Grant of Entertainment Licence DL.pdf** *Page 266*

14. Cemetery Pricing

Report attached

 **14. Cemetery Pricing.pdf** *Page 268*

 **14. Appendix Cemetery Pricing 2023-24.pdf** *Page 270*

15. Delegated Authority for Place and Prosperity Committee 5 January 2023 to approve LMP tenders

Report attached

 *15. Delegated Authority for LMP programmes.pdf*

Page 272

16. Continuation of Bangor Aurora Joint Management Committee

Report attached.

 *16. Continuation of Bangor Aurora Joint Management Committee.pdf*

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16.1 Choice Housing Annual Report 2021/22 Update

Report attached.

 *16.1 Choice Housing letter response.pdf*

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17. Sealing Documents

 *17. Sealing Documents November.pdf*

Page 278

18. Transfer of Rights of Burial

 *18. Transfers of Rights of Burial.pdf*

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19. Notice of Motion Status Report (Report attached)

Report attached.

 *19. NOM Covering Report - November.pdf*

Page 280

 *19.1 NOM Tracker November 2022.pdf*

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20. Notices of Motion

20.1 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 Park at Knockinelder Bay for the benefit of residents and tourists alike in seeking to deliver the Councils Tourism Strategy for the Ards Peninsula

20.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Irwin and 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.

20.3 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.

20.4 Notice of Motion submitted by Alderman McIlveen and Councillor Cummings

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 local community and local schools when the stones have been returned.

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)

 a) <i>Department of Health Press Release.pdf</i>	<i>Page 299</i>
 b) <i>October 2022 Newsletter.pdf</i>	<i>Page 301</i>
 c) <i>DfE Consultation on Period Products.pdf</i>	<i>Page 310</i>
 d) <i>DAERA - Summary of Consultation Resopnses.pdf</i>	<i>Page 311</i>
 e) <i>Energy Strategy E-bulletin - Issue 19 - Final.pdf</i>	<i>Page 312</i>
 f) <i>DoF BusinessRates Update.pdf</i>	<i>Page 319</i>

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

21. Extension of Contract for Provision of Corporate Uniform, Casual Uniform, Leisure Uniform and Protective Workwear (Report attached)

****IN CONFIDENCE****

Report attached.

 21. <i>Extension of Uniform Contract Report.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
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22. Filling of Directors posts and Changes to Committee

****IN CONFIDENCE****

Report attached.

 22. <i>Filling of Directors posts and Changes to Committee Responsibilities.pdf</i>	<i>Not included</i>
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23. Delegated Authority to sign SLA with Tourism NI for Market Led Product Development Programme 2022/23 (Report

attached)

****IN CONFIDENCE****

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
|  23. Delegated Authority TNI Market Led Programme SLA 2223.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |
|  23. Appendix 1 Market Led Product Development Programme 22-23 Submission Form 23 Nov ANDBC.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |
|  23. Appendix 2 Market Led Product Development Programme 22-23 Activity Summary Table 23 Nov ANDBC.xls | <i>Not included</i> |

24. Call-In Rescinding Motion on Office Rationalisation

****IN CONFIDENCE****

Report attached

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
|  24. Call in of Rescinding Motion.pdf | <i>Not included</i> |
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ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

24 November 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby invited to attend a meeting of Ards and North Down Borough Council which will be held at the Town Hall, The Castle, Bangor on **Wednesday, 30 November 2022 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 (Copy attached)
6. Minutes of Council meeting dated 26 October 2022 (Copy to attached)
7. Minutes of Committees (copies attached)
 - 7.1. Minutes of Planning Committee dated 1 November 2022
 - 7.2. Minutes of Meeting of Environment Committee dated 2 November 2022
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- f) DoF Business Rates Update (Correspondence attached)

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22. Filling of Directors posts and changes to Committee (Report attached)
23. Delegated Authority to sign SLA with Tourism NI for Market Led Product Development Programme 2022/23 (Report attached)
24. 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 (Deputy Mayor)	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 (Mayor)	Councillor Walker
Councillor S Dunlop	Councillor Woods

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Ards and North Down Borough Council was held remotely using Zoom on Wednesday, 26 October 2022 commencing at 7.00pm.

In the Chair: The Mayor (Councillor Douglas)

Aldermen:

Armstrong-Cotter	Keery
Gibson	McDowell
Girvan	McIlveen
W Irvine	Wilson

Councillors:

Adair	Kennedy
Blaney	McAlpine
Boyle	McClellan
Cathcart	McKee
Chambers	McKimm
Cooper	McRandal
Cummings (7.44)	Moore
Edmund	Smart
Gilmour	P Smith
Greer	T Smith
S Irvine	Thompson
Irwin	Walker
Johnson	

Officers: Chief Executive (S Reid), Director of Organisational Development and Administration (W Swanston), Director of Community and Wellbeing (G Bannister), Director of Finance and Performance (S Christie), Director of Regeneration, Development & Planning (S McCullough), Director of Environment (D Lindsay), Head of Communications and Marketing (C Jackson), Democratic Services Manager (J Wilson) and Democratic Services Officer (H Loebnau)

1. PRAYER

The Mayor (Councillor Douglas), welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Chief Executive read the Council prayer.

NOTED.

2. APOLOGIES

An apology for lateness had been received from Councillor Cummings. Apologies for non-attendance were received from Aldermen Carson and M Smith, and Councillors Brooks, Dunlop, MacArthur and Woods.

NOTED.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Chambers Item 6.1 - Matter Arising – Item 8.4 Community and Wellbeing Minutes – Leisure Target Operating Model
Alderman W Irvine Item 6.1 – Matter Arising – Item 8.4 Community and Wellbeing Minutes – Leisure Target Operating Model

NOTED.

4. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

The Mayor offered her congratulations to Donaghadee and Comber, as towns which had been recognised as representing the top of Northern Ireland's horticultural talent in Translink's Ulster in Bloom Competition. Donaghadee had taken top prize in the town category and Comber had been placed second. Holywood, Groomsport, Donaghadee and Bangor had also been accredited in the Best Kept Awards 2022 and she praised all of those involved in achieving that success and helping to make the Borough such an attractive place to work, live and visit.

She reported that in the past week she had chaired a meeting for elected representatives from Westminster, Stormont, and local government along with local businesses to hear about the challenges being faced within the economy and what support was being made available from government sources. It had been very useful and a number of actions had been taken away by the elected representatives.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman Irvine, seconded by Alderman Girvan, that the Mayor's comments be noted.

5. MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ENGAGEMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2022

(Appendix I)

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

The Mayor described that October had been a busy month of engagements and she had visited numerous places across the Borough. One of the highlights had been meeting citizens living with cancer, using their time to volunteer to raise funds and awareness for Macmillan Cancer Support in both Cloughey and Bangor.

She and the Chief Executive had been delighted to welcome HMS Magpie to Bangor and had met the crew and enjoyed a tour of the ship. The Kirkistown Castle open day, marking its 400th Anniversary, had been a fantastic afternoon, and many residents within the local community had enjoyed visiting the Castle for the first time

and also the many activities on offer. She put on record her thanks to the Arts and Heritage Manager, and the Council team for organising the day and for Councillors Adair and Edmund who had brought the anniversary to the attention of the Council.

The Mayor had also visited Portaferry Integrated Primary School and Portaferry In Bloom to help them tidy up the local community orchard there which had been very enjoyable.

She put on record her thanks to the Festival Director for Aspects Literature Festival, which had been hugely successful with very positive feedback received from those who had attended.

Finally, the Mayor reported that she had attended the fifth anniversary of K9 Search and Rescue Team, an organisation which had been set up by a local Bangor man. That team had volunteered to assist the community at Creeslough, County Donegal, in the aftermath of the recent tragedy in that place.

In concluding the Mayor asked Members to observe a moment of reflection for those who had lost their lives at Creeslough which was agreed.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Blaney, that the information be noted.

6. MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Copy of the above minutes.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the minutes be agreed.

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

6.1. Matter Arising - Item 8.4 Community and Wellbeing Minutes - Leisure Target Operating Model

The Chair said that Item 6.1 would be heard later in the meeting In Committee.

7. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

7.1. Minutes of Planning Committee dated 4 October 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

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

7.2. Minutes of Environment Committee dated 5 October 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

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

In respect of Item 5 – Recycling Engagement Campaigns Report

Councillor P Smith referred to that item and had some questions for the Director seeking clarity on what had been discussed since he was not a member of the committee. The Member was of the understanding that the Council had in place procedures to help people who were among those considered to be more vulnerable within the community such as the elderly or those who experienced mobility issues. The Director confirmed that that was correct and that such a system was well embedded into the Council's processes and that that would continue in respect of any requirement for a person to use the services of a Household Recycling Centre. Every other person in the Borough who was not exempt was expected to travel to the Household Recycling Centre to accompany their own waste.

In respect of a question in relation to the size of domestic trailers and the impact of those going forward the Director explained that the Council permitted cars with a single axle trailer but experience had led officers to believe that there were a number of individuals who were running a commercial enterprise and utilising a single axle trailer for waste disposal. Most other Councils within Northern Ireland referred to the size of trailer that could be used for the disposal of household waste and it was believed that Ards and North Down should follow that thereby creating a more robust system for users and discouraging commercial users from taking advantage.

Those were the two issues that members of the Environment Committee were seeking to explore with a further report and everything within the report except for those issues were considered to be acceptable to Members.

The Director explained that officers were of the view that the requirement to accompany waste by a householder would be acceptable to all but a small minority. A marketing campaign was underway with the Council's Communications section to help explain why changes were required urgently and what they would mean for households. Due to the uncertainty of the points already discussed that campaign would need to be more vague than would have been desired. Householders were due to receive that information within the coming weeks in a postal drop.

Councillor P Smith expressed concern that the Council might be sending a mixed message to the public and applauded it for the initiatives which it planned to introduce which would go some way in meeting the target recycling rate set as 70% by 2030. The Council's recycling rate currently stood at 48.3% so there would be a long road to travel although the benefits of reduced costs of landfilling waste were clear. In his opinion if the set targets were to be achieved, he agreed with officers that radical changes in behaviour would be necessary.

Councillor P Smith proposed an amendment which was seconded by Councillor Boyle that: 'Council approves the proposals set out in the report, including consolidated policy documents in appendices 1 & 2, and requires officers to report back to the next Environment Committee with a more detailed process on how those

unable to attend the HRC in person in a van or with a trailer due to physical incapacity will be facilitated'.

Councillor P Smith thought that the Council should be clear that businesses should not be using the services of Household Recycling Centres. Ards and North Down had a higher use of those centres than any other Council in Northern Ireland and the misuse of those facilities needed to be addressed in the interest of all ratepayers locally. It was right that clarity be brought with a policy that was clear, accessible and well communicated. If anyone wished to bring a larger trailer on to those sites a permit could be sought. It was hoped that significant progress could be made since waste disposal was a major cost to the Council budget and excessive landfill was also not in the interest of the local environment.

Councillor Boyle thought that Members would not be surprised to hear that he also believed that tough decisions needed to be made if the Council was to avoid huge costs and fines in the future. He considered that there had been years of talk on this matter and now was the time for action.

Alderman McIlveen was surprised that no one had considered the risks to women with the proposal and it was not simply correct to think of vulnerable people as simply those who were elderly or unwell. He gave the example of a single mother who might have to leave her children to travel in a van with a relative stranger to dispose of household waste. It was for that reason that he believed that an alternative arrangement was necessary and that Members should be mindful of the safety of the Borough's residents. In terms of trailer sizes he thought that that should also be reconsidered in light of the impact it may have on genuine users.

Councillor Cathcart thought that it had been odd that Councillor P Smith was asking questions to the Director at the meeting and wondered why he had proposed what he had when he could have clarified the reasons directly with officers. The committee had suggested some exemptions for further consideration due to what had been considered by some as a lack of information. He stated that he genuinely wanted to bring improvements to how HRCs operated but some Members were still holding legitimate concerns.

Councillor Edmund rejected the suggestion that some Members were delaying making the necessary decisions but rather thought that he and others were exercising due diligence. He did not think that a single axle trailer could be significantly larger than what had been suggested and thought that the Council was making life more difficult for domestic ratepayers rather than commercial operators.

(Councillor Chambers left the meeting at 7.40 pm)

The Director explained that the rules were being brought because there was reason to believe that the system at HRCs was being abused. He assured Members that it was the Council's duty to look at what it was doing and review decisions in light of that information. He stressed that it was certainly not the officers' intention to provide a poorer quality of service to residents but rather to protect those ratepayers from excessive waste disposal costs that they were not responsible for. He reported that officers had noticed that some single axle trailers had been modified and when

Ards and North Down Borough Council had had looked at other practice regionally it was shown that on average a household trailer size of 6 x 4 feet was stated for most Councils.

Alderman Irvine agreed that he would not support the amendment thinking that ratepayers had every right to use a third party to help them transport their waste and did not see how that could increase the rates of recycling. He thought the permit required could be given to the person responsible for transporting the waste so that it was unnecessary for the householder to travel to the site. He thought that the population at large should not have to suffer because there were some who were abusing the system.

Councillor T Smith had not been impressed with the report and would not support the amendment since he believed that it felt like the Council was making it more and more difficult for people to use HRCs. Waste disposal was paid for through Rates and many people considered this to be the only service the Council offered that they had a benefit from. He added that he would oppose the amendment.

(Councillor Chambers entered the meeting at 7.44 pm)

Councillor McKee could also not support the amendment since it had called for more information and he did not think that that had been unreasonable. He added that no one disagreed that there were tough choices that needed to be made but it would be welcomed to have a little more information on attendance in person, trailer sizes and the lingering issue of pedestrian access at the Holywood site. He wanted to see facts before decisions were made but the majority of what had been laid out in the report was permitted to proceed.

Councillor Adair would not support the amendment stating that ratepayers were worth more than the proposals within the report. He remarked that it was important to make the best decisions based on fact and he considered what was on offer would affect the most vulnerable. He pointed to the low levels of car ownership in some areas and thought that those communities would be most adversely affected by the changes proposed.

Councillor McKimm was shocked and believed that many people were missing the significance of what society now faced. He urged them to remember that a climate catastrophe was being faced. Human behaviour was required to change and if anyone wished to put residents first, they must consider that fact. Levels of consumption and waste should be urgently reduced, and he would keep pushing to make progress on those matters and would support the amendment.

Councillor Greer referred to the concerns that Alderman McIlveen had raised regarding women in particular and she asked if exceptions could be made to the policy in certain circumstances if residents such as those made contact with the Council.

The Director agreed that they would be and reported that some people were already registered to designate someone else to represent them. The vast majority of people could manage their waste without to need to hire a commercial company but

the Council would advise and make exceptions as appropriate. He added that a permit could not be given to a commercial enterprise to take waste on the behalf of a resident since there would be nothing to stop that enterprise from gathering up waste and bringing it with the permit secured waste. What was suggested would add an extra level of reassurance that Council facilities were being used correctly.

He added that the disposal of waste was not a trivial matter and it was important that everyone took responsibility for their own. The legislation placed a duty of care on the householder for their own waste and officers had not felt it was unreasonable for a person to accompany their own waste to an HRC. That was the rationale but if anyone came to the Council with an exceptional issue or concern then the Council would help to address that need. If these proposals were not supported ultimately the cost of waste disposal would be passed to ratepayers who may themselves be struggling with the current increased cost of living. Councillor Greer stated that she would support the amendment and thanked the officers for what they were trying to achieve.

Before the Environment Committee meeting earlier in the month Alderman Armstrong-Cotter had been unaware that it was illegal to transport another person's waste. She took issue with a person having to phone the Council to explain why they were not happy to get into the van of a commercial operator and she was sceptical of Council staff having the ability to deem what was an acceptable exemption.

Councillor Gilmour stressed the importance of the Council having a clear policy and in response to Councillor McKimm's comments she was unsure about how this matter affected climate change.

Alderman Wilson questioned if there was any reason why people could not use the services of the private sector to move their waste. The Director replied that many Councils did not permit commercial operators to bring waste at all to HRCs. Councils were not obliged to take waste where a profit had been made and he went on to say that the law around the area was messy. Where Councils did permit such businesses, they made a charge for it. The Director compared the position to one of hiring a skip to dispose of waste. In that case a householder was paying the business to dispose of its waste and costs were built in accordingly for disposal. The Member was content with that and would support the amendment since it would benefit the vast majority of the population.

(Councillor Chambers left the meeting at 8.12 pm).

In summing up and as Chair of the Environment Committee Alderman McDowell considered that the original proposal which had been brought before the Environment Committee was quite a major compromise on the part of Council officers and he believed the Council's actions could have gone further in helping to reduce levels of waste. What was being permitted in this Council area was much more lenient than in other Councils across Northern Ireland and he was happy to support the amendment.

At this stage Alderman McIlveen requested a recorded vote.

On the Councillor P Smith's amendment being put to the meeting with 16 voting For, 17 voting Against and 7 Absent it FELL.

FOR (16)	AGAINST (17)	ABSTAINING (0)	ABSENT (7)
Aldermen	Aldermen		Aldermen
Girvan	Armstrong -		Carson
McDowell	Cotter		M Smith
Wilson	Gibson		Councillors
Councillors	W Irvine		Brooks
Boyle	Keery		Chambers
Blaney	Mclveen		Dunlop
Douglas	Councillors		MacArthur
Greer	Adair		Woods
Irwin	Cathcart		
McAlpine	Cooper		
McClellan	Cummings		
McKimm	Edmund		
McRandal	Gilmour		
Moore	Irvine		
Smart	Johnson		
P Smith	Kennedy		
Walker	McKee		
	T Smith		
	Thompson		

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman McDowell, seconded by Councillor McKee, that the minutes be adopted.

Councillor T Smith asked to be recorded as against.

7.3. Minutes of Regeneration and Development Committee dated 6 October 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

Proposed by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor McKimm, that the minutes be adopted.

In respect of Item 10 – Economic Impact Assessment of Pipe Band Championship in Castle Park, Bangor, May 2022

Councillor Gilmour raised a matter of accuracy in this item where she had been quoted. Where it currently read "She added that she would be happy for it to take place in both towns." That was inaccurate and should read, "She added she had previously supported trying out the pipe bands championships at the two venues as Ards airfield was an untested venue, to then allow the Council to make an informed choice. She voiced concerns that hosting the championship at Ards airfield was twice the price of Castle Park and that Newtownards traders had noted a downturn in

trade in the town on the day but stated it was important to hear from the RSPBANI. Councillor Gilmour emphasised the importance of Members having that information before being asked to make a decision on the matter.”

That amendment to the accuracy of the minutes was agreed.

In respect of Item 3.1 – Presentation by President of Bangor Chamber of Commerce, Geoff Thompson

Councillor McKimm raised a matter of accuracy on this Item and asked that ‘architectural heritage’ should be amended to read ‘architectural inheritance’.

In respect of Item 10 – Economic Impact Assessment of Pipe Band Championship in Castle Park, Bangor, May 2022

Alderman McIlveen proposed ‘that the Council do not proceed with the invitation to RSPBANI and instead note the report that was there before’. That was seconded by Alderman Armstrong-Cotter.

Alderman McIlveen did not agree that the RSPBANI should be invited to join in what he thought was the pettiness of some North Down Councillors. He remembered Alliance Councillors saying when the decision was taken to alternate the venue between Bangor and Newtownards that they would continue to review it and now it seemed that Councillor McClean had taken up that baton and made it quite clear that he considered the Pipe Band Championships to be a Bangor event and that it should stay in Bangor.

He considered that to be garbage since both legacy Councils had proud histories of supporting that event. In fact, he had been proud Chieftain for the Day when he had been Mayor of the former Ards Borough Council. In his opinion the problem had arisen following the mergers of the two Councils and so he saw the solution to that as either running two events or alternate them between the two main towns. He considered it wholly inappropriate for Bangor to Hoover up all of the Council’s events.

He noted that Councillor McClean had said that he was simply asking for RSBPANI to be invited to put forward its views on the event going forward but he felt that the Member was being disingenuous. RSBPANI should not be asked for its preference when it had indicated that previously that the location was a matter for the Council to decide. He insisted that the Pipe Band Championships were not a Bangor event and they were not unique to Bangor but rather were a Borough event. To keep them just in Bangor would, in his opinion, be denying Ards its history and tradition.

Alderman McIlveen made it clear that regardless of any vote if any changes were made to the Ards event he would not hesitate to call in the decision. The request had been brought simply, he felt, because Bangor Councillors had not learned to share and to recognise that they were part of a larger Borough. He called for some maturity on the matter, if the event could be improved he asked that officers be left to do their jobs. If it was a matter of communicating better with towns, the Council should do that. It would be wrong to use the views of traders within Newtownards on one day as a flag of convenience to move the event permanently to Bangor. He

could not accept the proposal to do that and asked for Members to support him. He asked for the officers' report to be noted and continue to alternate the pipe band championships between Bangor and Newtownards each year.

At this point Alderman Armstrong-Cotter reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Irvine asked if there had been agreement on how to proceed when the Councils were merged and if so, why should that now be changed. He considered that the wealth that the competition brought to local towns be shared for the benefit of the entire Borough.

Councillor Gilmour said that she could not support Alderman McIlveen believing that the legacy Ards Borough Council had held the event in the Airfield and an economic appraisal was to have been carried out for that location. All that was being asked for was information to get an idea of the best location and to make a more informed decision going forward. She pointed out that the event was more expensive to run at the Airfield and comments from the local businesses in Ards should also be considered. She asked why those opinions should not be heard.

(Councillor Chambers entered the meeting at 8.30 pm)

Councillor Adair referred to the Ards/Bangor perceived divide and in the past it had been agreed that, in the interest of fairness, that the event be alternated. The RSPBANI had made it clear that the decision was up to the Council and he noted that more visitors attended the event in Newtownards and had a higher visitor spend than in Bangor. He urged Members to improve the event to make it something that everyone could be proud of and continue to alternate it between the two towns.

Alderman Irvine agreed that it was a very valued event within the Borough which had a long and distinguished history. In terms of the decision to invite a deputation to speak to the Council he thought that that could be useful in coming to a decision about which location worked better and how the Council could add value.

Councillor Edmund thought to share the event was more diplomatic and indeed pointed to the benefits at Ards Airfield which was an open space permitting music to travel better when it was not bounced off buildings.

Councillor Cathcart explained that he had been rather taken aback at the reaction to the suggestion that the deputation be made and asked why Members were in fear of listening to the organisers point of view which would in turn inform Council decision-making and seemed an odd thing to wish to refuse.

Councillor McKimm agreed that this should be viewed as an opportunity to look at the event, consult and make informed choices moving forward. He thought that that point had been missed in the wider debate.

Councillor Blaney thought that consultation was an excellent opportunity where the Council and deputation could speak on how they felt the event ran. It should not be interpreted as a 'them' and 'us' situation. That suggested a paranoia that Members would argue about literally anything and he personally simply wanted to hear some

facts before he expressed any preference to the event in either town. He also thought that Members should be careful since a poor outcome would be if the organisation moved its event to another part of Northern Ireland.

Councillor Smart agreed that the event had a very strong history and had been successful for both residents and visitors alike. The varied location had, in his opinion, worked well. Those proposing a deputation wished to hear further information, and as someone who had attended the event in both towns, he thought that the organisation may feel that it was being urged to go in one particular direction over another which might not be helpful. He was happy to support Alderman McIlveen's proposal.

Councillor McClean sought to give some clarity that his intention was that the Council invited a deputation to speak to the committee at the earliest possible opportunity to provide feedback to Members on the RSPBANI's preferences and requirements and to how the event could be enhanced for the residents of the Borough. He thought that some Members might confuse what they perceived their 'opponents' were trying to say but a full consultation could help to address any issues that may have existed or inform for the future. Wisdom could be exchanged and the Championships could only be improved by that action.

Councillor Thompson expressed support for Alderman McIlveen and stated that the arrangement had worked well for both towns and that that should continue. Once the decision was made to keep that arrangement in place further consultation could then take place with the organisers.

Councillor Kennedy had been amazed at the flood of enthusiasm for Ulster Scots heritage since up to now he had not heard much spoken by those now championing for the removal of the event from Ards to Bangor. He admired Councillor Smart's diplomacy that the intentions of those pursuing this deputation were not sinister but he felt that the intentions were unfortunately very clear. The event was being used to create division, with references to costs to push the debate in a certain direction which in turn demeaned the competition and the expression it gave to Ulster Scots culture. He was happy to support Alderman McIlveen.

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter did not like the word paranoia being used which she considered to be slightly offensive. She believed that the event was capable of being held in Newtownards and had been successful there. The real issue in her opinion was that some people did not want to share the wealth and she asked them to stop being so disingenuous in their reasoning. There existed a pre-existing decision to rotate and that had been the recommendation in the officers' report.

Councillor Walker felt that the discussion had been emotional which showed that the value which this event held within the Borough. He asked for clarity on the original decision which to him had been to trial the Championships in the two locations before deciding how to take the event forward in to the future. He believed that listening to the views of the organisers was the right thing to do and consultations were regularly carried out by the Council so he could not see the problem in doing that here.

Councillor T Smith called for a recorded vote.

The Chief Executive advised Members that the vote would be taken on Alderman McIlveen's amendment that the Council do not proceed with the invitation to RSPBANI and instead note the report that was there before'.

On the proposal being put to the meeting with 13 voting For, 20 voting Against and 1 Abstained and 6 Absent it FELL.

FOR (13)	AGAINST (20)	ABSTAINING (1)	ABSENT (6)
Aldermen	Aldermen	Councillor	Alderman
Armstrong-Cotter	W Irvine	Boyle	Carson
Gibson	Keery		M Smith
Girvan	McDowell		Councillors
McIlveen	Wilson		Brooks
Councillors	Councillors		Dunlop
Adair	Blaney		MacArthur
Cooper	Douglas		Woods
Cummings	Cathcart		
Edmund	Chambers		
Irvine	Gilmour		
Kennedy	Greer		
Smart	Irwin		
P Smith	Johnson		
Thompson	McAlpine		
	McKimm		
	McClellan		
	McKee		
	McRandal		
	Moore		
	T Smith		
	Walker		

RECESS 9.09 pm

RECOMMENCED 9.20 pm

NOTED.

In respect of Item 17 – Bangor Business Awards

Councillor Greer informed Members that she had been delighted to be nominated to attend the Bangor Business Awards but would unfortunately be unavailable to on that particular evening and offered her place to another Member or stakeholder. No Member came forward at the meeting and the decision would be left with officers to invite another stakeholder.

NOTED.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor McKimm, that the minutes be adopted.

7.4. Minutes of Corporate Committee dated 11 October 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

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

In respect of Item 14 (d) – Notice of Motion

Councillor Boyle referred to the item which had been brought by Councillors Cooper, T Smith and S Irvine which he had felt was embarrassing and had been pleased to note that Alderman McIlveen had interjected to save that discussion. He said he had been beginning to wonder if there were new sporting activities going on that he was unaware of. He thought the Motion itself was a backward step and had been brought full of doom and gloom and thanked Alderman McIlveen and Councillor Gilmour for making a sensible amendment.

Councillor Cooper took umbrage at Councillor Boyle's comments and pointed to the fact that on the very evening of that meeting the Republic of Ireland Women's Football team had been heard and recorded singing sectarian chants. How could Councillor Boyle think the Motion was a backward step, was it not rather a forward step since sectarianism was still rife in society, never mind sport. He stated that he would take no lessons from the SDLP which had failed to oppose the naming of a children's playpark after a well-known terrorist. He was astonished that the Member could not see how brazen his point of view was in light of that.

Councillor T Smith asked Members to remember the signing of the Belfast Agreement which he had voted for 25 years ago and which he now viewed as an appeasement process. He had hoped that sport would have moved on but references to terrorism were still made in some sports and he questioned why taxpayers should support that. He referred to the recent uproar over the design of a football kit but the same people were likely to stand back and say nothing when playparks were named after known terrorists, the hypocrisy of that was breath-taking in his view. He was proud to have brought his Motion.

Councillor McRandal believed, that to the best of his knowledge, Ards and North Down Borough Council did not fund or support organisations that were linked to terrorism. While he acknowledged that the recent sectarian chanting by the Republic of Ireland Women's Football team was undoubtedly wrong, he was left wondering what the true motive for the Motion had been.

NOTED.

In respect of Item 14 (e) – Notice of Motion

Alderman McIlveen referred to the item which had been brought by Alderman Wilson and Councillor Douglas and asked to make an amendment.

Proposed by Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Councillor Gilmour:

To defer back to committee to consider Motion in light of likely costs to prepare such a report.

Alderman McIlveen noticed that the Motions requested quite a detailed report detailing steps to be taken in the hope of creating a low traffic neighbourhood along with the benefits it could bring. He considered that much expert knowledge would be required and even if some of that was available within the Council staff internally, those staff were currently overworked in many areas. The cost of possibly hiring a consultant would be high and he thought that those aspects should be considered before any work were to go ahead. For those reasons he thought that it should be referred back to the committee so that a decision could be made based on facts.

Alderman Wilson was disappointed at Alderman McIlveen's amendment and stated that a good debate had taken place at the meeting and the Motion was supported. Timescales had not been placed on the work and it was likely to be connected to work that was going on already. He had not asked for an extensive report requiring the input of specialist consultants and the work could be done within the Council at a time that was suitable to officers. He hoped the Motion could be left as it was.

Councillor Blaney asked officers to comment on if in their opinion such a report would be costly to produce and if the information was available internally within the Council. The Chief Executive replied that the Council may not have all the information available to produce a report without using consultants.

Councillor Edmund stated that he would be happy to support the amendment and from a retail point believed that access to towns was of great importance and while everyone wanted to see emissions reduced, the infrastructure to support that was not yet in place. He urged Members to 'get real'.

Councillor T Smith saw no problem with taking the matter back to the Committee and was himself concerned about the message getting out that Bangor did not welcome cars which in turn would have a detrimental effect on the city. He did not wish to see obstacles being put up for people who wanted to visit Bangor and, as said previously, the transport infrastructure was not yet in place to realistically permit that.

Councillor McKimm thought that those Members were exaggerating what had been asked for and a traffic free area would not be intended to be extended across the entire city centre. He thought that there would be a lot of information to hand and there were excellent examples across Europe of where such zones had been created very successfully.

Councillor Kennedy thought that Alderman Wilson was not quite sure himself what he was asking for and the terms of reference of what he was proposing. Would it apply to the city centre, or be extended, would be in-house or need the input of external consultants? For that reason, he felt that to proceed with that work as it stood would be madness.

Councillor P Smith who had proposed the minutes summed up and having listened to the debate he had supported the Motion on the night and had thought there was

merit in taking forward a report since he knew that similar initiatives were being implemented in many cities in England. He did think it would be worthwhile to look at costs and the detail more closely and while he was aware that the intentions of the Motion had merit more information could be sought.

A vote on Alderman McIlveen's amendment was taken and on being put to the meeting with 21 voting For, 12 voting Against, 1 Abstained and 6 Absent the amendment was CARRIED.

NOTED.

In respect of Item 12 – Extension to Local Government Remote Meeting Legislation Update

Councillor T Smith asked if any further information could be provided on that matter since the legislation could not be ratified by the NI Executive in the absence of a sitting Assembly. The Chief Executive agreed to seek clarification on the matter and respond to the Council as soon as possible.

NOTED.

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

And further Item 14e - be deferred back to the Committee to consider the Motion in light of likely costs to prepare such a report.

7.5. Minutes of Community and Wellbeing Committee dated 12 October 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

Proposed by Councillor Edmund, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the minutes be adopted.

Arising from Item 19 - Affordable Warmth Scheme

(Councillor Greer declared an interest and left the meeting at 9.59 pm)

Councillor Adair proposed an amendment which was seconded by Alderman McIlveen: That the Council writes to the Department of Communities requesting an urgent meeting to discuss concerns in relation to the funding and delivery of the Affordable Warmth Scheme.

Councillor Adair explained that he had re-joined the Community and Wellbeing Committee after a three-year absence and had been surprised to see that issues relating to the Affordable Warmth Scheme had still not been resolved.

He went on to say that now, more than ever before, people needed to be helped and supported to access funding. He and Councillor MacArthur had written to the Department about the matter pointing to the difficulties that people in his community

were facing accessing help. He gave some examples of irregularities that he was aware of and the Department seemed to be taking an all or nothing approach. One elderly lady could not have a loan for a new boiler unless she insulated her roof which was difficult for her and she missed out on help. In short, sometimes the scheme did not meet the needs of the people it should be helping.

The Department had promised to review the scheme, but it currently seemed to operate like a postcode lottery and many in genuine need were being held back. He believed that Councillors should lobby collectively to ensure that the needs of their constituents were being met.

Alderman Irvine supported those comments and thought that the scheme was good, but it needed to work a little better and issues could be raised with the Department for the benefit of many local residents.

As the proposer of the minutes Councillor Edmund was in agreement and the matter needed to be progressed with the Department urgently.

AGREED.

In respect of Item 14 – Litter Bin Rationalisation Response to NoM

Alderman McIlveen referred to the Council's work in rationalising the public litter bin rotas between the Parks section and the Environment section. He asked if there would be an additional report to address the concerns of himself and Councillor Cathcart to look at the anomalies which existed as well as the requirement for the large bins that had been placed in Comber Square.

The Director of Community and Wellbeing said that the Head of Parks and Cemeteries had felt that the Notices of Motion which had been brought in relation to public bins had been addressed but he would raise the matter and come back to the Member.

NOTED.

In respect of Item 18 - Age Friendly Update

Alderman McIlveen had brought a Motion in recent years to make the Borough a Dementia Friendly area. He noted that officers had since incorporated that condition under the Age Friendly programme. As a result of that he believed that Dementia was not being given the focus and emphasis that it needed. He said that the Council should do what it had been asked to do and noted that the Borough had the highest levels of Dementia in Northern Ireland.

NOTED.

In respect of Item 29 Programme of Events to Mark the Bicentenary of Lord Castlereagh

Alderman McIlveen highlighted the legacy of Lord Castlereagh and when he had brought his Notice of Motion about that he had hoped that there would be something visible within the Borough to pique the interest of residents and visitors. The work which had been done such as banners and flowerbeds was very low key and inexpensive and did not in any way grab the attention of the public. Officers who worked in the tourism section had only attended one meeting of the organising group. What had been produced failed in what he had desired when bringing the Motion to celebrate the life and legacy of what had been a remarkable man of historical influence.

He thanked Councillor McKimm for the walking tour which he had led and that had been excellent in bringing the story to life and would have loved to engage a wider population in the history.

NOTED.

In respect of Item 12 Play Park Locking – Response to NoM

Councillor Gilmour referred to the locking of playparks and welcomed the proposal while appreciating the costs involved. There had been inappropriate activity around the parks at night and the Muga was used as a dog toilet regularly which made the area unsafe for young people particularly and asked if the communities had shown willingness to help lock up and maintain parks.

The Director explained that there had been some discussion on that but experience had shown that it did not always work as planned and it did involve more risks than benefits.

Alderman Irvine referred to a PCSP meeting that he had attended where the Police Commander had reported on incidences of anti-social behaviour around several playgrounds and when he had been pressed stated that he would be in favour of having those areas locked. He asked officers if the Police Service had been in touch with the Council on that matter. The Director was aware of those comments and a consultation would take place in time to help to address the matters of concern.

NOTED.

In respect of Item 22 – Consumer Protection Market Surveillance Project on Second-hand Goods

Councillor T Smith proposed an amendment which was seconded by Councillor Cooper: Given that the Northern Ireland Protocol impacts on the General Product Safety Regulations 2005 as it relates to Northern Ireland, This Council will seek legal advice from John Larkin KC on what the legal obligations are for the Council in relation to the implementation of the Protocol in this and all other matters.

The Chief Executive suggested that this amendment be taken In Committee because it was about legal matters.

C.26.10.2022PM

23

It was proposed by Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Irwin that the matter be taken In Committee.

Councillor T Smith wished for the matter to be taken in public and asked that a vote be taken.

When the vote was taken to take the matter In Committee 17 voted FOR, 15 voted AGAINST so the proposal to take the matter In Committee was agreed.

NOTED.

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

It was further agreed that the Council writes to the Department of Communities requesting an urgent meeting to discuss concerns in relation to the funding and delivery of the Affordable Warmth Scheme.

*****ITEM 7.5.1. IN CONFIDENCE*****

7.5.1. Matter Arising – Item 22 – Legal Advice on the Council Continuing its Market Surveillance in Accordance with the General Product Safety Regulations 2005 as they are applied in Great Britain.

The Chair said that this matter would be considered later in the meeting In Confidence.

NOTED.

7.6. Minutes of Special Corporate Committed dated 13 October 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Copy of the above minutes.

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

Councillor T Smith asked to be recorded as against the minutes.

8. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 DAERA, Forestry Planning, Strategies and Silviculture, Down Forestry Planning Area Consultation
(Appendix II)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Correspondence from DAERA, Forestry Planning, regarding a consultation for forestry planning for the Down Forestry Planning Area.

RECOMMENDED that the Council considers this consultation.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Alderman W Irvine, that the information be noted.

8.2 Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority – Draft Strategic Planning Consultation Online
(Appendix III)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Correspondence from the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority detailing dates for online consultation on its Draft Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDED that Council considers this consultation.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Alderman W Irvine, that the information be noted.

8.3. Department of Justice, Consultation on Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility
(Appendix IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Correspondence from the Department of Justice detailing the Launch of consultation on Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR). Closing date for responses was Friday 23 December 2022.

RECOMMENDED that Council considers this consultation.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Alderman W Irvine, that the information be noted and also that this be passed to PCSP to make a response on its own behalf.

Councillor T Smith could not support the decision in Item 8.3.

9. COURSES AND CONFERENCES

9.1. NAC UK Conference & AGM 25-27 November 2022 Carlisle
(Appendices VI-VIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 18 October 2022 from the Chief Executive detailing that the NAC was holding a conference on The Effect of the Financial Crisis on Community Facilities in Carlisle from 25–27 November 2022. Information on the event is included in the attached conference booking form. Delegate fees are £350 + VAT, accommodation is £85 + VAT per night, plus there would be costs associated with flights and travel.

RECOMMENDED that the Council considers whether it wishes to nominate a Member(s) to attend the NAC Conference.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor T Smith, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that Council note this report.

10. RESOLUTIONS

10.1 Correspondence from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council – Motion – Justice for Noah Donohoe (Appendix IX)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Correspondence dated 3 October 2022 from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Irwin, that the Council note the information.

11. ARRANGEMENTS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 3 October 2022 from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that the Council had received invitations to attend a range of Remembrance Day Services across the Borough. Details of arrangements for Remembrance Day Services on Sunday, 6 November 2022 (Groomspoint) and Sunday, 13 November 2022 were laid out below. Members were asked to confirm which Service, if any, they planned to attend.

Bangor

Members were asked to meet at the Bowling Pavilion, Ward Park, Bangor at 10.20am for robing. They would then process to the War Memorial for 10.40 am for the Remembrance Day Service. Please note there would be no church service on this occasion. After the service at the War Memorial, the parade would march through the town to the Royal British Legion Social Club and would disperse from there.

Holywood

Members were asked to assemble for robing at Queen's Leisure Complex (Studio Room) at 10.00 am. Refreshments would be available on arrival. The Parade would form up in the car park at 10.40 am and march to the Cenotaph for the Service at 10.50 am. After the 2 minute's silence at 11.00 am the Parade would proceed to St Phillip and St James Parish Church, Church Road, Holywood. Members should make their own way to the church.

Newtownards

Robing would take place at the Royal British Legion, Court Square, at 9.45 am after which Members were asked to form up at Old Cross Street car park at 10.00 am to parade to the Cenotaph, Court Square, Newtownards. Following a wreath laying ceremony at 10.10 am, the Royal British Legion would parade to St Marks Parish Church, Church Street, Newtownards for the Remembrance Service which commenced at 11.30 am. After the Church Service the parade would march back to the Royal British Legion. Refreshments would be available.

Donaghadee

Members were invited to meet at Donaghadee Parish Church for a Service of Remembrance at 10.00 am. The parade would leave the Church at 10.40 am and process to the War Memorial where an Act of Remembrance and wreath laying

would take place. Members were then invited to join other dignitaries to take the salute.

Comber

Members were asked to meet at St Mary's Church Hall, The Square, Comber, at 10.00 am for robing. Refreshments would be available. They would form up and march to the War Memorial in The Square for a wreath laying ceremony. That would be followed by a Church Service in 2nd Comber Presbyterian Church, Killinchy Street. Further timings would follow. Please note there was no parking in St Mary's car park as that was reserved for parishioners.

Millisle

Members were asked to meet at the Royal British Legion, Churchill Avenue at 10.30 am to parade to the War Memorial for a short Act of Remembrance at 11.00 am. The parade would then proceed to the Millisle and Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church, for the Service at 11.30 am. Light refreshments would be served in the Legion after the service.

Ballywalter

Members were asked to meet at 10.30 am at the Beach Car Park, Main Street, Ballywalter. The parade would march off at 10.45 am for an Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial at 10.50 am. That would be followed by a Church Service at Ballywalter 1st Presbyterian at 11.15 am. The Parade and march past will take place at approximately 12.05pm, Lord Dunleath, Deputy Lieutenant would be taking the salute. Refreshments would be served at 12.30 pm in the Orange Hall.

Craigavad Helen's Bay

A Service of Remembrance would be held at Ballygilbert Presbyterian Church at 11.00 am.

Portavogie

A Service of Remembrance would be held at Portavogie War Memorial, Harbour Road, Portavogie at 9am.

Groomsport

The Groomsport Remembrance Day Service would be held on Sunday 6 November 2022 at 2.45 pm. The Walter Nelson Hall, Main Street, would be available from 2.00 pm for robing and Councillors would parade from there to the War Memorial at approximately 2.30 pm. There was no Church Service. Light refreshments would be served after the service at the Walter Nelson Hall.

Members' Robes

Members' robes would be taken to the services at Bangor, Holywood and Newtownards. Members attending other services were asked to collect their robes from the Town Hall, Bangor, no later than **3pm on Friday, 11 November 2022.**

Robes would be available at The Walter Nelson Hall, Groomsport, for those Members who indicated their intention to attend the Groomsport Service on 6 November 2022.

Those Members requiring wreaths were asked to contact the Democratic Services Office a week in advance.

RECOMMENDED that Members:

1. Note the arrangements as set out above.
2. Indicate, via email to democratic.services@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk which service they plan to attend; and
3. Note the above arrangements for robing and collect robes in advance, where appropriate.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.

12. NOMINATIONS TO WORKING GROUPS

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 3 October 2022 from the Chief Executive detailing 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.

Following the resignation of Councillor Kendall from the Council, a place had become available on each of the following groups:

1. Holywood Town Steering Group
2. Community Development Grants Working Group
3. All Party Group on Climate Action

The below tables reflected the current membership of the above working groups.

Body: Holywood Town Steering Group – 5 Places (4 Year Appointment)

	2019/23
1	Councillor Johnson
2	Councillor Greer
3	Councillor McClean
4	Councillor McRandal
5	Vacant since resignation of Lauren Kendall

Body: Community Development Grants Working Group – 5 Places (1 Year Appointment)

	2022/23
1	Councillor Thompson
2	Councillor Cathcart
3	Councillor Smart

4	Councillor Douglas
5	Vacant since resignation of Lauren Kendall

Body: All Party Group on Climate Action – 2 Places (1 Year Appointment)

	2022/23
1	Councillor Thompson
2	Vacant since resignation of Lauren Kendall

A further vacancy had arisen, following the resignation of Councillor Boyle from the Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership.

The table below reflected current membership of the above working group.

Body: Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership – 2 Places (4 Year Appointment)

	2019/23
1	Vacant since resignation of Councillor Boyle
2	Councillor Thompson

Nominations were sought from the Council to fill each of the above places for the remainder of the year or four-year term as the case may be.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. It is recommended that the Council nominates a Member to the Hollywood Town Steering Group.
2. It is recommended that the Council nominates a Member to the Community Development Grants Working Group.
3. It is recommended that the Council nominates a Member to the All Party Group on Climate Action.
4. It is recommended that the Council nominates a Member to the Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McKee, seconded by Alderman McIlveen, that the recommendation be adopted and that Councillor Woods be nominated to the three bodies that had been held by Councillor Kendall.

13. SEALING DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED: - (On the proposal of Alderman Gibson seconded by Councillor Edmund)

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

- (a) Grant of Rights of Burial: Nos 14413-14429
- (b) Original Performance Bond and Acceptance of the contract award for Portavogie Harbour EIS

14. TRANSFER OF RIGHTS OF BURIAL

The following transfer application was received:-

- (a) Transfer/Assignments: Comber section 18 grave 49, Comber Section 18 Grave 50, Movilla section 29 west grave 60, Clandeboye section GX grave 2586

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Thompson, seconded by Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, that the recommendation be adopted.

15. NOTICE OF MOTION STATUS REPORT

(Appendix X)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report dated 12 October 2022 from the Chief Executive detailing that a Status Report had been attached in respect of Notices of Motion.

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 Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Thompson, that the recommendation be adopted.

16. NOTICES OF MOTION

16.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor McRandal, Alderman Wilson and Councillor Irwin

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.

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.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McRandal, seconded by Councillor Irwin, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Corporate Services Committee.

16.2 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Adair and Councillor Edmund

That this Council agree to install signage to identify the townlands of Ballyblack and Kirkistown and that officers are tasked to bring forward proposals to incorporate townland signage across our Borough.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Environment Committee.

16.3 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Cooper and Councillor Irvine

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.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Irvine, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Community and Wellbeing Committee.

16.4 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor MacArthur and Councillor Gilmour

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.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Gilmour, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Corporate Services Committee.

16.5 Notice of Motion submitted by Alderman McIlveen and Alderman Armstrong-Cotter

That 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 Council are obligatory and which are discretionary;

and in the meantime, ceases actions which relate to the now expired Service Level Agreement with Causeway Coast and Glens Council and reverts to actions undertaken pre-Service Level Agreement.

Council requests that officers' action these matters with due urgency in order that Members may take any necessary actions without undue delay.

Alderman McIlveen proposed, seconded by Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, that the Motion be heard at this meeting on the basis of urgency and given that the Council had been the focus of a great deal of misinformation in recent days.

The Mayor agreed and asked if it was the Member's intention to focus on staffing or legal advice since the debate would need to be stopped if that was the case and dealt with later in the meeting In Committee. Alderman McIlveen stated it was not his intention to stray into legal or staffing matters.

Alderman McIlveen stated that Members were aware he had previously brought a Motion along with his colleagues Alderman Armstrong-Cotter and Councillor Kennedy to adopt the policy of non-implementation of the NI Protocol. A Special Council meeting had been called to hear that but the Chief Executive, following the advice of senior Counsel, ruled that the Motion was inadmissible.

He said that the purpose of his Motion had been to bring some clarity to a swirl of adverse and in part ill-informed publicity that was ongoing. He had drafted and submitted the Motion but understood that some commentators had tried to paste on their own interpretation of what that Motion entailed.

This new Motion had been submitted in response to the Chief Executive deciding not to allow that first Notice of Motion to proceed. Unfortunately, and given that Ards and North Down was an overwhelmingly unionist Council, this did not allow the Council to state its opposition to the NI Protocol in the terms that he had hoped but it would, he hoped, provide clarity to those who sought to comment on the workings of the Council in relation to that.

He noted that the Council did have some legal advice In Confidence which he would not refer to at this point but it was useful in giving information about what we did and did not have control over. The Council came under the spotlight recently in two respects, one the confiscation of noodles and the furore over the passing of a Service Level Agreement with Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council back in January 2022.

Having reread the Service Level Agreement he would not have been overly concerned about that since, given the funding ended in March this year and the agreement ended in May. However, it was noted that Ards and North Down Borough Council still carried out the terms of that agreement and that was why he had brought the Motion.

He was aware that officers would have a certain interpretation as to why those works were ongoing but he thought that for the sake of this Council there was a need for clarification around those things because Members would recall that the Service Level Agreement provided funding of £49,541.66 to the Council which ran out in March 2022 and the Council was still carrying on expecting funding to be paid retrospectively.

There was also the issue that the Service Level Agreement had come into force in April 2021 but as Members of this Council it was not brought to Members' attention until January 2022. He believed that significant matters such as those needed to be dealt with transparently and be brought to Members in a timely fashion.

This Motion, he said, was asking for a list of measures that were carried out, those which were obligatory and those which were discretionary which would provide clarity to Members. Local Councils already enforced many of those requirements therefore the Memorandum of Understanding did not impose further requirements but rather formalised them. Many obligations had been stated as not relevant to the Northern Ireland Protocol but were the mirror of what took place in other parts of the United Kingdom. It was right and proper that elected representatives should know what was being carried out and he considered it to be good governance. If the Service Level Agreement no longer existed there should be no issue with the Council operating as it had before but if there was additionality and it was costing the Council, Members needed to be made aware of that.

Seconding the Motion Alderman Armstrong-Cotter reserved her right to speak at this point.

Councillor Irwin indicated that it was important for her to remind Members why the NI Protocol had come in to being and it was, in her opinion, a necessary outworking of Brexit. The Conservative Party and the DUP had pushed to leave the Customs Union and had disagreed with any option put before them. That had led Northern Ireland to this place. She said that the Good Friday Agreement needed to be protected and the Alliance Party understood why the Protocol needed to exist and recognised that it was an imperfect solution. She said that the Alliance Party was a proud European Party and had been working to resolve the Protocol issues practically through dialogue and negotiation.

She went on to say that with regards to the Motion before everyone it was recognised that there would be legal implications for the Council. The Protocol was an international treaty and had been negotiated between the British Government and the European Union and there were duties on the British Government, the Northern Ireland Executive and the departments and local authorities to implement it.

That did not even touch on the processes put in place to protect businesses, residents and visitors to the Borough. She thought that it would be greatly careless to even consider that it was not implemented and she and her Party would not support the Motion and felt that it was a waste of time and resources since the Protocol was in place to protect residents.

In finishing she asked the Director if she could get clarity on the material differences to the Council as a result of the Service Level Agreement and what it would mean for the Council to revert back to the arrangements it had had in place prior to the Protocol.

The Director explained that the Service Level Agreement had been in place for 12 months and it allowed for the distribution of funds to the eleven Councils in Northern

Ireland. The arrangements were largely the same as they had been before but there were some additional requirements which could be teased out properly in a report. In reply the Member thanked the Chief Executive and Directors of the Council for the work which had been undertaken.

Alderman W Irvine supported the Motion by Alderman McIlveen and considered it important for Members to be aware of the functions that the Council was carrying out in respect of the Protocol. It's implementation had created a massive wedge in the country's democracy. He believed that Northern Ireland should have left on the same terms as the rest of the United Kingdom and that it was undemocratic for this region to fall under European Union law.

Alderman Wilson repeated that the DUP had helped to deliver Brexit and the Irish Sea Border could have been avoided. He was concerned about public health being put at risk if non-compliance was adopted. The Council could not even consider placing staff in danger.

RECESS 11.00 pm
RECOMMENCED 11.12 pm

Councillor T Smith had been consistently opposed to the Northern Ireland Protocol and did not wish to see it implemented in any way. The Council should, in his opinion, do the minimum that the law required and get the best legal advice available so that it did not take on additional duties. He stated that he did not intend to be lectured to by the Alliance Party, Green Party and SDLP all of whom in his view stood shoulder to shoulder with the IRA.

This was a constitutional issue and unaccountable officials in Europe were deciding the rules that people in Northern Ireland were now having to follow. He asked why democrats were not enraged by such a scenario. Of course, Irish Nationalists liked the realignment of regulations and the breaking of the link with Great Britain which he felt was absolutely wrong and should be stopped.

Councillor McKimm was glad this was being discussed in the public domain and offered to provide some education on what was going on. He was bemused and spoke of the motivation behind what was being brought to the Council and considered it to be political point scoring.

He thought that the point of the Protocol was about keeping people safe and that related to checks on food produce and products. As a result of Brexit this was a necessary outworking to have special arrangements and regulations so that safety could be maintained. Northern Ireland shared a border with the European Union and that was why such arrangements were required.

Councillor Cooper was surprised at how Councillor McKimm had described the arrangements and thought this had nothing whatsoever to do with keeping people safe, this was anti-democratic and he urged some others to wake up to that fact. The rest of the United Kingdom was multicultural, thriving under the free market and free from the shackles of the European Union.

Councillor P Smith, like Councillor Cooper, had been consistently opposed to the Northern Ireland Protocol along with his Party ever since it had been muted. His Party had made it clear all along that it was a bad deal for Northern Ireland and so he now welcomed the opportunity now to get some clarity on the issues. Advice was needed for what was a complex issue and it was evident from the misinformed debate in the media that there was a severe lack of understanding around the points of the Protocol. He was happy to support the Motion.

Councillor Greer believed that her colleagues had represented her Party well in the debate and she had no further comment to make but she had taken great offence at Councillor T Smith's comment about her Party and others standing shoulder to shoulder with the IRA. She asked him to apologise, withdraw his comments or qualify his remarks.

In response, Councillor T Smith asked if the Alliance Party believed that the IRA and Sinn Fein were the same organisation. Councillor Greer said that her point was that the Member had said that her party stood shoulder to shoulder with the IRA and she did not accept that. He repeated that Sinn Fein and the IRA were in his view interchangeable and two sides of the same coin and asked if the Alliance Party were now claiming that that was not the case.

At this point the Mayor said that Councillor T Smith had provided his explanation and the debate would move on.

Councillor Gilmour fully supported the Notice of Motion and thanked her colleagues for bringing it to the attention of the Council. She was also unsurprised that many people would object the Motion. The Protocol was imposing costs and difficulties to members of the community and she thought that Members were obliged to call for a review on what was being implemented. She was amused that Councillor Irwin could think the Protocol was simply to protect the Good Friday Agreement and thought it did quite the opposite. Councillor McKimm thought it was all about keeping people safe and protecting them so how could he explain the disruption to the food supply. When farmers and many other businesses could not get the supplies they needed from within their own country could anyone claim that that made sense. She went on to say that the Director had indicated that further detail could be teased out so why did some see a problem with doing just that.

Councillor Kennedy thought that no other term in current usage sounded so innocuous as the Northern Ireland Protocol yet it held so much weight and significance. It was a rather dry and uninspiring topic of conversation but it threatened hundreds of thousands of people and their businesses. It seriously undermined the principles of democracy and drove a horse and cart through the often lauded and utter failure of the Good Friday Agreement. He said it threatened community cohesion within Northern Ireland and represented an existential threat to Northern Ireland's place within the United Kingdom.

He went on to say that at the present time this country was going through huge economic instability which may in time surpass the Great Depression of the 1930s and the mismanaged global scale shutting down of the world's economy for two years had left everyone feeling and facing a genuine cost of living crisis. Yet, the

Alliance Party was in his view showing a criminal level of madness in supporting a framework which economists had indicated would cost the region huge sums as well as increased costs of up to 9-10% for goods imported into Northern Ireland.

European Union negotiators had asserted that the Protocol was necessary to protect the people of Northern Ireland from 'unsafe goods arriving from Britain' and to ensure that 'public health of people in Northern Ireland is not under threat'. He said that that was nonsense and he wondered how anyone could fall for that reasoning. He had previously been under the impression that all political parties, even though they often disagreed, shared his core values in working to improve the lives of the whole of society. He believed that the Alliance Party was now so ideologically driven that it was blind to the destructive effects of its brand of radical leftism. He concluded by asserting that there should be no return to Stormont until free and unfettered trade had been re-established.

Responding Councillor Walker said that he was not a neo Marxist, as suggested by Councillor Kennedy, and was unaware of anyone in his Party who was but that Councillor Kennedy was welcome to his thoughts. He reminded him that the situation had come about from the Brexit decision, and it had been the DUP who had prevented Northern Ireland from being taken out of the European Union on the same terms as the rest of the United Kingdom. He wondered why the DUP had been slow to act on that matter, other unionist parties had spoken out against the Protocol but they had not. He remembered Councillor Cooper bringing the Protocol to the attention of the Council but no one from the DUP had stepped in to help him. He believed this was only coming to light now since the comments broadcast on the Nolan Show.

Councillor Walker thought that this was an anti-business proposal and the Council was trying to help businesses and maintain a level of consistency and so he would not be supporting the Motion.

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter felt that this Motion was about the Council not taking steps to go beyond what was legally required and to ensure that Members were fully briefed on what work was being carried out to comply with the requirements of the Protocol. Whether or not the DUP was instrumental to Brexit was not the point and did not appear to be grasped by some. When she had been informed that a business in Newtownards is losing £2k revenue per month because it could not get dog food supplies from England she was flummoxed at how political parties could think of themselves as pro-business. The DUP was on the side of businesses and wanted to see that adequate scrutiny was in place. In her opinion there were many who were wilfully misunderstanding the issues.

Alderman McIlveen, in summing up, wholeheartedly agreed with Alderman Armstrong-Cotter that its views were being wilfully misinterpreted and the behaviour around his Notice of Motion had been shameful. The Alliance Party was calling for its full implementation and believed that had it not been for that Party working against the British Government and instead co-operating with the European Union a better deal could have been made. Europe itself was not an island and shared a border with many countries who it seemed to be able to co-exist without the need for such heavy regulation.

Councillor Greer called for a recorded vote and when the Notice of Motion was put to the meeting 21 voted For, 12 voted Against and 7 Absent were absent it was declared CARRIED.

FOR (21)	AGAINST (12)	ABSTAINING (0)	ABSENT (7)
Aldermen	Aldermen		Aldermen
Armstrong-Cotter	Girvan		Carson
Gibson	McDowell		M Smith
Irvine	Wilson		Councillors
Keery	Councillors		Boyle
McIlveen	Douglas		Brooks
Councillors	Greer		Dunlop
Adair	Irwin		MacArthur
Blaney	McAlpine		Woods
Cathcart	McKimm		
Chambers	McKee		
Cooper	McRandal		
Cummings	Moore		
Edmund	Walker		
Gilmour			
S Irvine			
Johnson			
Kennedy			
McClellan			
Smart			
P Smith			
T Smith			
Thompson			

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Alderman McIlveen, seconded by Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

16.6 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 25th anniversary.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Moore, seconded by Alderman McDowell, that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Community and Wellbeing Committee.

CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION

(Appendices XI-XV)

- (a) Choice Housing Ireland Limited, Annual Report 2021/22
- (b) Department of Justice, Youth Justice Agency Performance Impact Report 2021-2022

- (c) CAWT Cross Border Health and Social Care Annual Progress Report 2021
- (d) The Gas (Designation of Pipe-lines) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022
- (e) Children's Services Review Secretariat (DOH), Children's Social Care Services NI An Independent Review, October Newsletter

(Having declared an interest in (a) Councillor Greer was excluded from the meeting at 11.58 pm).

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

He referred to his disappointment in this scheme and it had only been live for a few days so that some had missed out due to funding being on a first come first served basis and he asked Members to support.

Councillor Edmund was in full agreement and thought the system had operated unfairly.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the items which were Circulated for Information be noted and further 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 opportunity fairly.

(Councillor Greer was readmitted to the meeting at 11.59 pm)

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Irwin, seconded by Councillor McKimm, that the public/press be excluded from the undernoted items of confidential business.

(Having declared an interest in Item 6.1 Alderman W Irvine and Councillor Blaney left the meeting at 00.01 am)

6.1 Matter Arising – Item 8.4 Community and Wellbeing Minutes – Leisure Target Operating Model

*****ITEM 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)

(Alderman Irvine re-entered the meeting)

7.5.1. Matter Arising – Item 22 – Legal Advice on the Council Continuing its Market Surveillance in Accordance with the General Product Safety Regulations 2005 as they are applied in Great Britain.

*****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. LEGAL ADVICE RECEIVED REGARDING NOTICE OF MOTION AT SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

*****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)

READMITTANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Greer, that the public/press be readmitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 00:56 hours.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Planning Committee was held virtually on Tuesday, 1st November 2022 at 7.00 pm via Zoom.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Alderman Gibson

Aldermen: Keery
McIlveen

Councillors:	Adair (9.08pm)	McRandal
	Brooks	Moore
	Cathcart	P Smith
	McAlpine	Thompson
	McClellan	Walker
	McKee	

Officers: Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning (S McCullough), Head of Planning (A McCullough), Principal Planning and Technical Officer (L Maginn), Senior Professional and Technical Officer (Clare Rodgers) and Democratic Services Officers (M McElveen and S McCrea)

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Alderman McIlveen for lateness due to the recent passing of a family member and an apology was received from Councillor McRandal for lateness.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor McRandal:

Item 4.1: LA06/2018/1198/F – Replacement of facilities and car park Sullivan Upper School, Belfast Road, Holywood

Item 4.2: LA06/2018/1196F – Floodlighting proposal for new artificial pitch and additional planting to perimeter of pitch – Sullivan Upper School, Belfast Road, Holywood

NOTED.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2022.

RECOMMENDED that the minutes be noted.

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor P Smith, that the minutes be noted.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

4.1 LA06/2018/1198/F – Replacement of facilities and car park – Sullivan Upper School, Belfast Road, Holywood (Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

DEA: Holywood & Clandeboye

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

Proposal: Replacement of Facilities and Car park at Sullivan Upper School

Site Location: Sullivan Upper School, Belfast Road, Holywood

Recommendation: Approval

The Head of Planning advised that this item was before Members this evening as the Council had received objections from six or more addresses which were contrary to our recommendation to approve.

Planning permission was granted in 2015 for 'Replacement of sports changing rooms and addition of gymnasium and dance-studio on site of existing pavilion. In addition, a full size artificial grass hockey pitch, associated facilities and replacement carparking of existing car park'.

Those facilities had since been constructed and were fully operational within the established curtilage of Sullivan Upper school. It was important to note that that approval replaced a former pitch with a new, higher specification pitch in exactly the same location. The hockey pitch was located to the west of the school buildings parallel to the Belfast Road, and immediately to the right of the entrance to the school.

This proposal before Members this evening sought non-compliance with a condition, and variation of another condition, as attached to that previous decision. At the time of consideration by what was then the Department of the previous proposal, there were objections raised concerning the use of the facility by the community, and as a consequence the school reluctantly withdrew the use by community from the proposed scheme.

This proposal essentially comprised of two separate elements as follows:

Non-compliance with Condition 3 which reads as follows:

"Sports facilities and hockey pitch hereby approved shall be solely for use of Sullivan Upper School and shall not be used at any time by any other organisation or any

event or purpose other than those associated with operation and function of the school.

Reason: To safeguard the living conditions of residents in adjoining and nearby properties."

That was - seeking the use of the artificial pitch and pavilion by the community. Then variation of Condition 4 of that approval, which specified the permitted hours of operation of the development as approved, proposing new increased permitted hours of operation of the artificial grass hockey pitch.

With regard to the difference of approved hours and those sought by the variation, that being starting one hour earlier and finishing two hours later on weekdays (total increase of 3 hours), starting 30 minutes earlier on Saturdays (total increase of half an hour), and provision to use for five hours between noon and 5pm on Sundays. Whilst these excellent sporting facilities had greatly improved, the sporting and recreational facilities available to pupils, the present conditions attached to the 2015 approval essentially prohibit the local community, including youth groups, sports clubs, individuals etc. from taking advantage of the facilities.

Members were asked to note that community use of school facilities was actively promoted by the Department of Education and that it had a number of programmes and policies aimed at ensuring schools were active within their local communities.

Sullivan Upper School had always been part of the local community, and importantly it was to be noted that various facilities were already made available for use by local clubs, community groups, individuals etc. In this respect it should be noted that none of the other school facilities, including the outdoor grass pitches, tennis courts, indoor swimming pool or various rooms and halls are precluded from community use or restricted in their periods of operation.

Community use of the new facilities (artificial grass hockey pitch with floodlighting, replacement sports pavilion with changing rooms, dance studio and gymnasium) was to be provided as part of an approved project under the School Enhancement Programme and had been a focus of the original business case to the Department of Education: the project was consistent with Article 140 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, which enabled schools to make provision for wider community use of their premises when not otherwise required for education purposes and Area Based Planning Policy. It was also consistent with the Regional Strategy 2035 whereby through the maintenance of a well-developed network of schools and colleges, that in turn would have helped to sustain and strengthen local communities, including rural communities. Regional Guidance also highlighted how integrated services or facilities could strengthen community cohesion.

Sullivan wished to ensure that its newest facilities could be made available for use by the local community, especially as significant public money had been made available by Department of Education to help deliver these high-quality recreational facilities. It was evident that there had been a demand for these facilities by the community.

Because of Planning restrictions at the time of writing, the school had to turn down requests for usage from, for example, local and national hockey teams; local young peoples' football clubs; Irish dancing club; local Pilates/yoga classes; and a stage and drama school.

It should be appreciated for those who were present in the meeting that participation in sport and outdoor recreation facilitates good health and physical development. PPS 8 on Open Space, Sports and Outdoor Recreation also highlighted that it could help foster a strong sense of civic pride and assist cross-community relations.

PPS 8 also set out specific measures, one of which was encouraging the protection and enhancement of open spaces and playing facilities for the long-term benefit of the whole community.

Whilst the primary responsibility for the provision of public open space facilities such as playing fields, parks and children's play areas lay with the Council, through sharing of facilities such as these at Sullivan, the burden could be lifted somewhat off the rate payer by reducing doubling up of such facilities, and free up capital monies to be expended elsewhere for the benefit of the community.

Five letters of support had been received in relation to the proposal, from elected members, MLAs and the occupier of no. 2 Belfast Road, immediately to the north of the hockey pitch. Objections to this proposal had been received from five addresses, which were situated alongside distance to the goals of the subject hockey pitch. Members were asked to note that the threshold for objections triggering referral to Planning Committee was only reached by receipt of a letter from Alex Easton MLA.

The material considerations to be assessed within the objections received related to:

- noise in relation to residential amenity
- assertions that the noise assessment submitted does not represent worse-case scenario
- Light pollution (which is addressed under the next application before Committee)
- Increase in traffic and parking

Those had been addressed in detail within the Case Officer's Report but for clarity, the Head of Planning provided highlights. The Environmental Health Department of the Council had confirmed that no noise complaints had been received to date in relation to the use of the hockey pitch. The application was accompanied by a Noise Impact Assessment and further addendums submitted dealing with matters raised in objections.

Typical noise levels for artificial grass pitches had been taken from 'The Sport England Guidance on the Planning Implications of Artificial Grass Pitch Acoustics 2015'. Environmental Health had assessed the submissions in detail and confirmed that the predicted noise levels from any extended usage were in compliance with the AGP. The EH conducted its own longer term, unattended noise survey in the front and rear gardens of no. 4 Belfast Road and confirmed that the dominant background noise was from vehicular traffic on the Belfast Road. EH was content with the ambient noise monitoring levels provided by the noise consultant.

The Council's own Environmental Health Officer dealing with this application was in attendance at the evening's meeting, as was a Noise consultant, appearing on behalf of the school, who would be able to respond to any noise-related queries posed by Members.

Objectors were concerned that the most significant and intrusive noise of the hockey pitch would have been when a hockey ball hits the backboard of the goal. The AGP noted that such noise was significantly absorbed by the use of padding and that once shock absorbing measures were incorporated, the voice of players would then become the most significant noise source.

Acoustic fencing had been constructed along each end of the pitch at 1.8m height. The fence at the no. 4 Belfast Road end was situated on land at a higher level than the adjacent dwelling and Environmental Health was content that this would be an effective barrier height to that predicted in modelling scenarios. The objector speaking this evening had objected to the length of the acoustic fencing as built. In order to address that concern, revised modelling was carried out and it found that predicted noise levels at head height in the garden of no. 4 Belfast Road and at first floor level facing onto the pitch were within acceptable parameters. The extent of acoustic fence was truncated at that end because of need to allow access to the pitch, but runs the entire length of No 4, as well as the existence of some evergreen vegetation at that end between the pitch and no. 4

Noise in relation to use of other parts of the facility such as the gymnasium/dance studio was not considered to have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity considering any associated noise would be contained within.

Examples were provided of other locations where outdoor hockey pitches in close proximity to residential dwellings existed, identifying that it was not uncommon, and that the majority did not utilise padding for goal backboards. Additionally, within the agent's supporting statement there were a plethora of schools highlighted whereby the hours of use of the outdoor pitches, in proximity to residential properties, was NOT restricted in any way.

In relation to concerns regarding Road safety and parking, Sullivan Upper operated a one-way system within the grounds with double yellow lines and cones preventing parking on the side of the access adjacent to nos. 2 & 4 Belfast Road. No changes had been proposed in respect of access to the site.

DFI Roads was consulted and had no objections. Those present were asked to be cognisant that the proposed additional hours of usage relating to primarily outside of school hours, so parking by teachers/pupils would be drastically reduced. The Spafield car park was also in close proximity, and it had been accepted that it was often occupied during the school day by R-plate drivers, so outside of school hours it was to be expected that off street parking would also be available.

Condition 5 of the Case Officer Report required submission of a Site Management Plan to detail access to parking restrictions and arrangements alongside detail of how visitor parking was to be managed. If and once agreed in writing by the Council,

these measures were required to be carried in perpetuity, and could be subject to enforcement proceedings if the need arose.

it was important to be cognisant that use of the facilities already took place with cars accessing the school and parking accordingly.

With the inclusion of an addendum that had been uploaded the day previous to this evening's meeting, and that the conditions had been amended to ensure that the shock absorbing material, once approved by Council, was affixed appropriately to the back and side boards of the goals, and the perimeter boards, prior to commencement of any extended usage.

Accordingly planning permission subject to conditions as set out in the Addendum was recommended.

Councillor McKee asked for clarification in regard to trees that were not included in the report but was reminded this was a topic for discussion under item 4.2

One of the objectors, Jill Comerton attended the evening's meeting and was brought in to speak of her concerns at 19:23.

Mrs Comerton advised Members that she resided at 4 Belfast Road, adjacent to the hockey pitch where she lived with her family. She advised that the sound of a struck hockey ball was akin to a gunshot; much louder than rugby or football, citing that planning conditions regarded safety of local residents. With proposed operational times and access by external entities, she believed it paved the way for hockey to take place 100% of operational availability. It was stated that Sullivan School had mentioned external entities using the pitches for a maximum of 5% of their operating times and that proposed use had been just 3 nights a week which was significantly different than figures quoted in the application. She believed that the averaging of sound levels would disguise the true sound levels and alleged that one child hitting a hockey ball into a goal would equate to 72db with noise impact by adults likely being worse.

With regard to conditions three and four, she referenced the pitch not being used continuously or for long periods with generally no use at night. The change to a later closing time had only occurred after the school had explained that the pitch could not be used after 18:30. The proposed changes included availability of the pitch during bank holidays and an additional 35 hours per week during term-time. Mrs Comerton asked Members to consider hours of use by both the school and external entities, suggesting the school's hours of use should remain unchanged as the pitches were not used for the entirety of opening hours; something she believed would allow time for interested parties to carry out their training.

In relation to noise assessments, Mrs Comerton alleged that a worst-case-scenario had not been taken into consideration such as all six goals being used in target practice at the same time and the effect of such upon noise levels. She believed the sound reports provided were not fit for purpose and advised that one Mr Shane Carr's concerns had not been addressed. She believed the Sport England Free-field noise level document was not representative of the Sullivan pitch as it referenced a

pitch in use 22% of its opening times for women's hockey and had not taken shooting practice into consideration. As there were six other football and/or rugby pitches in close proximity, she believed this would mean the Sullivan pitch in question would likely only be used for hockey.

She believed Condition three should be varied but not removed as it was vital to protect local residents from noise that would emanate from the pitch. She explained that Condition 4 in changing times would not be required as a 20:00 finish time would accommodate Hollywood Football Club whose times for practice, at the time of writing ranged from 18:00 to 20:00 as well as the Hollywood Women's Hockey club. and advised that those who would attend the pitch in the evenings would inevitably arrive before and leave after closing times which would cause more noise. This, she suggested would be intensified due to a one-way system for traffic that did not work, especially when one of the entryways was closed.

In conclusion, Mrs Comerton explained that the twelve objectors that included herself were the heart of the school community. If the proposed changes were agreed, she believed it would disrupt living conditions for residents and urged Members to consider residents and their plight.

Councillor P Smith asked if Mrs Comerton agreed that the level of noise would be reduced by the introduction of padding around goals. Mrs Comerton advised that the through source material that a sound consultant had tested sound levels with padding on, with one ball and the noise level had been 72db with a child whilst an adult could manage to reach sound levels of between 100 to 119db. These figures, she believed would provide evidence that even with padding, a significant sound level would still exist and if conditions were changed to allow longer opening hours for the pitch, it would have a detrimental impact on those living nearby.

(Mrs Comerton was taken back to the attendee room on Zoom at 19:32, at which time, David Donaldson, William Orbinson KC, Rey Gaston, Peter Moran and Chris Warnock were brought into the meeting. Mr Orbinson was to be speaker for the presentation.)

Mr Orbinson explained to Members that the proposal would allow for Upper Sullivan's facilities to be used and enjoyed by the local community whilst adhering to the visions of both the school and Department of Education. The pitch had been publicly funded and could be used by sporting organisations and community groups in the same way that the school's other facilities were. As such organisations could only operate in the evenings, the application had sought to remove the exclusionary bar that meant the school was the only entity that could use the pitch as well as to extend opening hours in order to facilitate other organisations' ability in using the pitch. Hollywood Ladies Hockey Club, Hollywood Sports Forum and local fitness and drama clubs had expressed interest in their use. Due to child protection issues, the facilities could not be used during normal school hours and both the school and Department of Education required such external organisations to be properly convened, including agreement to Sullivan's terms and conditions of use, as well as having their own public liability insurance in place.

He described Sullivan School's vested interest in the concerns of local residents and how they had engaged the services of Northern Ireland's leading acoustics consultancy FR Mark, represented by Mr Gaston who attended this meeting. Mr Gaston's research and investigation concluded that, the urban surroundings within which the school was located accounted for the lion's share of noise pollution. In addition, Mr Gaston's research had determined that noise produced by way of hockey games would not be of an unacceptable level according to sports specific environments. The assessment had been supported by Environmental Health who, when taking into consideration the representations put forth, agreed that the proposal and conditions before Members should not adversely affect the denizens of nearby dwellings.

Mr Orbinson understood that Members must give the views of their constituents great consideration. He asked that Members also take into consideration, the actions that Sullivan School had already carried out voluntarily and at cost to mitigate any noise factors that may be associated with the pitch.

With regard to car parking, Mr Orbinson advised that as external organisations would not be using facilities at the same time as school staff and pupils, there would be no overlap between the two and as such, adequate space would exist for those who would use the facility outside of school hours. DfI had been consulted and raised no concerns with regard to traffic generation. He advised Members that Mr Hutchinson's house of 2 Belfast Road also abutted the pitch in a much more front-facing orientation with less screening than the residents of 4 Belfast Road. In a letter of support Mr Hutchinson praised the school as a good neighbour and, in a similar fashion, Mr Orbinson hoped Members would agree to the proposal and conditions set forth on the night in order for Sullivan to be themselves, a good neighbour to both those dwelling nearby but also the wider community.

Councillor Walker enquired as to what tests had been used to measure decibel sounds and what effect using all six goals at the same time would have upon sound levels. Mr Gaston explained that he had carried out the tests himself and done so in a location as close as possible to 4 Belfast Road. They had been carried out whilst the senior boys hockey team were practicing as he believed the youthful enthusiasm of the team who were quite mature in stature would provide the best results and indeed, be more intense than during a hockey match. On paper, one could theorize that six goals used at the same time would increase decibel levels if they were placed as close to 4 Belfast Road as possible which would equate to 8db of an increase. However, the goals would not be placed together beside 4 Belfast Road and instead would be spready out at varying distances. Due to this distance factor coupled with the reduced angle of view and screened barrier, sound increases would be negligible.

Councillor P Smith referred to Mrs Comerton's comments on the impact of the pads on noise levels and her lack of optimism in their effectiveness. He was curious as to the difference between padded and non-padded goals. Mr Gaston had tested this as well with the senior boys hockey team at a time when the 1.8 metre high barrier was in place. On both occasions, the average and maximum noise levels had been significantly reduced by at least ten decibels when comparing non-padded and padded goals. Mr Gaston referenced a statement by Mrs Comerton earlier regarding

115-119db, advising that any tests carried out had not managed to reflect such figures. In computer modelling, levels would reach 44db whilst at a first floor level, 48db was the average hourly value.

Councillor McCean regarded 119db as a surprising figure given 120db caused severe hearing damage and was curious as to the figure's provenance. He also wanted to know if the school had sourced the best padding possible to be the best possible neighbour. Finally, in referencing an unfortunate, unrelated incident whereby a pensioner on a mobility scooter died after being unable to continue his journey on a pathway due to parked cars, he wanted to know if the school had taken into consideration and had assurances that parking around the facility would not involve the blocking of pavements. Mr Gaston explained that the padding was a propriety system brought in especially for the project and astroturf had also been used to dress the sides of the boards around the pitch. The manufacturers of the padding did not give estimates in terms of decibel reductions. Mr Gaston's tests had shown the difference the padding made with results being displayed as spikes upon a graph. The ambient traffic noise had registered as 55db in the evenings and so Mr Gaston was unable to explain the origins of the 115-119db figures quoted by Mrs Comerton. He explained that the barriers built around the pitch were made from heavy timber and that sound had to travel around it as opposed to through it. With the inclusion of topography where the pitch and the barrier were at a higher level than 4 Belfast Road, it added to the ability to block sound with a 1.5 metre differential in ground height coupled by the 1.8 metre high fence. With the noise being generated by hockey taking place at ground level, the barrier worked very well and would mean that voices would be the louder sound.

William Orbinson explained that generous parking would be available to users as there would be no overlap between them and school usage of the car park. The proposed condition 5 which was a negative condition had required that prior to extended use, a site-managing plan including parking provision would be agreed by Council. As such, further measures could be addressed as part of that process whilst the Council would effectively have a veto if they found the situation was not satisfactory. David Donaldson added that the changing room facilities were adjacent to the school and that those who would use the pitch would be parking near them as opposed to beside the pitch.

Councillor McAlpine understood the padding had been applied to permanent goal mouths and wished to ensure the same would apply to mobile goals. David Donaldson advised that the school had purchased three sets of padding for all six goals and that at the time of writing, it only applied to permanent goals as community use had not begun yet. However, padding was purchased for all the goals including mobile versions and planning permission required it to be fitted before being used. Councillor McAlpine asked if students and community users would respect neighbours to the schools and how such might be communicated in terms of noise generation. David Donaldson explained that the community use would be curtailed to properly convened clubs or organisations and would be subject to terms and conditions agreed to by the school. In these terms and conditions, it would allow for expectations to be laid before those using the premises with an ultimate sanction for those not acting in accord.

Councillor McKee asked the pitch benefited from natural screening by trees in terms of sound travel to houses. Mr Gaston advised that trees and vegetation would make little difference to the noise reduction but distance between goals and adjacent gardens, reduced angles of view and any screening by long barriers or walls would be the biggest factors. He did point out however that an element of psychology exists whereby not seeing the source of noise can make those living nearby busy roads believe the volume to be lower.

Councillor McClean proposed, seconded by Councillor P Smith that the recommendation be adopted, and that planning permission be granted, subject to outlined conditions.

Councillor McClean was reassured by explanations provided by those speaking at the meeting and believed the school had gone above and beyond with care and scientific research, as well as the safety net of the Council having a veto. Councillor P Smith shared the same views and understood the expressed concerns of residents though believed the evidence that had been supplied at the meeting from different sources had been robust.

Councillor Walker appreciated those that had spoken at the meeting were qualified but had concerns over the increased hours each night plus the additional opening hours over bank holidays and presumably school holidays. He asked if there was any value in having a consultation with neighbours to see how the opening hours had affected their lives. The Head of Planning understood his concerns but advised that under protocol for operational planning committee, the application could be approved with conditions, amended or refused until additional conditions were set. The pitch had been primarily created for hockey but the school was already open to using it for other purposes. It was not being looked at as additional hours representing 365 days. The environmental Health department had assessed the issue since 2018 with monitoring which is why it had taken so long to reach the planning committee.

The Senior Environmental Health Officer explained that Environmental Health had carried out their own monitoring with time spent to the front and back of 4 Belfast Road. They had been content with Mr Gaston's background ambient levels statement of 50db which meant the rear garden was already subject to equal or higher sound levels due to surrounding noise levels such as traffic.

Councillor Walker asked if an agreement took place tonight, could the decision be revised if issues were to present themselves in the future. The Head of Planning advised that a statutory nuisance with regard to noise would require complaints to be raised, and from that monitoring would be carried out to ascertain issues. However, the conditions did not set out a maximum decibel value. The Senior Environmental Health Officer explained that any complaints could be addressed and investigated similarly to other noise complaints.

As Councillor Walker did not support the recommendation, a vote was called, with 8 in FAVOUR, 2 AGAINST, 2 ABSTAINING and 1 ABSENT. The vote was carried. The results of the vote can be found below.

FOR (8) Alderman	AGAINST (2) Alderman Keery	ABSTAIN (2) Aldermen Gibson McIlveen	ABSENT (1) Alderman
Councillors Brooks Cathcart McAlpine McClellan Moore P Smith Thompson	Councillor Walker	Councillor	Councillor McRandal

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor McClellan, seconded by Councillor P Smith, that the recommendation be adopted and that planning permission be granted.

4.2 LA06/2018/1196F – Floodlighting proposal for new artificial pitch and additional planting to perimeter of pitch – Sullivan Upper School, Belfast Road, Holywood
(Appendix II)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

DEA: Holywood & Clondeboyne

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

Proposal: To add 6 15m floodlighting poles around a new artificial pitch and additional planting to perimeter of pitch.

Site Location: Sullivan Upper School, Belfast Road, Holywood

Recommendation: Approval

The Head of Planning explained to Members that the application followed on from the previous item, and again was before them as the Council had received objections from six or more addresses which were contrary to the recommendation to approve.

In parallel with the approval granted in relation to the previous item back in 2015, approval was granted for the erection of 6no. 15m high floodlighting poles to serve the replacement artificial pitch. In line with the previous restrictions discussed in relation to the previous proposal, use of this floodlighting was restricted to use by the school only, and in line with specific hours of operation.

The proposal essentially comprised of the same two separate elements as follows: Non-compliance with Condition 2 which restricted the use of the approved floodlighting to school use only, and Condition 3 which imposed restrictions on the hours of operation. The difference between the approved hours and those sought by the variation consisted of starting one hour earlier and finishing two hours later on weekdays (total increase of 3 hours), starting 30 minutes earlier on Saturdays (total

increase of half an hour), and provision to use the floodlighting for five hours between noon and 5pm on Sundays.

Whilst those excellent sporting facilities had greatly improved the sporting and recreational facilities available to pupils, the present conditions attached to the 2015 approval essentially prohibited the local community, including youth groups, sports clubs, individuals etc. from taking advantage of the facilities.

Sports clubs interested in using the pitch tended to operate in the evenings and would have required floodlighting beyond the restriction of 8pm, given the winter nature of the sport. There was a plethora of other examples whereby schools and sports facilities utilised floodlighting beyond 8pm, such as CIYMS, Strathearn School, and Bangor Grammar.

Policy OS 7 of PPS 8 stated that floodlighting of recreational facilities would be permitted where there was no unacceptable impact upon the amenities of people living nearby; there was no adverse impact on visual amenity or character; and public safety would not be prejudiced.

The J&A further highlighted that floodlighting could extend the hours of operation of such facilities, thereby creating greater flexibility and potential for enhanced use by more people, both as participants or spectators. Care would have to be taken, however as to ensure that such development would not cause unacceptable harm to amenity or prejudice public safety.

Representations received included 5 letters of support, Objections from 6 addresses, a proforma letter from 3 apartments, plus an MLA. The issues raised concern primarily to Light pollution; concerns relating to Increase in traffic and parking, and noise impact were addressed under the previous application.

The previous approval specified that the floodlighting was to be hooded and to operate in accordance with specified lux levels. There were not proposed changes to those lux levels as they operated at the time of writing.

The school also received approval under W/2007/0566/F for a synthetic pitch with 15m high floodlighting columns (the same height as those to the front of the school) to the rear of the school building. It was not known if the school implemented this approval, but of interest was that the use of the pitch and those floodlights was not restricted to school use only, and the hours of operation for the floodlighting was restricted to 8.00am to 11.00pm Monday to Friday and from 8.00am to 6.00pm on weekends, with no restriction on public/bank holidays. The floodlighting columns were positioned in close proximity to dwellings on Demesne Road and Wood End.

The extension to the hours of operation of the floodlighting would be apparent from September to April for the two hour extension in the weekday evenings, and approximately from December to February for the additional hours at the weekend, so limited to winter months. That extension of usage had been considered in the context of that urban location with street lighting along Abbey Ring and along the main Belfast Road during hours of darkness 365 days a year. The lights were fitted with hooding and to be conditioned to be turned off when the pitch was not in use.

Environmental Health had undertaken light monitoring from inside no. 4 Belfast Road and based on measurement results and professional experience, considered that the present floodlighting did not constitute a statutory nuisance.

Should the Committee have considered that the first application was approved, then it remained that the use of floodlighting beyond the previous restrictions as set out should be approved, otherwise the previous determination to approve would have been curtailed significantly.

Objectors assert that the floodlighting would be utilised for an additional 8 months per year, however, floodlighting was only utilised when hockey was to be practised or played – which was by nature limited to a number of months of the year. That floodlighting related specifically to the hockey pitch. Commonly those people who played hockey engaged in other sports during summer months.

There was also comment made regarding the design and size of the floodlights impacting on visual amenity, whereas this lighting had been previously approved and was in situ. That approval was not challenged on a point of law. The fact was that there were residential properties abutting the curtilage of the school, within which various sporting activities took place.

Examples of complaints noted by the objector to the school concerned:

Three dates when floodlights turned on when no one using pitch
Five dates when lights remained on long after students left the pitch
One date when lights on for 1.5 hours when no practice

This was 9 out of 1822 days since November 2017 when lights first became operational – representing half of 1%.

It was considered that such issues could be conditioned effectively with a timer built in to reflect limit on upper time of usage specified. In that respect, if Members were minded to approve this application, delegated powers would be sought to amend the conditions to reflect this requirement to build in some form of timer to adequately ensure turn off of the lights at latest time specified.

The Council's Planning Service opened an enforcement investigation in 2018 in respect of alleged breach of condition 4 of W/2014/0422/F regarding floodlighting being above specified lux levels, supported by a lighting report commissioned by the occupier of 4 Belfast Road. The school in response advised that it had commissioned its own light report which necessitated their lighting supplier travelling from England to attend to adjustments to all six lighting poles. Those adjustments resulted in the school accepting a slight detrimental impact on the pitch playing surface uniformity in order to alleviate its neighbouring residents' concerns.

Further to receipt by Planning of the School's lighting report, Planning sought guidance from Environmental Health in the context of the report in regards the Lux Levels of the Floodlights. In their opinion, the school had complied with condition 4 of planning approval W/2014/0422/F and also noted that the conditions at the site would fall below the threshold that would be considered nuisance in respect of the

Cleaner Neighbourhoods legislation. The case was closed as there was no breach of planning and the School was in compliance with condition 4 of planning approval W/2014/0422/F.

In line with the Case Officer Report and Addendum, the application was recommended for approval subject to the conditions as set out.

(Mrs Comerton was brought back to speak at the meeting at 20:19)

Mrs Comerton advised that she lived nearest the floodlights and that safeguarding the living conditions of local residents would be an acknowledged interest and that the application this evening could allow for hockey to be played 100% of the time or any other sport. The joint effect of conditions two and three meant that the pitch would not be used continuously or for prolonged periods with lights, instead allowing for lights to be used from November to February for approximately 1.5 hours per weekday with lights rarely on after 17:00. The application would seek to drastically extend these times throughout the year and beyond 17:00. She cited that on the 21st June 2022 sunset was at 22:04 and believed this would mean lights would be required even on the longest day of the year. She stated that a school representative had stated the pitch would just be for hockey which opposite to that which the application of the evening sought.

The use of lights throughout the year would be detrimental to local residents with issues such as light-spill and excessive glare. She asked for Members to distinguish between hours for school use and any other community use and consider that school does not change the agreed lighting times given it did not make full use of the pitch during such times. Mrs Comerton stated that the Council had not carried out any kind of lighting assessment or modelling and that the amended lux plan was furnished to Environmental Health in June, not February 2018. She explained that no evidence existed to identify that lighting as it was at the time of writing was within parameters subject to paragraph 21 of planning approval and that Council should be satisfied that such was within parameters before agreeing to any extension of use.

Mrs Comerton advised that a robust lighting assessment including a vertical lighting plan should be required to assess any impact on local residents and that there had been a lack of enquiry and material information to this point in time. Without these elements, she believed that the applicant had failed to prove that the scheme complied with OS7PPS8 which would affect Members' ability to come to a decision without knowledge of proper impact on residents. Quoting OS7PPS8, she explained that it would protect individuals from excessive light and light pollution, however the pitch lights shone into both her home and garden as well as affecting other residents despite adjustment to the lighting in 2018. The EHD stated that harm may be caused even where there was no statutory nuisance. She referred to an incident where a school engineer had said to her that glare would exist as the lights were floodlights and that one Mrs Doherty had reported in 2019 that moderate to high glare was produced by the floodlights. In order to protect residents from additional glare from extended hours, Mrs Comerton believed lumens could be lowered and floodlights fitted with further baffles and dampeners to reduce light spill. Though streetlights existed nearby, Mrs Comerton advised that it did not mean floodlights should be

used at the same time and for longer periods especially considering that street lighting was softer.

She stated that condition 2 should be varied, not removed and a condition added to restrict glare that may emanate from the pitch. With condition 3, it was not a requirement to change lighting times as Holywood football club and Holywood Ladies hockey team could be accommodated until 20:00. She advised that the owner of 2 Belfast Road was frequently away from home with no children residing there and that it was further away from the noise and lighting. Mrs Comerton believed no weight should be given to the previous 2007 approval as it was in a different location and circumstances. Given that each issue should be dealt with upon their own merit, other applications and approvals should bear no sway upon decisions of Members this evening. She explained that trees did not provide screening in months other than summer given their deciduous nature.

(Mrs Comerton was returned to the gallery at 20:31 and David Donaldson, William Orbinson KC, Rey Gaston, Peter Moran and Chris Warnock were brought into the meeting. Mr Orbinson was to be speaker for the presentation.)

Mr Orbinson explained to Members that this application would allow for the school's facilities to be used by the wider community in line with their and the Department for Education's vision. Interested organisations operate during the evening by nature and the lighting arrangements at the time of writing would significantly constrain operating times and availability to such parties and the community. The extended variant of light operations sought were modest and allowed the school to operate as similar establishments and schools did within the Ards & North Down fiefdom that were located beside residential areas; a situation accepted by Environmental Health and Councils. Environmental Health confirms that the proposal would not give way to a statutory nuisance and saw no reason to require the school to reduce light impact. In line OS7 and PPS8, there would be no unacceptable impact in residential amenity, nor upon visual or character representations in the area, or a prejudice to public safety. Residential amenity was protected by a series of measures by the existing lighting levels reducing from the optimal 500 lux to 300 lux averages that the school had agreed to. The lighting had been agreed to be amended to allow for average drop-off levels in lighting to fall from 300 lux averages to between 0.67 to 1.83 at the boundary of 4 Belfast Road, an equivalent to less than 2 candles at the boundary. The directional hoods focused light to the playing surface with minimal spill beyond. This had all been carried out whilst lighting from streetlights and other sporting venues existed. When the hockey pitch would be in use is what mattered as opposed to when it may be theoretically used. The actual use of the extended lighting would be carefully controlled and only in use when the pitch is used and would welcome conditions from Environmental Health atop those already placed by Council officers. The retention of the condition for securing the previously agreed lux levels was also welcomed. Support had been given to Sullivan school by Mr Hutchinson whose house faced the pitch with less screening than 4 Belfast Road. The school hoped Members would endorse the recommendation of the evening and that keep in mind that there would not be significant impact on dwellings surrounding the pitch, including that of 4 Belfast Road.

(As no Members wished to indicate, David Donaldson, William Orbinson KC, Rey Gaston, Peter Moran and Chris Warnock were returned to the gallery at 20:33.)

Councillor McKee asked if trees would assist in protection from light pollution for residences abutting the pitch. The Senior Environmental Health Officer advised that without knowledge on the height of trees or their juxtaposition in relation to lighting, no comment could be made nor the impact made by their presence. Councillor McKee suggested that if trees were removed in the future, it could increase light pollution for such residences. The Head of Planning explained that the trees had been proposed for protection given their visual amenity and not for their assistance in blocking light. If the trees were to die, it would be difficult to replace them like-for-like especially given the time for trees to grow to the same height.

Councillor Walker held the same concerns as the previous item in that the extra hours for the pitch in terms of lighting could be difficult for residents and so did not support the recommendation.

Alderman Keery asked if the age demographic of those dwelling near the pitch had been taken into consideration such as families with young children who could suffer sleep deprivation due to floodlights shining toward houses until potentially 22:00. The Senior Environmental Health Officer advised that light levels were much lower than permitted levels outlined in guidance and that 22:00 was considered as an acceptable cut-off time.

Councillor P Smith proposed, seconded by Councillor McClean that the recommendation be adopted, and approval be given subject to outlined conditions.

A vote was called, with 7 in FAVOUR, 2 AGAINST, 3 ABSTAINING and 1 ABSENT. The vote was carried. The results of the vote can be found below.

FOR (7)	AGAINST (2)	ABSTAIN (2)	ABSENT (1)
Alderman	Aldermen	Aldermen	Alderman
	Keery	Gibson	
	Walker	McIlveen	
Councillor	Councillor	Councillor	Councillor
Brooks	Walker		McRandal
Cathcart			
McAlpine			
McClean			
Moore			
P Smith			
Thompson			

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor P Smith, seconded by Councillor McClean and in a VOTE with 7 FOR, 2 AGAINST, 2 ABSTAINING and 1 ABSENT, that the recommendation be adopted and that approval be granted subject to outlined conditions.

4.3 LA06/2022/00335/F – Proposed/Part replacement wastewater rising main connecting Stricklands Glen Wastewater Pumping Station (WWPS) to Brompton Road WWPS with associated temporary site access and material storage areas
(Appendix III-IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

DEA: Holywood & Clandeboye

Committee Interest: Application relating to land in which the Council has an estate

Proposal: Proposed/part replacement wastewater rising main between Stricklands Glen WWPS to Brompton Road WWPS with associated temp site access and material storage areas.

Site Location: Lands 46m N of no.7 Brompton Road and 80m W of no.29 Stricklands Bay, Bangor, to include Brompton Road and Stricklands Glen pumping stations and the coastal path between.

Recommendation: Approval

The Head of Planning first provided some background as to the nature and necessity for this application.

Members approved the Stricklands Glen Wastewater Pumping Station and the Brompton Road Wastewater Pumping Station at its meeting of July 2017 and November 2018 respectively.

NIW then intended to replace the wastewater rising main between the two pumping stations utilising its Permitted Development rights as a statutory undertaker. However, as the site of the proposal infringed on the ASSI, a Habitats Regulation Assessment under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995.

The HRA proceeded to Appropriate Assessment stage. NIEA was consulted as the Statutory Nature Conservation Body under the Habitats Regulations. Natural Environment Division responded to the initial consultation to state that it was recommended that this project be progressed to a full planning permission, in order to secure the implementation of mitigation through the Appropriate

Assessment. NIEA requested further mitigation to prevent disturbance to wintering bird features of Outer Ards SPA, such as Redshank and stated that should be included within the HRA and Construction Environmental Management Plan. NIEA Water Management Unit also requested additional information to be included in the CEMP to ensure effective mitigation to protect the water environment.

The Shared Environmental Service considered that as NI Water is a competent authority under the Habitats Regulations it could essentially be trusted to carry out the mitigation it proposes through its HRA and CEMP without the need for a planning application/conditions to secure mitigation.

The Planning Service did not agree with that approach and requested a legal opinion on this discrete matter. That opinion stated that there was no basis in statute or caselaw for this proposition by SES of NIW as a competent authority. It also confirmed that the Council had no power to impose non-statutory conditions on the

Class H(a) of the Permitted Development Regulations to secure the mitigation required and concluded an application for planning permission would be necessary to enable conditions to be imposed on the grant of planning permission which would provide the necessary legal mechanism to secure the mitigation in question.

The rising main was described as a pipe that conveyed sewage under pressure – connecting the two WWPS, from where the sewage was then pumped to a Wastewater Treatment Works. The rising main would be installed beneath the existing coastal path to connect the two pumping stations. The existing path was to be excavated to lay the pipework then reinstated as per the existing path with bituminous surface material. The proposal intended to improve and maintain the existing wastewater infrastructure network. The works would essentially reduce the aggregate number of spills from the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) discharging to Belfast Lough to meet DAERA standards, thereby improving the coastal water quality. The proposal would therefore result in benefit to the local area and environment. The length of the route is approximately 540m, and during excavation works, the excavated material was to be temporarily stored in the Brompton Road pumping station compound. It had been envisaged that the works would take five weeks to complete, with the coastal path requiring to be closed during this period.

Environmental Health was consulted in relation to the potential impact from the excavation works. It considered there were a number of sensitive receptors located near the proposed works, including dwellings at Downshire Road/Lane and Stricklands Bay. Subsequently there could be noise and vibration disturbance effects mainly caused by breaking through the existing path and associated plant and machinery noise. Environmental Health recommended conditions for any approval forthcoming, including restrictions on hours of construction activity.

Access to the site by construction vehicles would be via Brompton Road and Downshire Road with turning heads at each of the pumping stations. Any increase in traffic as a consequence was expected to be short lived and would not significantly inconvenience traffic flow or prejudice road safety.

Given the sensitive location of the application site in relation to various national, international nature designations, a plethora of documents were submitted and consulted upon, resulting in a number of conditions being recommended.

At the time of publication of the Case Officer Report, only two representations from one address, 19 Downshire Lane, were received. Those raised issue with the quality of the maps as submitted, and queried operation of a proposed vent. The agent submitted a technical note in response to this query detailing how the vent would work, confirming that no noxious odours were likely given the flows through the pipeline and the air vent will be no closer than 20m to the curtilage of any residential property. Air would be expelled up to ten times per hour and no vandalism would be possible as it would be contained underground and accessed via a manhole.

Further to the Case Officer Report being published, NIW's agent contacted the Planning office to advise that as was worded at the time of writing, Condition 4 may cause a problem in respect of gaining access by machinery. Condition 4 was worded as follows:

'All proposed works shall be confined to the existing hardstanding man-made coastal path. Where widening of the path to enable plant equipment access is required, this shall be confined to the landward side of the coastal path, not the marine side. This is to protect the marine environment.'

An addendum was prepared to vary the condition accordingly in relation to that concern, and that prompted submission of an objection querying how Planning could therefore ensure that NIW restricts its operations to that which was only required in absolute and did not include any requirement for restoration.

Marine Team had requested detail in respect of the precise distance that any seaward encroachment would have required; and how much the path the path needed to be widened in the area stated, alongside confirmation that any seaward encroachment would be temporary.

NIW engineers confirmed that any seaward width would be no more than 1m extra as an absolute maximum, and that any extension within that 1m would be kept to a minimum. Any encroachment would be temporary and reinstated once the works were completed.

In that respect, The Head of Planning considered the condition would be better worded as follows:

'The proposed works shall be confined to the existing hardstanding man-made coastal path, as far as practicably possible. Where widening of the path to enable plant equipment access is required, this shall be confined to the landward side of the coastal path as far as practicable, with any encroachment required on the seaward side being a maximum of 1m. The entirety of the path affected shall be restored to the satisfaction of the Council' and seek delegated authority to refine that condition with further input from Marine Team as required.

(Councillor McRandal joined the meeting at 20:43).

Councillor Cathcart agreed that the term, 'where possible,' in regard to widening of pathways was far too vague. He recalled at a previous meeting that the site compound for proposed storage of excavated materials had been mentioned in a recent meeting and wished to ensure that decisions made today were in keeping with any made previously. The Head of Planning confirmed that the Brompton Road site had a decision notice outlining its removal within two months of the newer site being becoming operational. As such, the Head of Planning agreed that a new condition would have to be added to ensure that upon completion, each of the compounds be cleared of any excavation material.

Councillor Cathcart proposed, seconded by Alderman Keery that the recommendation be adopted, and delegated powers be granted to refine the condition regarding pathway expansion and to include an additional condition that excavated materials also be removed from sites upon their demolition.

Councillor McKee agreed that some terms had been vague and wished to ensure land was protected.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Alderman Keery, that the recommendation be adopted, and delegated powers be granted to refine the condition regarding pathway expansion and to include an additional condition that excavated materials also be removed from sites upon their demolition.

RECESS 21:01 resuming 21:10

4.4 LA06/2022/0466F – Tensile canopy structure for public use, Hibernia St, Hollywood
(Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: Report outlining the planning application.

DEA: Hollywood & Clandeboye

Committee Interest: An application made by the Council.

Site Location: Hibernia Street (Pedestrianised Section), Holwood

Recommendation: Approval

The Head of Planning explained that this item was before Members as it was an application submitted by the Council. Funding had made available by the Department for Communities in respect of COVID recovery. The Hollywood Town Advisory Group was consulted in respect of monies available and considered the provision of a canopy structure over this pedestrianised section of Hibernia Street would be appropriate. The cover was also welcomed by Tourism events team in respect of particular events that ran in that location.

Whilst the application related to a canopy proposal, it did not involve the creation of additional retail space. The canopy was to be supported by five columns on each side of the street with a white PVC waterproof fabric attached. The canopy would extend 11m across the section of Hibernia Street closest to High Street. The fabric would have 80% opacity and columns were to comprise a mix of 2.5 and 3m heights. It was not considered that the proposal would harm any features of the proposed Area of Townscape Character.

All works were proposed to be carried out on the pedestrianised area with no alterations to any vehicular access. Whilst DFI Roads returned an eventual response of No Objection, it had requested a number of conditions and informatives, related to the fact that DFI was the landowner, and a number of agreements were required prior to commencement of works, such as relating to street lighting, an indemnity agreement, structural engineer sign off, maintenance agreement and geotechnical agreement. The applicant was aware of those DFI Roads comments. The relevant conditions only had been attached to the recommendation to approve.

Councillor Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Cathcart that the recommendation be adopted, and the report be noted.

Councillor Adair spoke of Hibernia Street being opened through funding that had been received whilst he was Mayor and welcomed the addition.

RESOLVED, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Councillor Cathcart, that the recommendation be adopted, and that planning permission be granted.

5. UPDATE ON PLANNING APPEALS

(Appendix VI - VII)

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

New Appeals Lodged

1. The following appeal was lodged on 18 July 2022.

PAC Ref	2022/A0080
Application ref	LA06/2019/0518/O
Appellant	Mr 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

Update on Withdrawal of Appeal

2. Last month Members were advised of the withdrawal on 02 September of the following appeal prior to the hearing date of 13 September 2022.

PAC Ref	2021/A0100
Application ref	LA06/2018/0324/O
Appellant	Belfast Central Mission
Subject of Appeal	Development of 24 no. extra care living units and shared communal facilities
Location	Lands at 95 & 97 Donaghadee Road, Millisle

Officers were questioned upon the reason for the withdrawal and at that time were unable to advise; however, upon the recommencement of the PAC's online services, it was apparent that a third party objector submitted an application for award of costs against the withdrawal of the appeal, a copy of the decision thereof being attached.

Paragraph 10 of that decision set out that, in response to the costs claim, the respondent stated that as a charitable organisation, Belfast Central Mission has a finite amount of financial resources that have been negatively impacted by the effects of Covid-19 and the current economic pressures. In light of that, the decision was made to prioritise the organisation's resources on the delivery of its existing services to support those in need. Since the submission of evidence in the appeal, the organisation has undertaken a review of future care delivery. They considered it prudent, and only fair to all parties, to withdraw the appeal until that review was complete.

The Commissioner then at Paragraph 11 highlighted that there was not a significant period of time between the submission of evidence and the planned hearing. Statements of case were requested by 29 July 2022 and rebuttal comments by 17 August 2022. He states that 'Whilst the charitable status of the respondent is acknowledged, the Covid-19 pandemic had been raging for two and a half years at the point of withdrawal and well before the appeal was submitted. It appears unusual that only 11 working days after the final submission of evidence and only 6 working days before the hearing a review of future care delivery should be initiated causing such a significant change in circumstances that would require the respondent to abandon the entire proceedings. Initiation of the review and withdrawal of the appeal were choices made by the respondent and I am not persuaded that they were solely prompted by events outside of its control. It is natural that with only 6 days to go before the hearing, the parties would have been preparing for it and I consider that giving such late notice does constitute unreasonable behaviour.' However, in the absence of any submitted detail, the application for award of costs was denied.

Decisions

3. The following appeal against the Enforcement Notice detailed below was considered and the appeal on Ground (d) failed and the appeal on Ground (a) succeeded and the deemed planning application was granted subject to conditions, resulting in the Enforcement Notice being quashed.

PAC Ref	2020/E0041
Application ref	EN/2020/0224 & LA06/2018/0358/CA
Appellant	Mr Glenn Ford
Subject of Appeal	Appeal against Enforcement Notice dated 21 October 2020 alleging the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Change of use of land and domestic stable block to an Animal Rescue Centre; ii. Erection of a detached building being used as dog kennels; iii. Erection of a detached prefabricated building being used as a cattery; iv. Siting of three portacabins, a storage container and portable animal kennels; v. Metal fencing/gates more than 2m in height and vehicle entrance gates adjacent to a roadside more than 1m in height
Location	Lands at 'The Barn Animal Rescue Centre', 4 Ballyblack Road East, Newtownards

Ground (d) of the appeal was brought on the basis that when the Enforcement Notice was served, no enforcement action could be taken. This ground was pursued solely in relation to point i. of the above Notice. The Commissioner did not consider that the evidence provided related to the use of the site as an animal rescue centre, therefore that use was not immune from enforcement action and the appeal on that ground failed.

The deemed planning application was considered in relation to the following:

- The principle of development

- The acceptability of the reuse of an existing building
- The ability of the development to satisfactorily integrate and the impact on rural character
- The impact of the development on the safety and convenience of road users and
- The disposal of waste and effluent from the site

The appeal under Ground (a) deemed application was allowed subject to a number of conditions restricting the number of dogs on site at any one time, restriction on hours when dogs could be kennelled outside any buildings, and various noise and ventilation mitigation measures to be installed.

The costs award decision and appeal decision were appended to this report.

Details of appeal decisions, new appeals and scheduled hearings can be viewed at www.pacni.gov.uk.

RECOMMENDED that Council notes this report.

The Head of Planning summarised the report to Members.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor McKee, that the recommendation to note be adopted.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart seconded by Councillor Moore, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted item of confidential business at 21:18.

6. UPDATE ON PLANNING PORTAL REPLACEMENT PROJECT (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)

Alderman Kerry left the meeting at this stage – 10.27pm

7. VERBAL UPDATE ON JUDICIAL REVIEW STATUS

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

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

PC.01.11.2022PM

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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 Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Walker, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 10.33pm.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Environment Committee was held remotely via Zoom on Wednesday, 2 November 2022 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Alderman McDowell

Aldermen: Armstrong-Cotter

Councillors:	Boyle	Johnson
	Cathcart	MacArthur
	Cummings	McAlpine
	Edmund	McKee
	Irwin	Woods
	Smart	Smith M

Officers: Director of Environment (D Lindsay), Head of Waste and Cleansing Services (N Martin) and Democratic Services Officer (R King)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Carson and Councillor Greer.

NOTED.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

NOTED.

3. ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT – MONTH 6 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2022 (FILE FIN45 / 40012)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the Environment Directorate's Budgetary Control Report covered the 6-month period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022. The net cost of the Directorate was showing an overspend of £925k (7.7%) – box A on page 3. However, £614k of this was due to covid, electricity, gas and vehicle fuel pressures which were mitigated in the Council's Budgetary Control Report (presented to the Corporate Services Committee) by Ear-Marked Fund transfers.

Explanation of Variance

Environment's budget performance was further analysed on pages 4-6 into 3 key areas:

Report	Type	Variance	Page
Report 2	Payroll Expenditure	£312k adverse	3
Report 3	Goods & Services Expenditure	£785k adverse	3
Report 4	Income	£172k favourable	3

Explanation of Variance

The Environment Directorate's overall variance could be summarised by the following table:-

Type	Variance £'000	Comment
Payroll	312	Environment HQ - Covid related - £183k ¹ (this is offset by Ear-Marked Fund transfer in the Council BCR). Waste & Cleansing - £245k - overtime £115k; base salaries & agency £138k. Assets & Property – (£70k) - vacancies Regulatory Services – (£46k) - vacancies_
Goods & Services		
Assets & Property	856	Electricity - £254k ¹ Gas - £71k ¹ Vehicle fuel - £106k ¹ (the above are offset by Ear-Marked Fund transfers in the Council BCR). Vehicle maintenance - £122k Property Maintenance - £164k – increased reactive maintenance. Technical Services - £61k – refurbishment work.
Income		
Waste & Cleansing	(147)	Arc21 recycled waste income – (£121k).
Assets & Property	(53)	Wind turbine (£34k)
Regulatory Services	28	Building Control - (£121k) – plan fees (£81k); property certificates (£27k). Licensing - £105k – Off street car parks £75k; Licensing £21k.

Type	Variance £'000	Comment
		Neighbourhood Environment - £44k – fines.

¹ Funds from the Earmarked Fund had been released to mitigate these exceptional costs to date. This would be kept under review as the year progresses.

REPORT 1 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT						
Period 6 - September 2022						
	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance	Annual Budget	Variance	
	£	£	£	£	%	
Environment						
200 Environment HQ	295,402	93,000	202,402	188,500	217.6	
210 Waste and Cleansing Services	8,129,258	8,092,100	37,158	15,532,800	0.5	
220 Assets and Property Services	4,411,938	3,679,200	732,738	7,177,100	19.9	
230 Regulatory Services	166,401	213,700	(47,299)	454,900	(22.1)	
Total	13,002,998	12,078,000	A 924,998	23,353,300	7.7	
REPORT 2 PAYROLL REPORT						
	£	£	£	£	%	
Environment - Payroll						
200 Environment HQ	260,535	78,000	182,535	156,800	234.0	
210 Waste and Cleansing Services	3,909,070	3,663,800	245,270	7,306,000	6.7	
220 Assets and Property Services	933,641	1,003,800	(70,159)	2,019,900	(7.0)	
230 Regulatory Services	944,226	990,000	(45,774)	1,990,400	(4.6)	
Total	6,047,472	5,735,600	B 311,872	11,473,100	5.4	
REPORT 3 GOODS & SERVICES REPORT						
	£	£	£	£	%	
Environment - Goods & Services						
200 Environment HQ	34,867	15,000	19,867	31,700	132.4	
210 Waste and Cleansing Services	4,860,149	4,920,900	(60,751)	9,220,000	(1.2)	
220 Assets and Property Services	4,085,656	3,230,000	855,656	5,795,000	26.5	
230 Regulatory Services	318,049	347,500	(29,451)	725,900	(8.5)	
Total	9,298,721	8,513,400	C 785,321	15,772,600	9.2	
REPORT 4 INCOME REPORT						
	£	£	£	£	%	
Environment - Income						
200 Environment HQ	-	-	-	-		
210 Waste and Cleansing Services	(639,961)	(492,600)	(147,361)	(993,200)	(29.9)	
220 Assets and Property Services	(607,359)	(554,600)	(52,759)	(637,800)	(9.5)	
230 Regulatory Services	(1,095,874)	(1,123,800)	27,926	(2,261,400)	2.5	
Totals	(2,343,195)	(2,171,000)	D (172,195)	(3,892,400)	(7.9)	

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

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

Councillor Boyle queried the reported £925,000 adverse and it was explained that this was largely from the Assets and Property section where the utility budgets were located. The increased energy costs had brought additional pressures along with additional payroll costs in Waste and Cleansing due to the ongoing Covid-19 contingency measures throughout the reporting period.

Noting a £164k adverse reported for 'reactive maintenance', Councillor MacArthur asked for further detail and the Director explained that this proportion of maintenance spend was non-discretionary and where it was unforeseen/unscheduled it was liable to result in overspend. Works falling within this category were often safety related. Councillor MacArthur asked if there was a budget for responding to incidents of vandalism and the Director added that this sat within the reactive maintenance budget and that only a set amount was set aside each year. It was difficult to legislate for an unforeseen spate of vandalism for example so the budget could never be completely accurate and would therefore result in an overspend if a spate of vandalism did occur.

In a further query, Councillor MacArthur asked if there were budgets within other directorates to react to specific antisocial behaviour issues such as goalposts being removed from a Council owned football pitch. The Director added that while there were pockets of funding for such maintenance issues within other directorates, property and maintenance budgets were now largely centralised within this budget.

Councillor Smart queried a reported £122k overspend on vehicle maintenance and if the Vehicle Maintenance Policy needed to be reviewed. The Director explained that the factors behind that overspend related to increased cost pressures for parts and labour. That unforeseen increase had been unbudgeted, but he felt that it was not necessary to review the Vehicle Maintenance Policy.

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter had a further query around payroll budgets, and this would be discussed 'in committee'.

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

4. Q1 SERVICE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR REGULATORY SERVICES (FILE 43600)
(Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment 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 this 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 2021)
- Service Plan – developed annually (approved April/May 2021)

The Council's 17 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 achievements:

- Building Control was extremely busy and was meeting the increased demand and was therefore generating a larger than expected income. The Licensing Department also faced the increased demand of interpreting changing legislation and guidance from the NI Executive as well as being short staffed. The enforcement element of NET had struggled to maintain and recruit staff, despite being 65% down on personnel the staff continue to patrol the hotspot areas across the borough.

Emerging issues:

- The 'after use' surveys that all Regulatory Service users received had an extremely low uptake. This was important as our four customer service objectives used this data to report on our performance. This was despite many attempts to encourage and make it easy for people to access and fill out.
- The education programmes had not developed as quickly as expected due to staff shortages and working with schools was more challenging as a result of the pandemic.
- Recruitment continued to be problematic.

Action to be taken:

- The organisation and Regulatory Services were exploring ways to speed up recruitment as well as appeal to more people as a potential employer.
- The development of the education programme had now fully commenced and would be reported on separately.

- Service Unit Managers would organise focus groups to ascertain customer satisfaction.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

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

The proposer, Councillor Boyle, noted that education programmes had been identified as an emerging issue due to staff shortages and asked what the factors behind the shortages were. The Director advised of widespread recruitment difficulties within the employment sector. In particular this had impacted on staffing levels within the Neighbourhood Environment Team and managers had struggled to replace high quality personnel that had progressed into new roles. Another element was that schools were not yet fully open to engaging with outside organisations such as Council, following two and a half years of Covid-19 restrictions and the impact on other aspects of the core curriculum.

Councillor Boyle appreciated that it would be slow progress in returning to pre-Covid levels in terms of the education programmes, however despite being 65% down on personnel, he welcomed that Neighbourhood Environment staff continued to patrol the hotspot areas across the Borough.

Councillor Edmund asked if it was anticipated that the education programmes would have returned to pre-Covid-19 levels by next year and the Director advised that while he didn't have specific information around that, he confirmed that a comprehensive programme of pupil engagement was being prepared in readiness to be rolled out as soon as the schools were ready to accommodate it.

Pointing to the recruitment difficulties, Alderman M Smith asked what action was being taken to fill the vacant positions. The Director advised that managers across the Council were working with Human Resources to revise recruitment protocols, including review job/candidate criteria and looking into providing in-house training for otherwise suitable candidates that did not meet previously required minimum criteria.

Responding to a follow-up query from Alderman M Smith on customer service focus groups, the Director explained that there were various segments of service users across the directorate. Entertainment Licence applicants were included for example, along with community groups that worked with the Neighbourhood Environment Team. Heads of Service were looking at new and effective ways to engage with customer bases given that current response rates to postal surveys were poor. Elected members could be included on customer focus groups if that was desired. Alderman M Smith advised that she would be interested to hear more about how the focus groups would work.

In a further query, Councillor Woods asked what the total number of vacancies were in the Neighbourhood Environment Team and the Director confirmed he thought it was down by around three staff, although it was a constantly changing situation. There were certain roles in Council that were particularly challenging and demanded a very specific type of individual to fulfil them effectively, and those roles were

included on that list. He explained that the Council had benefited from a very successful NET staff complement over recent years but as those employees progressed their careers it had often been difficult to replace them. It was a challenge faced by many Councils.


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

5. NEIGHBOURHOOD ENVIRONMENT TEAM Q2 ACTIVITY REPORT (1 JULY 2022 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2022) (FILE 92009)
(Appendix II)

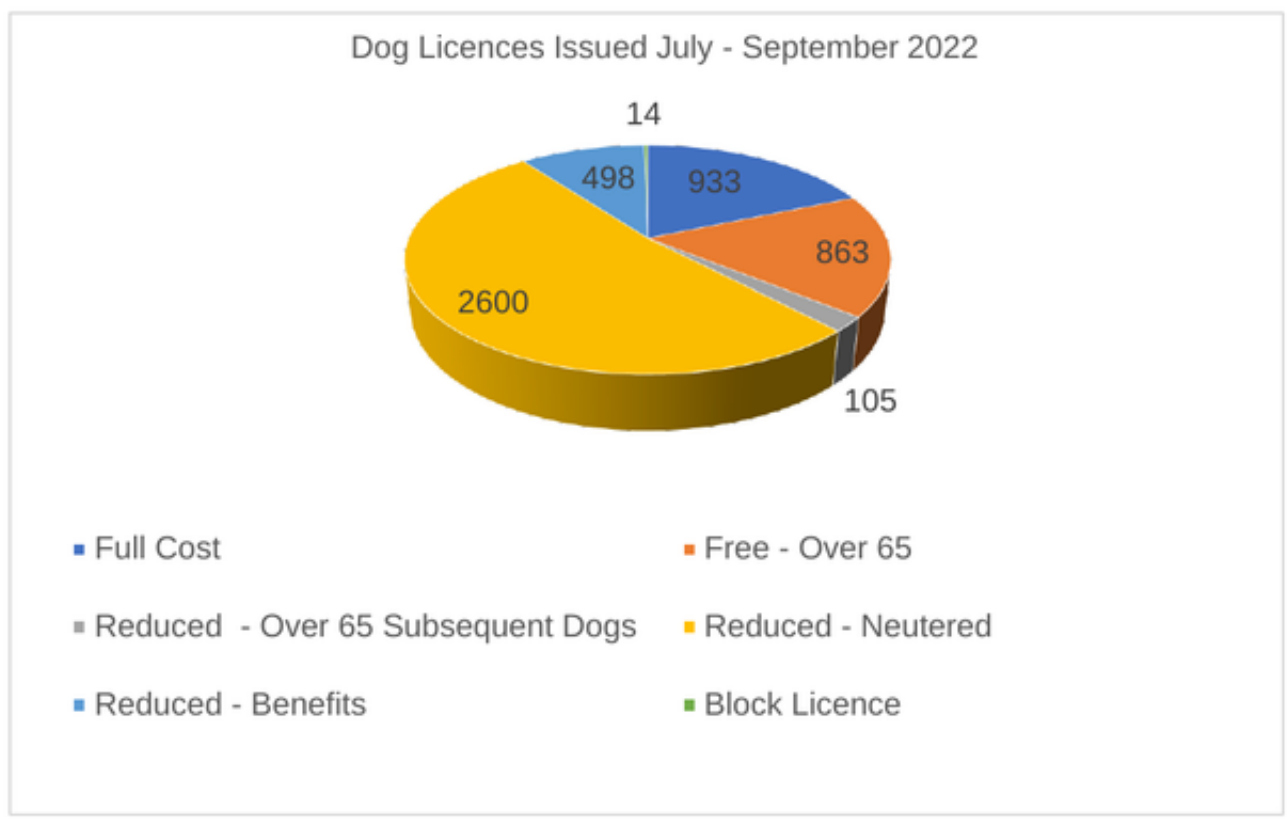
PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that the information provided in this report covered, unless otherwise stated, the period 1 July to 30 September 2022. The aim of the report was to provide members with details of some of the key activities of the team, the range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

Applications to the Neighbourhood Environment Team
The Dogs (NI) Order 1983

It should be noted that these figures included block licences where one licence could be issued for multiple dogs in specific circumstances.

	Period of Report July – September 2022	Same 3 months July - September 2021	Comparison
Dog licences issued during the three months	4999	4913	

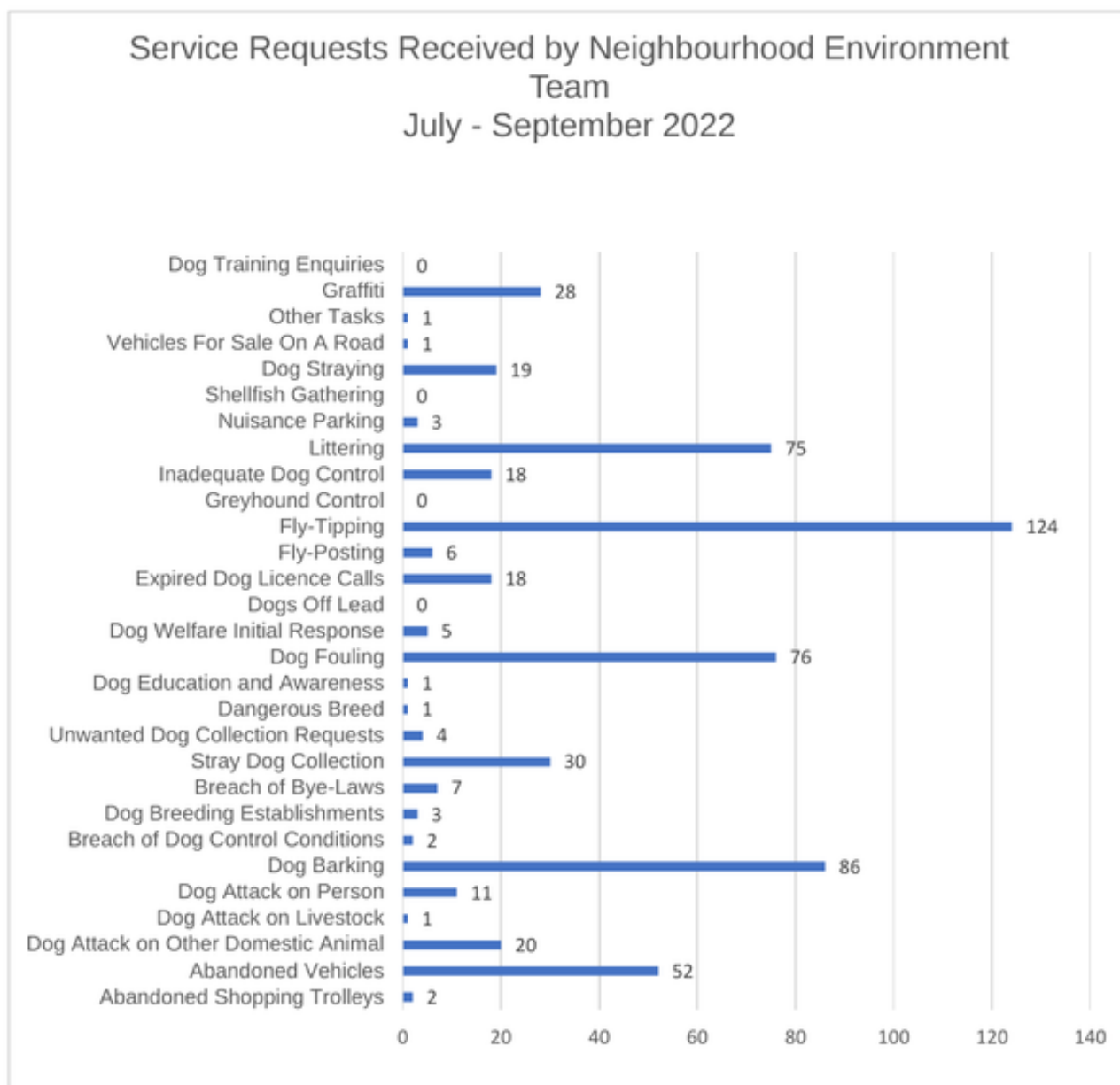
Concessionary licences remain at 82% of dog licences issued over the period. This included the categories of neutering (£5) / over 65 (Free – 1st dog) / over 65 subsequent dog (£5) and income related benefits (£5). Standard dog licence £12.50 and block licence £32.



Investigations

The Neighbourhood Environment Team responded to a range of service requests. In terms of time spent, some types of service requests would be completed immediately whilst others required a longer-term strategy to find a resolution. The total number of service requests had been outlined together with a sample of the types of requests received.

	Period of Report July – September 2022	Same 3 months July – September 2021	Comparison
Service Requests received the three months	623	839	↓



Non-Compliance Prosecutions





	Period of Report July – September 2022	Same 3 months July – September 2021	Comparison
Total Prosecutions	11	18	

The level of prosecutions during the same period last year included a back log of cases delayed due to COVID 19.

Fixed Penalty Notices

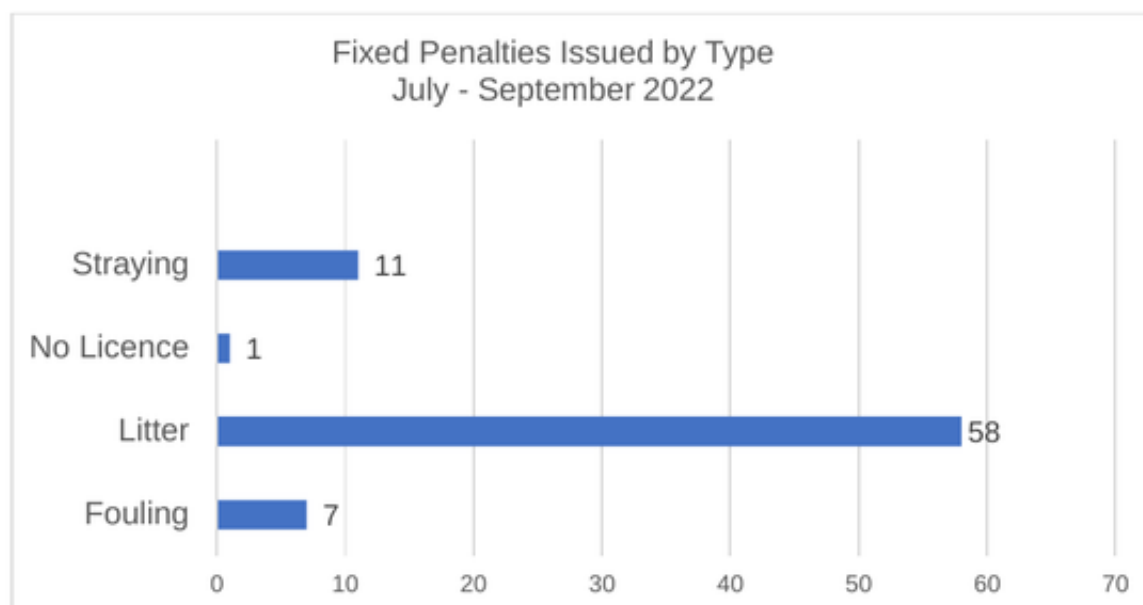
In addition to cases being prosecuted through the court, **79** fixed penalty notices had been issued in respect of various matters. This continued to demonstrate a sustained Council focus upon detecting and punishing those who persisted in committing environmental offences in the Borough and highlights one patrolling outcome of the Neighbourhood Environment Team achieved despite the reduction in staffing levels due to sickness and vacant posts. Recruiting for Enforcement officers was ongoing in October 2022.

The main categories of fixed penalties were shown below. Other categories existed i.e. breach of dog control conditions, exclusion order and off lead offences. The offer of an £80 Fixed Penalty Fine was an opportunity to discharge liability to prosecution. A payment period of 28 days was permitted. If paid within 14 days, the fine was discounted to £60. As staff recruitment and retention remained a challenge this had impacted on the number of notices issued during the quarter.

	Period of Report July – September 2022	Same 3 months July – September 2021	Comparison
Straying	11	12	
No Licence	1	31	
Litter	58	58	
Fouling	7	9	

The following graphs demonstrated:

1. the total number of fixed penalties issued by the Neighbourhood Environment Team during each month of the period of report
2. the fixed penalties issued during the period of report by type



Appendix A to this report provided a street level location for each of the penalty fines issued during the period of report 1 July to 30 September 2022.

Environmental Education Programme – Preliminary Actions

The Neighbourhood Environment Team was continuing to prepare an Environmental Education Programme during this financial year with a view to rolling out delivery in the next financial year subject to ongoing Recycling Community Investment Fund budget availability.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

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

Noting the reported dog behavioural statistics, Councillor Cummings queried if there were plans to reintroduce the Green Dog Walkers Scheme or any other training programmes around dog behaviour. The Director advised that there had been discussions looking at getting those types of responsible dog owner schemes back on track through a mixture of in-house and contracting arrangements, however such schemes were considered to be discretionary spend and would be on a list for review in the upcoming estimates process.

Alderman M Smith noted the low number of dog fouling reports but questioned the reporting system and explained of potential complainants being put off pursuing a complaint further when their personal details were requested as part of the process. The Director reassured the Member that such details were held in confidence and used for providing feedback to the complainant. Their personal details were not given out unless the complainant consented and was willing to have their details used in evidence. Alderman M Smith felt it was vital to reinforce that message to people contacting the Council to report issues.

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

6. NOTICES OF MOTION

6.1 Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Adair and Councillor Edmund

That this Council agrees to install signage to identify the townlands of Ballyblack and Kirkistown and that officers are tasked to bring forward proposals to incorporate townland signage across our Borough.

(Councillor Adair joined the meeting – 7.30pm)

Councillor Adair proposed, seconded by Councillor Edmund, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

Councillor Adair outlined his proposed Notice of Motion, explaining that the issue of townlands had originated from former Ards MLA and Councillor Kieran McCarthy who had raised this in the 1990s. As a result of that work there were now townland signs erected at a series of locations throughout the Ards Peninsula. They were part of the Borough's Christian heritage and common across the island of Ireland and western Isles of Scotland. Many townlands originated from Norman times and it was right and proper to keep their history alive.

The proposer added that there had been two requests, from the people of Kirkistown, given the marking of its recent 400th anniversary, and Ballyblack. There had been calls from the residents of each for the townlands to be identified through signage.

Councillor Adair hoped that Council would agree to this motion and he added that it included a request for a policy to incorporate townland signs throughout the Borough going forward. It was something that could be done to ensure the old townland names continued to live on. He felt that it was something that could be done, perhaps as a phased approach, as and when existing signs needed to be replaced.

Speaking as seconder, Councillor Edmund supported the proposal and added that people from the townlands took a pride in their heritage.

A debate followed in which Councillor MacArthur was happy to support the motion and was aware that many other Councils across Northern Ireland had already adopted the approach towards dual signage. She agreed a phased approach to replacing existing signage would be sensible and it was also worth noting, on a side issue, that signage in some of Donaghadee's old streets was in need of replacement.

Councillor Cummings was also supportive of the motion and felt that the link with Kirkistown was important and would give Council an opportunity to show its appreciation of the history throughout the Borough. The naming of townlands was also about telling a story and recognising people's appreciation for language that had been used over the years.

While sympathetic to the principal of the motion, Councillors Smart, Boyle and McAlpine were cautious about agreeing to something without seeing the costs first and indicated they could not support the motion as it stood but would welcome an amendment that would request to bring forward cost proposals.

Summing up, Councillor Adair pointed out that the motion included a request for a report to look at establishing a policy for marking of townlands going forward and his motion was only asking for a commitment to Kirkistown and Ballyblack in response to long term calls from residents. He attempted to reassure members that a townland sign would not incur significant costs as there was no planning permission required and the signs were smaller than the village signs for example that incurred a £1300 cost. The townland sign was similar to a regular street sign.

On being put to the meeting with 6 FOR, 7 AGAINST, 1 ABSTAINING and 2 ABSENT, the motion FELL

7. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

- (a) An update on the Recycling Community Investment Fund for this, and next, financial year.

Raising the above matter, Councillor Woods was mindful of the ongoing budgetary process but asked what budgets had been allocated in the current year and ringfenced for the upcoming financial year.

The Director advised that £100,000 was allocated in the current year for RCIF and £75000 of that was dispersed through Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) to the regional Live Here Love Here (LHLH) programme and the local LHLH small grants scheme which a number of groups had availed of to fund community environmental initiatives. The remaining 25,000 was currently earmarked for educational programmes with schools and that had gone offline due to reasons referred to earlier in the meeting. A programme was being prepared to run though at the earliest opportunity. He explained though it was a discretionary budget and there was no statutory imperative to spend that money. A proposal was required each year for all significant discretionary spend amounts and the RCIF would be listed as such during the estimates process for a decision on funding allocation. He was unable to state what the future would be next year for the RCIF, as its fate would be determined by the outcome of the estimates process.

Councillor Woods asked who would decide on what discretionary spend budgets would be put forward. The Director advised that officers would put those forward, but Members would make the final decision. Ultimately the decision would go to full Council, so all Members would be involved at that stage. He understood that the list of discretionary spend items would be presented to Members at an upcoming meeting of the Special Corporate Services Committee.

Councillor Woods asked if the RCIF would be included on the list put forward in the estimates process and the Director confirmed it would be, but he was unable to state at this stage where it would rank among the many potential discretionary spend projects. He reminded Members that there would be difficult decisions to be made in reaching an acceptable rate rise.

CIRUCLATED FOR INFORMATION

(a) Northern Ireland (NI) Local Authority Collected Municipal (LACM) Waste Statistics Latest Publication – Recycling Rates

Recognising that landfill waste targets were for below 10% by 2030, Councillor MacArthur asked how Ards and North Down Borough Council's statistics compared with the overall figures stated in the above correspondence.

The Director advised that Council recycling rates were around 50%, similar to the national average but our landfill rate was higher due to the fact that this Council only sent a small amount to incineration and the vast majority of our residual (non-recycled) waste went to landfill compared to other Councils which send a lot to incineration.

NOTED.

POINT OF ORDER

Councillor Woods requested that Item 11 be brought out of committee for hearing while Councillor Cathcart asked why it was listed as 'in committee' on the agenda.

The Director advised that there was now a confidential aspect resulting from an amendment at the last meeting. It related to part three of the officer's recommendation.

Councillor Cathcart asked if it would be possible to split the item and deal with part three of the recommendation in committee. Councillor Woods felt it was appropriate for the item to be dealt with in its entirety out of committee given the particular issue had been discussed in public in the past. However, she accepted Councillor Cathcart's suggestion and the Chair agreed to that approach.

(Councillor Johnson had left the meeting at this stage)

11. FOLLOW UP REPORT - REGULATION OF HRC USE

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Environment detailing that at the October 2022 meeting of the Environment Committee, in relation to the report at Item 5 on that agenda regarding Recycling Engagements Campaigns, the following was agreed:

"The Council approves the proposals set out in the report, including the consolidated policy document Appendix 1 but excluding the policy requiring the householder to be

present in a van/large trailer when using an access permit. This policy will be brought back to Committee for further detail and consideration of the exceptions to this policy and how this will operate. Appendix 2 will also be brought back to Committee for further consideration of changes to trailer sizes.

Pedestrian access to Hollywood HRC as previously agreed by Council should also be considered further."

The following information was provided in relation to the matters raised in the proposal that was agreed at Committee in October 2022.

1. Conditions of Permit Use/Access - Exemptions

The policy as brought before Committee in October 2022, specified that a person who applied for and obtained a permit must be present on site when that permit was presented for use. This was in keeping with the principle that a householder should reasonably be expected to assume appropriate responsibility for the disposal of their own household waste (particularly the larger amounts that generally required to be transported in a van/large trailer), as this was a matter of significance. The policy was deemed necessary as it provided the Council with a means of further ensuring that all of the waste brought into one of the Borough's HRC under cover of a permit, was indeed all household waste emanating from the permit applicant's residential address within the Borough. If a person granted a permit needed to engage the services of a commercial provider to transport their household waste in a van, this was allowed under the policy as long as the permit recipient travelled with their waste to the HRC to confirm that all the waste being transported in the van was indeed their own household waste. It should be noted that many Councils did not allow a commercial waste contractor to gain access to their HRCs at all, even if they were bringing household type waste.

Members would be aware that most if not all commercial waste transport businesses provided their services well beyond the boundaries of Ards and North Down Borough and would uplift not only household waste but also other categories of waste – commercial, business, industrial etc. for commercial gain. Without the measure specified in the policy relating to the permit holder being present when their waste was being brought by the commercial service provider to one of our HRCs, it was entirely conceivable that at least some of the waste brought into the site in the commercial van/trailer could be waste that was not household waste and/or did not originate within the Borough. The presence of the householder who had applied for the permit, to confirm on site that all of the waste being brought in was their household waste, was an important further safeguard against infiltration of non-Borough/non-household waste into our waste disposal system (and against the additional associated cost burden to local domestic ratepayers).

The policy brought before the Council in October and attached at Appendix 1, provided an exception as follows:

Exception categories:

- *Where there was no-one in the household who was deemed able to attend the HRC when that permit was to be used to gain access, by virtue of age, disability or ill health.*

This was entirely in keeping with existing arrangements to support residents who were unable bring their bins to the kerbside for collection on health grounds, and an assisted lift service could be provided where the applicant fulfilled the criteria. It was considered entirely reasonable and appropriate that the same protocol could be used for exemption from the requirement for a resident to accompany their household waste which was being transported in a van/trailer by a commercial service provider. Where a resident was already approved for the assisted bin service, we would allow that person to also avail of the exemption from the requirement to accompany their household waste when they were using a HRC van/trailer permit.

2. Change to Trailer Size

The previously agreed policy required trailers other than single axle trailers to require a permit. However, experience since then had shown that a growing number of relatively large trailers were being used to frequently transport waste into our HRCs, in circumstances that went well beyond normal/legitimate householder requirements. Whilst such trailers might have been single axle, some were larger than the standard/small domestic trailer envisaged when the exemption from the requirement to apply for a permit was introduced.

It was the opinion of officers who were routinely involved in managing the HRCs that there was a need to revise the small trailer exemption, to help further reduce the abuse of the permit system for commercial/business waste disposal purposes. The policy of many other Councils had been reviewed, and the standard trailer restriction practice used elsewhere was by reference to the size of the trailer being used rather than the number of axles - with restriction to a maximum 6ft x 4ft trailer size, most commonly used. It was important to note that any householder who wished to transport large sized/large amounts of household waste items in a trailer larger than 6 ft x 4 ft, would still be able to do so under the policy; they would simply have to obtain a permit. Therefore, the change did not prevent legitimate householder use in these circumstances, it merely assisted the Council in better controlling potential means of abusing its HRCs for commercial/business waste disposal.

RECOMMENDED that the permit application process be moved to an online platform (with telephone/manual option as a back up to online application process)

That recommendation number 1 on report Item 11 is amended as follows:

1. Where a householder is applying for a permit that they want a commercial service provider to use to dispose of their household waste at a HRC, this will be permitted without the need for the householder to accompany the waste in question, subject to provision of relevant information when applying for the permit (list of their household waste items to be brought to the HRC on their behalf and details of the commercial service provider who will be using their permit).

2. The provision relating to the requirement for a permit to be obtained for trailers greater than 6ft x 4 ft is confirmed, as detailed in the policy at Appendix 2.

Councillor Cathcart proposed, seconded by Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, that:

1. Where a householder is applying for a permit that they want a commercial service provider to use to dispose of their household waste at a HRC, this will be permitted without the need for the householder to accompany the waste in question, subject to provision of relevant information when applying for the permit (list of their household waste items to be brought to the HRC on their behalf and details of the commercial service provider who will be using their permit).
2. Council does not proceed with point 2 of the recommendation and maintains existing vehicle and trailer type restrictions.

Councillor Cathcart felt it would be inappropriate to change the vehicle and trailer requirements for users of the HRC which was his reasoning for the alternative proposal in relation to part 2. However, in terms of the addendum report, he was pleased that officers had taken time to reflect and felt that an online system would be better.

He asked for some clarification around the amended recommendation and the Director confirmed that it would replace wording within the attached appendices.

Responding to a further query, the Director advised that during the van/trailer permit application process, the householder would need to indicate whether they were planning to bring the waste themselves or whether the permit and the waste would be brought to the HRC by someone else, either a commercial service provider or a friend/neighbour. Where the waste items were not being brought to the HRC by the permit applicant themselves, they would need to be listed when applying for the permit and the information provided during the online application process would then be married up through an electronic system at point of disposal. Any additional items not listed on the permit would not be accepted.

The software provider had ensured that the system was user friendly and specific details of the permit application could be processed within seconds. A telephone application option would be available for those not wishing to book online themselves.

Councillor Cathcart appreciated that the officer had taken on board previous concerns in relation to those issues and he hoped Members would realise this was a much better policy where people were not asked for medical exemptions etc. It was a much simpler process adding the element to say that someone was disposing waste on your behalf.

He had taken issue with the trailer aspect as he felt it was simpler for staff to spot double or single axle trailers and the systems had been established and waste carriers had adapted their vehicles and trailers around that policy.

He welcomed much of the recommendation that had come forward from this review and it would help to boost recycling but felt that it was important to stick to existing vehicle restrictions at this time.

On a side note, Councillor Woods welcomed that recycling rates were up from the previous quarter. She asked for clarity around the review under discussion and the Director outlined the move to an online permit application system for HRC access, which included the provisions for permit applicants to allow someone else to carry and dispose of waste on their behalf.

Councillor Woods felt it was adding another level of bureaucracy, but the Director said that he believed it would make the system more efficient as site staff would know in advance what waste would be arriving and it would allow for better control of waste disposal at our sites. It was also removed the need for a three-day advance notice period as that had been necessitated by the paper-based system.

In a final query from the Member, the Director clarified that, in the event of a household clearance following a death, the executor or personal representative of the deceased would be responsible for the permit application and should be able to provide necessary proof of residence information.

Councillor McKee welcomed the addendum as it dealt with previous concerns that the Committee had expressed. He shared the same concerns as the proposer around the trailer changes and feared Council would be unfairly changing the goal posts for those people who had purchased trailers to comply with existing vehicle and trailer requirements. He asked for clarity on why officers wanted to change the current vehicle and trailer policy.

The Director advised that the move to 6x4 trailer restrictions would eliminate a loophole and prevent persistent abuse by carriers that were disposing of commercial waste without a permit. He clarified that a householder with a larger than 6 x 4 ft trailer would not have been denied access to a HRC with their household waste, but rather could readily get access via a permit using the new efficient online system. The benefit would mean it would limit the abuse of those people coming in with what was suspected to be commercial waste, as they would be required to apply for a permit for every visit if their trailer exceeded the proposed 6 x 4 ft size. The permit system would enable officers to much more easily identify any abuse of the system. He added that the online permit application system could go live in a matter of weeks, once agreed by the Council.

The Director also clarified that a householder coming in regularly with a larger trailer containing compostable garden waste only needed to apply annually for a multi-use garden waste permit.

Councillor Boyle felt it important that members did not forget that these were household and not commercial recycling centres and did not want to see staff put in a difficult situation in terms of rejecting waste that was not itemised by the applicant. He was pleased though that it would eliminate the need for situations where the householder had to accompany a stranger in a van to dispose of their waste.

Councillor Boyle appreciated the importance of householders making sure neighbours or friends taking rubbish to the HRC on their behalf were following the guidance and pointed to a fly tipping incident where a bathroom suite was disposed of on the roadside because the HRC was closed. The waste contained information that was easily traced back.

The Director reaffirmed that the onus was on the householder to ensure they trusted the person taking the waste. There were examples, such as this, where householders had fallen foul of the consequences of their waste ending up somewhere it shouldn't have.

Councillor Irwin proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor McAlpine, that Council accepts the officer's recommendations in respect of Items 1 and 2.

Councillor Woods and Alderman Armstrong-Cotter challenged the proposed amendment and felt that it was a direct negative of the proposal, however Councillor Irwin later clarified that she was proposing the officer's amended recommendation from the addendum report and the chair was content for the amendment to proceed.

Outlining her amendment, Councillor Irwin noted that the vehicle and trailer amendments in relation to point two of the recommendation were in response to a loophole that had been identified by officers and it was right to support them in closing it given the consequences. In respect of the point one of the recommendations, as long as Officers were satisfied that part one of the proposal met legal obligations then she was satisfied with that.

The seconder, Councillor McAlpine recognised that as there was so much money at stake, it was important to identify and close loopholes. She felt that the policies in the recommendations were very well thought out and Members should support them.

Unable to support the proposed new trailer and vehicle restrictions, Alderman Armstrong-Cotter was aware of HRC users who had purchased new trailers or made changes in order to comply with the existing policy and she was not comfortable in changing that policy. She welcomed the Director's clarification that waste transportation on behalf of a householder was not illegal and that the new system had provisions for people to instruct others to carry their waste rather than have to put themselves in vulnerable situations and accompany a stranger to the HRC. In addition, she welcomed that the three day wait would no longer be in operation and assumed that users could book a time that suited and that there would be assistance for those not comfortable with the online system.

Councillor Smart welcomed the recommendation from the addendum report, feeling that it was an effective system however he took the same view as the initial proposer and seconder that changing vehicle and trailer restrictions would lead to potential confusion when many, at significant expense, had already adapted to the existing requirements.

Summing up, Councillor Cathcart, on clarification from the Director, recognised that garden waste would be treated separately and a multi-use permit could be purchased on an annual basis to provide compostable waste carriers with unlimited access regardless of their trailer size. He did not believe though that altering the size of the trailer would make much difference, the key element was the separation of waste and it would be easy for staff to identify the single and double axle trailers.

The amendment, on being put to the meeting, with 4 voting FOR, 9 voting AGAINST, 0 ABSTAINING and 3 ABSENT, the amendment FELL.

A vote was taken on the original proposal. On being put to the meeting, with 12 voting FOR, 0 voting AGAINST, 1 ABSTAINING and 3 ABSENT the proposal was declared CARRIED.

AGREED, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, that:

- 1. Where a householder is applying for a permit that they want a commercial service provider to use to dispose of their household waste at a HRC, this will be permitted without the need for the householder to accompany the waste in question, subject to provision of relevant information when applying for the permit (list of their household waste items to be brought to the HRC on their behalf and details of the commercial service provider who will be using their permit).**
- 2. Council does not proceed with point 2 of the recommendation and maintains existing vehicle and trailer type restrictions.**

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS

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

(The meeting went into recess at 9.07pm and resumed at 9.17pm)

- 3. ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT – MONTH 6 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2022 (FILE FIN45 / 40012) (CONTINUED)**

*****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)

8. TRIAL OF VEHICLE MOUNTED SOLAR PANELS (FILE 79001)

*****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)

9. COUNCIL STRATEGIC WASTE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS (FILE 72010)

(Appendix III)

*****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)

10. RENEWAL OF TENDER FOR GLASS PROCESSING (FILE 77072)

*****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)

11. FOLLOW UP REPORT - REGULATION OF HRC USE

(Appendix IV - V)

*****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 Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Cummings, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 10.14pm.

The Holywood 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:

After two years of limited activity due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Chamber of Commerce was, at the time of writing, holding regular events and continuing its work promoting the Town.

All activities had and would be in line with pandemic restrictions and would be adjusted if needed. The objectives of the Holywood Chamber were:

- Membership
 - Mapping exercise that was to establish the profile of the Holywood Business sector at the time of writing and identify possible new members.
 - Drive to support those who were already members and attract new members.
- Networking Events
 - They were to continue to offer a range of networking events which would support the business communities as well as working in partnership with the Council and supporting events relevant for County Down.
 - To promote working in partnership by offering networking possibilities in formal as well as social settings.
- Training/Information session
 - Support Initiatives which would help businesses/traders improve skills.
 - To be guided by the membership of issues relevant to the business community.
- Shop local initiatives
 - Support activities that were to increase the profile of Holywood.
 - Support Initiatives which would add value to visitors/tourists to the town.
- Seasonal Activities
 - Support activities that would increase the profile of Town Holywood.
 - Bespoke Christmas activity as well as stand-alone events or partnering with other events to add value.
- Social media
 - To support initiatives to keep an updated Web and Social Media presence.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the above report.

(Derek West, a representative of Holywood Commerce was brought into the meeting to speak at 19:04 hours).

Mr West apologised for his colleague, Susi Diesel, who had been running late for the meeting. He advised Members that a verbal update was to be provided this evening as opposed to a presentation. Works had been carried out on a virtual tour which had been a big project for Holywood and though still on-going, it was now published. Aerial mapping had been carried out via drone footage with businesses on the main thoroughfare being integrated into the map to assist people exploring Holywood on a virtual basis where they could 'visit' shops and access mainstream media, Facebook, Instagram and any commercial websites linked to such businesses.

For Christmas, they had embarked on a, 'hop-to-Holywood,' campaign with a timelapse video of people arriving at the town via public transport. It consisted of a social media campaign and three adverts on the radio which would run from the 24th November through to the end of December. Mr West spoke of the hope that they might attract an older market such as those who could use smart passes for transport. Some forms of street entertainment would also be in place with a window-dressing competition for businesses and a treasure hunt for the general public. It was hoped that the campaign would continue through to Christmas to increase footfall.

Alderman Girvan reflected upon her time with the Comber Chamber of Commerce and enquired as to which stations the advertisements would be on, their cost and how Holywood Chamber of Commerce might plan to measure the success of the advertising campaign.

Mr West advised that the campaign would cost around £1k for which they would receive sixteen 30-second plays per day from Monday to Sunday on Belfast 89; chosen so because of its target audience. The commercials would be promoting a discount day initially followed by an advert promoting activities throughout Christmas and another for promoting the Chamber of Trade treasure hunt. The success of the campaign, it was hoped, would be sourced through the uptake of leaflets that would be dispersed throughout various locations in the town such as at bus/train stations and within shops. It also included an information gathering section, which if a general member of the public completed and agreed to the recording of information, would better inform the success of the events.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor S Irvine, seconded by Alderman Girvan, that the report be noted.

4. RURAL SIGNAGE SCHEME UPDATE

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that, it had been agreed by the Council in April 2022 that the Rural Signage Scheme would be implemented utilising an underspend from the Covid-19 Revitalisation Fund. The project included the production and installation of village entrance signs in the rural villages and settlements across the Borough.

Project Update

This scheme had largely been completed, with a total of 40 new entrance signs being installed in the following areas:

Ballyhalbert, Balloo, Ballygowan, Ballywalter, Carrowdore, Cloughey, Conlig, Cottown, Crawfordsburn, Greyabbey, Groomsport, Helens Bay, Killinchy, Kircubbin, Lisbane, Millisle, Portaferry, Six Road Ends and Whiterock.

Issues

Cloughey

The new village entrance sign located at the junction of Ardminnan Road and Manse Road was installed as per the planning approval, however, the landowner made a complaint regarding its positioning.

Previously, a legacy Ards Borough Council sign had been in situ in the same location for many years, but it was much smaller in size. The landowner was not content with the new larger sign and as it was located on their property, the sign had been removed and was placed in safe storage.

In order to install the sign in a different location in Cloughey, the following indicative costs would be incurred:

Architect's Fee – c.£300
 Planning Fee - £193
 Installation Fee – c.£500

Cottown

The new village entrance sign at the Cottown (on the Bangor side of the village) was installed as per the planning approval. However, shortly after its installation a complaint was received from residents of two properties located near the new sign.

One individual had made contact and advised that they had removed the sign from the ground as they believed it was blocking their view of oncoming traffic. Council's signage contractor collected the sign from where it was left, lying by the roadside and had it stored for safekeeping.

As a result of the sign being forcibly removed from the ground, some damage was caused to the face of the sign and the sign channel to the rear was bent. This matter was reported to the PSNI, who confirmed that it was a case of criminal damage.

In order to install the sign in a new location in the Cottown the following indicative costs would be incurred:

Architect's Fee – c.£300
 Planning Fee - £193
 Repair to existing signage and Installation Fee – c.£1,000

Kircubbin

One village entrance sign was installed in Kircubbin at the south end of the village. However, one additional sign was required at the entrance from Greyabbey direction, which was an oversight.

In order to install an additional new sign in Kircubbin, the following indicative costs would be incurred:

Architect's Fee – c.£300
Planning Fee - £193
Signage Production and Installation Fee – c.£1200

Summary

The total cost to resolve the outstanding signage issues as outlined above were c.£4,179. At the time of writing, there was no budget available to meet those additional costs, therefore, the installation of the signs had been placed temporarily on hold.

This situation was to be reviewed when all the remaining Covid-19 Revitalisation Projects had been completed and a review of spend had been undertaken. At the time of writing, there may be a potential to reallocate any underspend to complete the Rural Signage Scheme.

RECOMMENDED that the Council agrees to note the above and an update report will be presented to Members in due course when all remaining Covid-19 Revitalisation schemes have been completed and a review of spend undertaken.

Councillor Adair proposed, seconded by Alderman Girvan that the recommendation is noted.

Councillor Adair commended Officers for their efforts over what had been a long, four-year process for villages to agree on signage. He advised that signs had been well received by the public and mentioned that some locations had appeared to not have signs/replacement signs such as Alan's Hill between Greyabbey to Kircubbin that had perhaps been missed. In addition, a sign had not been replaced on the Glastry side of Ballyhalbert.

The Rural Development Manager advised that signs that had been missed would be looked into whilst the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning reminded Members that the Rural Signage scheme funds were for existing signs and not for the installation of those that had not existed before.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Adair, seconded by Alderman Girvan, that the report is noted.

5. NORTHERN IRELAND FOOD AND DRINK ASSOCIATION (NIFDA) ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning detailing that during the summer of 2022, a letter was received by the Chief Executive from NIFDA requesting ANDBC's consideration of Associate Membership.

At the time of writing, 3 other Councils, who would be known as strong food 'areas', held membership:

- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
- Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

The following ANDBC business were members of the Association:

- Glastry Ice-cream
- Echlinville Distillery
- Mash Direct
- Pritchitts (Lakeland Dairies)

Membership

Following the request, a meeting was convened between ANDBC officers (Economic Development and Food and Drink Development) and NIFDA representatives, which would determine the benefits of Associate Membership for Council and Borough sector businesses.

The organisation, while primarily focused on larger businesses, offered SMEs assistance too, which included advice/guidance on:

- Exporting
- Regulation
- Marketing and Promotion
- Food and Drink Sector Strategy
- Research and Development
- Technology and Innovation
- Sector Attractiveness and Skills Development
- Lobbying of government on industry issues
- Networking opportunities
- Training courses
- Help to access relevant grants and support programmes

Following the meeting, officers determined that they were to seek advice from the TASTE and Food and Drink Network (FDN) Committee on the merits of membership. That was discussed at the October 2022 meeting, and it was agreed that membership would be beneficial for the Borough and would support the further delivery of the Borough Food Strategy. The FDN therefore suggested that the Council took out membership on a pro-rata 'rate basis,' through to the end of 2022 (NIFDA operate a calendar year membership) and that it should continue its membership in 2023.

During 2023 Officers were to ascertain continuing membership benefits. The cost of membership to include the remaining months of 2022 and the full calendar year of

2023 would be up to a maximum rate of £914. That could be covered from existing Food Tourism budgets.

RECOMMENDED that Council approves membership of NIFDA for the remainder of 2022 and 2023 calendar year.

Alderman Armstrong-Cotter proposed, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the recommendation be adopted and that the Council approves membership of NIFDA for the remainder of the 2022 and 2023 calendar year.

As proposer, Alderman Armstrong-Cotter believed it was a great benefit to be part this forum, allowing for a more interconnected approach. She expressed pride for the food and drink producers in Strangford and Newtownards town who supplied much needed employment and input into the local economy, sentiments which Councillor Adair shared.

The Head of Tourism explained that the food and drinks Officer had been working hard with the network which, at the time of writing had 116 members, a 26% growth upon last year's figures and believed it would prove useful for gaining insight, networking and training for the Borough Food and Drink businesses.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, seconded by Councillor Adair, that the recommendation be adopted and that Council approves membership of NIFDA for the remainder of the 2022 and 2023 calendar year.

6. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There were no items of notified business.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, seconded by Alderman Girvan, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted items of confidential business.

7. BANGOR WATERFRONT UPDATE

*****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)

8. QUEEN'S PARADE UPDATE

*****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 Alderman Armstrong-Cotter, seconded by Alderman Girvan, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 20.12 hours.

ITEM 7.4

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ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A virtual meeting of the Corporate Services Committee was held via Zoom on Tuesday 8 November 2022 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor P Smith

Aldermen: Girvan Irvine McIlveen

Councillors: Blaney Gilmour
Chambers Irwin
Dunlop T Smith
Douglas
Greer

Officers: Chief Executive (S Reid), Director of Organisational Development & Administration (W Swanston), Director of Finance & Performance (S Christie) and Democratic Services Officer (R King)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Councillor McKimm. The Chair was sorry to hear that Councillor McKimm had been admitted to hospital and wished him well in his recovery.

NOTED.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest were notified by the following Members:

Councillor Greer – Item 3 – Presentation – NIHE, Annual Housing Investment Plan.

NOTED.

(Councillor Greer was excluded for the duration of the following item having declared an interest – 7.02pm)

3. PRESENTATION – NIHE, ANNUAL HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN

(Appendix I - II)

Grainia Long and Owen Brady, NIHE, were welcomed to the meeting by the Chair and Ms Long outlined the attached presentation.

Members were invited to ask questions and the Chair had noted that there was a reported 167 adverse variance in the five-year SHDP Performance (2017/18) figures. The target was 460 starts and the achievement was 293. He recognised the challenges in terms of capital and identifying sites and asked what other constraints were preventing NIHE from meeting that shortfall.

Ms Long advised that her organisation was focusing on investing funding and capital through Housing Associations to enable them to build. She explained the process of site assessments which were undertaken as locally as possible alongside need assessments for a particular area, and housing associations would then be directed to explore areas of housing need.

Community Planning was a key part of the work and key partners could also bring sites forward. She pointed to a data sharing agreement with the Council which was being progressed to allow the NIHE to get a greater understanding of Council's assets.

It was also important to allow the Planning team to have access to data in order to support developments as they came forward. She added that if by 2025 the NIHE was in a position to borrow funding it would want to use that investment in its existing stock but also add to new supply for the first time in 25 years.

Alderman Irvine queried the scale of temporary accommodation shortages and asked what the NIHE was doing to address the problem.

Ms Long advised that 384 placements were made in the last year and that included 149 placements to hotel and B&B accommodation while 147 were in single lease properties. Single lets were the main source but there had been 50 placements in hostels but officers were constantly looking for opportunity to lease property given that it was seven times more expensive to place people in hotels so it was only done in extreme circumstances. In the longer term, NIHE wanted to move away from short term leases. It would be better to lease over five years for example, but multiyear budgets were not available to enable that.

Querying a demand and supply issue, Councillor T Smith noted that the NIHE had identified the need for 50 properties in Donaghadee and 28 in Groomsport but the targeted build in those areas was only 15.

While the NIHE continued to peruse both areas, Mr Brady advised that due to the rural locations of Groomsport and Donaghadee, the NIHE had struggled to compete with interest from the private sector. Generally speaking though, the failure to meet targeted need was down to site availability, interest from the private sector or lack of interest from Housing Associations.

Councillor Irwin queried how a reported 12-month disruption to NIHE maintenance contracts would affect Ards and North Down housing stock, particularly in terms of sustainability targets.

Ms Long advised that the NIHE managed 130 contracts and the press reports related to 10 long term contracts delivering programmes as part of the NIHE's

planned maintenance programme. Those contractors had requested uplifts and agreement was not possible due to procurement legislation. It had been decided to let those contractors be released from the contracts. It was felt that holding those contracts could have led to job losses so it was right for them to walk away.

Overall the affects for Ards and North Down were not significant. A contract was in place and operating well and jobs were being carried out in a timely manner and officers were satisfied. Bathroom, kitchen and rewire schemes had received excellent feedback from tenants and the situation would not affect this year's programme.

Alderman Girvan asked about strategic priorities and had found the future of climate change frightening, she asked what policies were being put in place to ensure any new builds would have solar panels, electric car chargers and insulation, for example, in order for them to be as green as possible.

Ms Long explained a Sustainable Development Strategy had been launched earlier in the day and the focus was on decarbonising road stock and taking a fabric first approach towards energy efficiency in terms of warming people's homes.

It was unfortunately the case that NIHE was not responsible for building regulations so therefore could not enforce Housing Associations to build to net zero carbon standards but it was certainly NIHE advice that building should move towards reducing greenhouse gasses.

The Chair thanked Ms Long and Mr Brady for their attendance. They both left the meeting.

(Councillor Greer returned to the meeting – 7.33pm)

4. DEPUTATION - ST ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, DONAGHADEE

Mr John Hennessey, principal of St Anne's Primary School, Donaghadee, was welcomed to the meeting and invited to address the Committee. He highlighted the following:

- St Anne's had opened in 1932 as a Catholic maintained primary school but earlier this year had begun the application process for transformation to Integrated Status.
- The school had undertaken a ballot of parents and the results of that showed that 96% were in favour.
- The school's Board of Governors had submitted a formal case for the change to the Education Authority (EA) and a public consultation had ended on 14 October 2022.

- 208 formal expressions of support and 150 expressions of interest had been received from parents indicating a willingness to send their children to the school should it make the change.
- If successful St Anne's would become only the second Catholic school to change to Integrated Status. In September 2021, Seaview Primary in Glenarm had become the first Catholic school in Northern Ireland to reopen as an integrated school.
- Integrated Status would enable the school to become more sustainable and provide a vital part of the Donaghadee's infrastructure and an option for families, as a growing town.
- Despite a popular misconception, the school had always been funded by the Department of Education and not the Catholic Church. Therefore no new burden on DoE resources.
- Under Integrated Status, the school hoped to have 130 pupils attending by 2030.
- There was capacity to extend and add a further classroom to accommodate the expected demand.
- The case for change, submitted by the board of governors to the EA, proposed that the school formally transformed into an integrated school from September 2023.

The Chair invited questions from Members and Alderman Girvan queried existing and future capacity. She congratulated the school on its campaign for Integrated Status.

Mr Hennessey confirmed that 58 children currently attended the school, an increase of 16% on the same figure last year which was 50. The school could accommodate 76 pupils at present and there were plans to provide a further classroom by 2025 as it aimed to achieve 130 pupil places by 2030. That was feasible to do on the school's existing grounds.

Councillor Irwin asked if there was support from the Department of Education and Mr Hennessey explained that the Department would not get involved during this phase because the decision had to be made by the Education Minister. The Minister had taken the time to come and meet with pupils and staff along with a Transformation Action Group. She had listened but had been unable to comment due to her role in making the decision.

Alderman McIlveen asked if there was spare capacity at other schools in the Donaghadee area and what St Anne's would be providing that wasn't already available.

Mr Hennessey understood there was some spare capacity at Donaghadee Primary School but not at Ballyvester Primary School. St Anne's had always been inclusive

and there was 25% Protestant and 25% Catholic and the remaining 50% was 'other' or of 'no religion'. The school had represented the backgrounds of all its families and children. Integrated Status would mean it was formal and the planning and curriculum would then identify the different religions in a more planned and intentional way. Staff would also be represented and it would be intended to have a balanced workforce.

Alderman McIlveen believed that maintained schools did have integration already but he asked if the school would be at risk of closure if it did not change its current status. Mr Hennessey advised that the school had been listed on the EAs area plan since 2008 advising that it should be looking for opportunities for sustainability. Resources had been shared with Ballyvester Primary School, as an example of this, and it had been recognised as good practice. That work included shared staff development days and it was felt that integration would be a natural step on from that to secure the long-term future of the school.

There would still be an option for children to take part in their first Holy Communion for example if that was desired, along with celebration and recognition of other cultures and religions.

Councillor T Smith spoke highly of the school's reputation and how Donaghadee was lucky to have the primary schools it did. There had been shock in the town when there had been a threat of closure from the CCMS and any loss of the school would have been a huge blow for a growing town and population.

He asked what role CCMS had in the application process and it was confirmed that CCMS only managed the school in terms of staffing of teachers and the HR element and the 'controlled' perception was a myth. It would be managed by the Education Authority and all recruitment would go through the EA under Integrated Status.

Mr Hennessey added that the land was owned by the Church but the land was vested by the DoE to build on. The DoE would make the final decision on the school's application for Integrated Status.

Councillor T Smith recognised that all state schools did everything they could to break down social and religious barriers, but he was hopeful for St Anne's in its campaign.

The Chair wished Mr Hennessey all the best with the school's Integrated Status transformation plans. Mr Hennessey left the meeting.

5. CITY STATUS UPDATE (FIN150)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Chief Executive detailing the undernoted:

Background

Further to the letter received on 19 May 2022 from the Minister of State for the Cabinet Office, Lord True CBE, advising the Council that its application for City

Status for Bangor had been successful, work had begun on the arrangements for the signing of the Royal Warrant and presentation of the Letters Patent.

Royal Warrant and Letters Patent

Following the sad death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September 2022, revisions to the Royal Warrant and Letters Patent were required to recognise the passage of the throne to His Majesty King Charles III. In consultation with the College of Arms, the Northern Ireland Office and the Office of the Clerk of the Crown for Northern Ireland, the wording of these documents had now been agreed.

Work was now underway for the Letters Patent to be produced by the Crown Office, which would be scrievned on vellum and sealed. This was due to be completed by the end of November. The design of the Letters Patent would also include the Ards and North Down Borough Council Coat of Arms.

The cost of the production and sealing of the Letters Patent would be covered by the Council and the Northern Ireland Office, payable to the Crown Office.

Conferment ceremony

Consultation at Officer level had taken place with the other eight Towns recently awarded City Status, as part of the Platinum Jubilee, concerning the conferral of their Letters Patent. Many of these had already completed the process.

It was recommended that the conferment ceremony to present the Letters Patent to the Mayor on behalf of the Council in the presence of Members, the Lord Lieutenant and other dignitaries, in the form of a Civic Reception be held in early December.

Marking of City Status

Information had also been collated from other areas recently awarded City Status about ongoing plans to mark the award. Responses varied, with some areas choosing not to make any significant investment, while others were undertaking events/ rebranding exercises and promotional activity.

Entrance Signage

A Notice of Motion to the September Environment Committee requested that consideration be given to future Bangor entrance signs making reference to Bangor being a Platinum Jubilee City. Bangor's entrance signs were created and installed in 2017 following consultation with the Chamber of Trade. The other four towns in the Borough were also part of this project. The signage was funded by the Department for Communities. The style of the signs is such that a reference to City Status could not be added to the existing signs, instead it would need to be incorporated into the design when the signs were replaced. The shelf life of the signs was around 8-10 years meaning they would not be due to be replaced until 2025.

There were signs at four entrance points into Bangor – replacing them like for like would cost in the region of £10,000 (fabrication and installation). A simpler style of sign could be considered that would be less expensive to produce. This would not align with the signage in the other towns, but this would not be a significant issue as it related to the new City.

It was suggested that Members considered progressing this form of recognition of Bangor's City Status now, rather than waiting for the replacement schedule for the existing signs. A further report on costs and design would be brought to a future committee. To wait until 2025 would hardly be appropriate timing given the Jubilee was in 2022. However, there was no current budget for this activity.

Naming of a Building of Place

In the Notice of Motion to the September Environment Committee it was also agreed that Officers would develop proposals to name a place or building in Bangor in Her Majesty The Queen's honour. Officers had been advised that the Cabinet Office was developing guidance for public bodies that wished to name buildings or places in this way and it would be prudent to wait until this was available before progressing this part of the Notice of Motion. Members would be kept up to date on this.

Name of the 'Town Hall'

Members may have wished to consider renaming the current Town Hall in Bangor as City Hall. This would have required a 'reskinning' of the totem signage on the driveway into the forecourt (cost of £2,500 that could be met from this year's budgets). The name would also need to be changed on stationary (from the point of new orders) and in listings for the building (online directories – no cost). However, if this was agreed, it would be sensible to limit the use of the title to the period that it was in use as a civic building.

Marketing Activity

Internally Council had already begun to reference Bangor as a City in marketing materials (e.g. promotion for Christmas Switch Ons) and with relevant groups and documentation e.g. 'City' Advisory Group. We were using 'City of Bangor' as the title. Existing ezines for business, community and tourism contacts would be used to encourage the use of 'City' by relevant stakeholders and examples of businesses that were already using the term in their marketing activity would be shared. To coincide with the receipt of the Letters Patent a series of social media posts would be created to showcase elements of the winning City Status bid document. This would help to explain why Bangor was awarded the honour.

RECOMMENDED that Council considers the following:

1. Approval of the arrangements for the presentation of the Letters Patent and the Conferment Ceremony.
2. The timing of the replacement of entrance signage for Bangor and instructs officers to progress designs in keeping with the Cabinet Office Guidance when published.
3. Approval for the name change of the Town Hall, Bangor to 'City Hall' whilst it is in use as a civic building.
4. That a report be brought back on the naming of a building or place in Bangor or other locations, in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II once Cabinet Office Guidance has been issued and considered.

Councillor Gilmour indicated that she wished to make an alternative proposal with changes to the second and fourth points of the officer's recommendation.

Councillor Gilmour proposed, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that:

1. Approval of the arrangements for the presentation of the Letters Patent and the Conferment Ceremony.
2. That a report be brought back with further information on alternative city signage referred to within the report.
3. Approval for the name change of the Town Hall, Bangor to 'City Hall' whilst it is in use as a civic building.
4. That a report be brought back on the naming of a building or place in Bangor and also considers other locations, in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II once Cabinet Office Guidance has been issued and considered.

Outlining her proposal, Councillor Gilmour stated that she fully supported the proposed exciting development on the City Status journey. She would be keen to see a report brought back on exploring alternative City signage once Cabinet Office Guidance was produced, as she believed that waiting until 2025 would have missed the opportunity to celebrate and mark that Bangor was a Platinum Jubilee City.

She had proposed an alternative to point 4 of the recommendation because when Councillor Cathcart had made his proposal, the evening before Her Majesty died, he had proposed the naming of a building or place in Bangor as a mark of gratitude for making it a city in the Platinum Jubilee year. So while she had no issue with other locations in the Borough honouring the late Queen, she thought it fitting we should have had something within Bangor in response to the city status.

Councillor Gilmour welcomed the civic reception for the conferment of Letters Patent, and asked if there had there been any consideration of a wider public celebration and event to mark the granting of City Status?

The Chief Executive responded that there were no further events planned, pointing to the lack of available budget. However, he referred Members to a Notice of Motion listed on the agenda which related to resourcing for events to celebrate the Coronation of the King in May 2023. He suggested that officers could perhaps look at ways of incorporating the award of the Letters Patent into an existing budgeted family focused event.

Councillor Gilmour felt this had worked well earlier in the year, where the Queen's Platinum Jubilee had been incorporated into the annual Sea Bangor event. She added that previously in response to the initial letter of award she had proposed the Council write a letter of thanks to Buckingham Palace and issue an open invitation for a royal visit to the new city.

The seconder, Alderman Irvine, welcomed the proposal believing that it made sense to look at the signage now rather than defer it until 2025. The award of City Status now took on extra significance following the death of Her Majesty. There was no great rush in the naming a building as it was something that was important to get right in order to leave a lasting legacy. He was content with the rest of the officer's recommendation, however.

The Chief Executive advised that it was important to hold the civic ceremony for the presentation of the Letters Patent in the same year as the Platinum Jubilee.

Councillor Dunlop asked if there was a budget available for the Council to proceed with the city signage now and the Chief Executive advised that was unbudgeted due to the award of City Status being confirmed after the 2022/23 budget setting process.

While delighted that Bangor had been awarded City Status, Councillor Dunlop would be concerned if the Council was going to proceed with signage given its financial position.

Councillor Chambers appreciated the decision had been taken to accept City Status and with that came responsibility and felt that three years was too long to wait for the signage to be installed. He looked forward to seeing a follow-up report and the costings and design.

Given the scale of the recent staff pay deal that Council had agreed to, Councillor T Smith felt Council may as well pay for the signs in the existing year and felt they would last for many years to come. He felt it was right for Members to support the proposal and recognise the honour that Her Majesty had bestowed upon Bangor.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Gilmour, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that:

1. **Approval of the arrangements for the presentation of the Letters Patent and the Conferment Ceremony.**
2. **That a report be brought back with further information on alternative city signage referred to within the report.**
3. **Approval for the name change of the Town Hall, Bangor to 'City Hall' whilst it is in use as a civic building.**
4. **That a report be brought back on the naming of a building or place in Bangor and also considers other locations, in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II once Cabinet Office Guidance has been issued and considered.**

6. BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT (FIN45)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Finance and Performance detailing that the Budgetary Control Report covered the 6-month period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022. The Revenue Budgetary Control Report by Directorate was set out in Report 1 on page 3 and showed an overall deficit of £211k.

Explanation of Variance

The Council's budget performance was further analysed on pages 4-6 into 3 key areas:

Report	Type	Variance	Page
Report 2	Payroll Expenditure	£316k adverse	4

Report 3	Goods & Services Expenditure	£1,491k adverse	5
Report 4	Income	£1,596k favourable	6

Explanation of Variance

The Council's overall variance could be summarised by the following table (variances over £100k):

Type	Variance £'000	Comment
Payroll Expenditure	316	Environment - covid related - £183k* . Waste & Cleansing - £245k Vacancies – (£112k)
Goods & Services Expenditure		
Leisure	507	Tariff risk and operating subsidy
Assets & Property	856	Electricity - £254k* Gas - £71k* Vehicle fuel - £106k* Vehicle maintenance - £122k Property Maintenance - £164k Technical Services - £61k
Administration	111	Insurance
Income		
Services Income	(486)	Waste & Cleansing – (£148k) Leisure – (£89k) Parks & Cemeteries – (£53k) Assets & Property – (£53k)
Non-Service	(1,110)	LPS are indicating a positive 22/23 District Rates finalisation based on August data. In addition, transfers from Earmarked Fund to offset Covid, utility and fuel cost pressures (indicated above with an *).

Report 1					
BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT					
Period 6 - September 2022					
	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance	Annual Budget	Variance
	£	£	£	£	%
Community & Wellbeing					
100 Community & Wellbeing HQ	109,744	96,200	13,544	204,300	14.1
110 Environmental Health	888,092	1,007,300	(119,208)	2,025,000	11.8
120 Community and Culture	1,048,913	1,107,000	(58,087)	2,259,900	5.2
140 Parks and Cemeteries	1,830,556	1,784,400	46,156	3,748,900	2.6
150 Leisure	1,514,009	1,117,400	396,609	2,591,000	35.5
Totals	5,391,314	5,112,300	279,014	10,829,100	5.5
Environment					
200 Environment HQ	295,402	93,000	202,402	188,500	217.6
210 Waste and Cleansing Services	8,129,258	8,092,100	37,158	15,532,800	0.5
220 Assets and Property Services	4,411,938	3,679,200	732,738	7,177,100	19.9
230 Regulatory Services	166,401	213,700	(47,299)	454,900	22.1
Totals	13,002,998	12,078,000	924,998	23,353,300	7.7
Regen, Development & Planning					
300 Regen, Dev & Planning HQ	98,278	99,600	(1,322)	292,500	1.3
310 Regeneration	335,988	439,800	(103,812)	1,291,700	23.6
320 Economic Development	574,603	597,100	(22,497)	1,313,800	3.8
330 Planning	662,576	669,700	(7,124)	1,499,400	1.1
340 Tourism	695,813	696,500	(687)	1,591,100	0.1
Totals	2,367,258	2,502,700	(135,442)	5,988,500	5.4
Finance & Performance					
400 Finance & Performance HQ	81,532	61,800	19,732	125,400	31.9
410 Internal Audit	18,775	18,800	(25)	57,000	0.1
420 Finance	380,658	429,400	(48,742)	947,700	11.4
430 Strategic Transformation and Performance	1,230,080	1,241,900	(11,820)	2,013,000	1.0
440 Strategic Capital Development	143,056	165,600	(22,544)	336,400	13.6
Totals	1,854,101	1,917,500	(63,399)	3,479,500	3.3
Org Development & Administration					
500 OD & Admin HQ	81,923	75,000	6,923	151,500	9.2
510 HR & OD	523,830	507,800	16,030	1,083,100	3.2
520 Administration	1,941,829	1,843,600	98,229	3,796,900	5.3
Totals	2,547,582	2,426,400	121,182	5,031,500	5.0
Chief Executive					
600 Chief Executive	177,615	168,300	9,315	393,900	5.5
610 Community Planning	82,309	90,000	(7,691)	185,600	8.5
630 Communications and Marketing	330,083	355,400	(25,317)	872,400	7.1
Totals	590,007	613,700	(23,693)	1,451,900	3.9
Payroll Savings Budget					
700 Payroll Savings Budget	-	(199,800)	199,800	(400,000)	
Total	-	(199,800)	199,800	(400,000)	-
NET COST OF SERVICES	25,753,260	24,450,800	1,302,460	49,733,800	5.3
Non Service Income and Expenditure					
Non Service Income and Expenditure	(25,542,265)	(24,450,800)	(1,091,465)	(49,733,800)	(4.5)
Grand Totals	210,995	-	210,995	-	

Report 2					
PAYROLL REPORT					
Period 6 - September 2022					
	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance	Annual Budget	Variance
	£	£	£	£	%
Community & Wellbeing					
100 Community & Wellbeing HQ	79,691	78,000	1,691	156,800	2.2
110 Environmental Health	1,065,672	1,159,700	(94,028)	2,330,500	8.1
120 Community and Culture	729,447	791,800	(62,353)	1,558,900	7.9
140 Parks and Cemeteries	1,601,857	1,591,200	10,657	3,192,500	0.7
150 Leisure	2,005,351	2,026,700	(21,349)	4,103,300	1.1
Totals	5,482,018	5,647,400	(165,382)	11,342,000	2.9
Environment					
200 Environment HQ	260,535	78,000	182,535	156,800	234.0
210 Waste and Cleansing Services	3,909,070	3,663,800	245,270	7,306,000	6.7
220 Assets and Property Services	933,641	1,003,800	(70,159)	2,019,900	7.0
230 Regulatory Services	944,226	990,000	(45,774)	1,990,400	4.6
Totals	6,047,472	5,735,600	311,872	11,473,100	5.4
Regen, Development & Planning					
300 Regen, Dev & Planning HQ	76,822	77,400	(578)	155,400	0.7
310 Regeneration	264,168	288,000	(23,832)	581,100	8.3
320 Economic Development	316,510	339,600	(23,090)	683,300	6.8
330 Planning	1,072,350	1,056,600	15,750	2,114,000	1.5
340 Tourism	464,092	423,000	41,092	860,400	9.7
Totals	2,193,942	2,184,600	9,342	4,394,200	0.4
Finance & Performance					
400 Finance & Performance HQ	60,545	60,000	545	120,400	0.9
410 Internal Audit	-	-	-	-	-
420 Finance	435,738	431,400	4,338	866,600	1.0
430 Strategic Transformation and Performance	339,675	372,000	(32,325)	746,300	8.7
440 Strategic Capital Development	142,651	162,000	(19,349)	324,400	11.9
Totals	978,609	1,025,400	(46,791)	2,057,700	4.6
Org Development & Administration					
500 OD & Admin HQ	81,207	69,600	11,607	139,500	16.7
510 HR & OD	368,865	372,600	(3,735)	748,500	1.0
520 Administration	872,506	870,600	1,906	1,759,400	0.2
Totals	1,322,578	1,312,800	9,778	2,647,400	0.7
Chief Executive					
600 Chief Executive	127,766	127,800	(34)	298,600	0.0
610 Community Planning	84,372	82,200	2,172	164,900	2.6
630 Communications and Marketing	255,142	259,800	(4,658)	523,300	-
Totals	467,279	469,800	(2,521)	986,800	0.5
Payroll Savings Budget					
700 Payroll Savings Budget	-	(199,800)	199,800	(400,000)	-
Total	-	(199,800)	199,800	(400,000)	-
NET COST OF SERVICES	16,491,898	16,175,800	316,098	32,501,200	2.0
Non Service Income and Expenditure					
Non Service Income and Expenditure	-	-	0	-	-
Grand Totals	16,491,898	16,175,800	316,098	32,501,200	2.0

Report 3					
GOODS AND SERVICES REPORT					
Period 6 - September 2022					
	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance	Annual Budget	Variance
	£	£	£	£	%
Community & Wellbeing					
100 Community & Wellbeing HQ	30,053	18,800	11,253	49,000	59.9
110 Environmental Health	122,513	130,300	(7,787)	295,200	6.0
120 Community and Culture	717,576	687,800	29,776	1,693,300	4.3
140 Parks and Cemeteries	457,526	369,000	88,526	944,700	24.0
150 Leisure	926,050	419,500	506,550	1,184,500	120.8
Totals	2,253,718	1,625,400	628,318	4,166,700	38.7
Environment					
200 Environment HQ	34,867	15,000	19,867	31,700	132.4
210 Waste and Cleansing Services	4,860,149	4,920,900	(60,751)	9,220,000	1.2
220 Assets and Property Services	4,085,656	3,230,000	855,656	5,795,000	26.5
230 Regulatory Services	318,049	347,500	(29,451)	725,900	8.5
Totals	9,298,721	8,513,400	785,321	15,772,600	9.2
Regen, Development & Planning					
300 Regen, Dev & Planning HQ	21,456	22,200	(744)	137,100	3.4
310 Regeneration	77,115	154,200	(77,085)	715,400	50.0
320 Economic Development	379,440	385,100	(5,660)	1,093,800	1.5
330 Planning	97,514	127,000	(29,486)	412,900	23.2
340 Tourism	437,795	429,900	7,895	906,700	1.8
Totals	1,013,321	1,118,400	(105,079)	3,265,900	9.4
Finance & Performance					
400 Finance & Performance HQ	21,007	1,800	19,207	5,000	1067.1
410 Internal Audit	18,775	18,800	(25)	57,000	0.1
420 Finance	20,007	20,200	(193)	126,400	1.0
430 Strategic Transformation and Performance	890,405	869,900	20,505	1,266,700	2.4
440 Strategic Capital Development	405	3,600	(3,195)	12,000	88.8
Totals	950,599	914,300	36,299	1,467,100	4.0
Org Development & Administration					
500 OD & Admin HQ	716	5,400	(4,684)	12,000	86.7
510 HR & OD	157,965	137,600	20,365	339,600	14.8
520 Administration	1,302,153	1,191,300	110,853	2,434,600	9.3
Totals	1,460,834	1,334,300	126,534	2,786,200	9.5
Chief Executive					
600 Chief Executive	49,966	40,500	9,466	95,300	23.4
610 Community Planning	(2,063)	7,800	(9,863)	20,700	126.5
630 Communications and Marketing	96,684	95,600	1,084	349,100	1.1
Totals	144,587	143,900	687	465,100	0.5
Payroll Savings Budget					
700 Payroll Savings Budget	-	-	-	-	100.0
Total	-	-	-	-	
NET COST OF SERVICES	15,121,780	13,649,700	1,472,080	27,923,600	10.8
Non Service Income and Expenditure					
Non Service Income and Expenditure	4,113,912	4,095,000	18,912	7,599,700	0.5
Grand Totals	19,235,692	17,744,700	1,490,992	35,523,300	8.4

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Report 4					
INCOME REPORT					
Period 6 - September 2022					
	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance	Annual Budget	Variance
	£	£	£	£	%
Community & Wellbeing					
100 Community & Wellbeing HQ	-	(600)	600	(1,500)	-
110 Environmental Health	(300,093)	(282,700)	(17,393)	(600,700)	(6.2)
120 Community and Culture	(398,110)	(372,600)	(25,510)	(992,300)	(6.8)
140 Parks and Cemeteries	(228,827)	(175,800)	(53,027)	(388,300)	(30.2)
150 Leisure	(1,417,392)	(1,328,800)	(88,592)	(2,696,800)	(6.7)
Totals	(2,344,422)	(2,160,500)	(183,922)	(4,679,600)	(8.5)
Environment					
200 Environment HQ	-	-	-	-	100.0
210 Waste and Cleansing Services	(639,961)	(492,600)	(147,361)	(993,200)	(29.9)
220 Assets and Property Services	(607,359)	(554,600)	(52,759)	(637,800)	(9.5)
230 Regulatory Services	(1,095,874)	(1,123,800)	27,926	(2,261,400)	(2.5)
Totals	(2,343,195)	(2,171,000)	(172,195)	(3,892,400)	(7.9)
Regen, Development & Planning					
300 Regen, Dev & Planning HQ	-	-	-	-	100.0
310 Regeneration	(5,295)	(2,400)	(2,895)	(4,800)	(120.6)
320 Economic Development	(121,347)	(127,600)	6,253	(463,300)	(4.9)
330 Planning	(507,288)	(513,900)	6,612	(1,027,500)	(1.3)
340 Tourism	(206,075)	(156,400)	(49,675)	(176,000)	(31.8)
Totals	(840,005)	(800,300)	(39,705)	(1,671,600)	(5.0)
Finance & Performance					
400 Finance & Performance HQ	(20)	-	(20)	-	100.0
410 Internal Audit	-	-	-	-	100.0
420 Finance	(75,087)	(22,200)	(52,887)	(45,300)	(238.2)
430 Strategic Transformation and Performance	-	-	-	-	100.0
440 Strategic Capital Development	-	-	-	-	100.0
Totals	(75,107)	(22,200)	(52,907)	(45,300)	(238.3)
Org Development & Administration					
500 OD & Admin HQ	-	-	-	-	100.0
510 HR & OD	(3,000)	(2,400)	(600)	(5,000)	(25.0)
520 Administration	(232,830)	(218,300)	(14,530)	(397,100)	(6.7)
Totals	(235,830)	(220,700)	(15,130)	(402,100)	(6.9)
Chief Executive					
600 Chief Executive	(116)	-	(116)	-	100.0
610 Community Planning	-	-	-	-	100.0
630 Communications and Marketing	(21,743)	-	(21,743)	-	100.0
Totals	(21,859)	-	(21,859)	-	100.0
Payroll Savings Budget					
700 Payroll Savings Budget	-	-	-	-	100.0
Total	-	-	-	-	-
NET COST OF SERVICES	(5,860,417)	(5,374,700)	(485,717)	(10,691,000)	(9.0)
Non Service Income and Expenditure					
Non Service Income and Expenditure	(29,656,177)	(28,545,800)	(1,110,377)	(57,333,500)	(3.9)
Grand Totals	(35,516,595)	(33,920,500)	(1,596,095)	(68,024,500)	(4.7)

The next budget report would be to the December Corporate Services Committee, covering the period from April to October 2022.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

Briefly outlining the report, the Director of Finance and Performance advised that overall the report was showing a relatively small overspend of £200,000 which given the scale of the external cost pressures was good. Other pressures coming from goods and services were being managed due to additional income from Council services and increased rates that had not been budgeted for.

Proposed by Councillor T Smith, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor T Smith queried the reported overspend in terms of payroll and the Director clarified that this was due to the additional costs of managing Covid in the first quarter of the year. There had been contingencies in place around waste collections services where support vans had been in place to ensure social distancing, for example.

Councillor T Smith queried further overspends in the Assets and Property (£320k) and Leisure (£500k) and the Director confirmed those were the result of higher fuel costs particularly in gas and electricity

Councillor T Smith queried reports of Cost-of-Living Payments being released to the Council from the Department for Communities and what Council could do with it to help ease the crisis. The Director was aware that the question related to recent media coverage reporting that £33million had been released to Councils to help with cost of living but that money had already been allocated last year and the Department had allowed Councils to carry the money forward in to 2022/23. That announcement was giving Councils formal permission to use the funding for any cost of living pressures.

Councillor T Smith thanked the Director for clarifying and understood why people would assume from the report that it was £33million of new money.

Alderman Irvine queried the reported £100,000 costs for insurance and the Director clarified that was the impact of cost of living prices. Insurance premiums were increasing significantly and that was something that would be come through as a cost pressure in the rate setting process. Alderman Irvine welcomed the reported leisure income, which was an indication that people were using the leisure centres again after Covid-19 restrictions were lifted, but appreciated the benefit was not as good as it would have been due to the external cost pressures outlined.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor T Smith, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the recommendation be adopted.

7. LIGHT UP REQUESTS

(a) For OG Cancer NI (FILE LP37)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing the following request.

Requestor

Helen Setterfield – Oesophago-Gastric (OG) Cancer NI.

Reason for request

To raise awareness of OG Cancer.

Dates and colours

Lighting up Ards Arts Centre / Ards Town Hall and McKee Clock green on 11 January 2023.

Background information

OG Cancer was a Less Survivable Cancer. The signs and symptoms of OG Cancer could be easily brushed off and ignored. Early detection of OG Cancer significantly improved treatment and recovery.

OGCancerNI, was a registered charity in NI, set up in 2018 specifically to benefit patients and families affected by Oesophago- gastric cancer.

They had three main objectives:

1. To support patients and carers affected by Oesophago-gastric cancer
2. To communicate and raise awareness of the early signs and symptoms of Oesophago-gastric cancer and promote early intervention and
3. To advocate for patients, by working in partnership with healthcare providers and promote best outcomes.

In 2022 they were successful with a funding application through the Community Lottery fund, to purchase a Mobile Unit. They were using this unit (van) to travel around NI attending a variety of different events to raise awareness of OG Cancer.

Does it meet policy requirements

As this request did not meet the specific criteria set out in the policy (not based in or connected to the Borough), it required the consideration and approval of the Council.

RECOMMENDED that the Council accedes to the request to light up Council buildings green on 11 January 2023 to raise awareness of OG Cancer.

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

(b) In Support of Ukraine (LP37)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED:- Report from the Director of Organisational Development and Administration detailing that in response to the invasion by Russia of Ukraine in February 2022, and to show Council's support for and solidarity with Ukraine, it was agreed at March 2022 Corporate Committee (and subsequently ratified at March Council) to light up Council buildings blue and yellow on Friday 25th, Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th February 2022.

It was further proposed that the Council continued to light up its buildings in support and in solidarity with the people of Ukraine if there were no other scheduled events and to keep this decision under review.

It should be noted that a review of costs for lighting up Council buildings was also being undertaken with the intention of reporting back to Corporate Services Committee in December 2022. Also due to a fault with the lighting system, only the Ards Arts Centre was currently lit up.

RECOMMENDED that Council continues to review the decision to light up in support of Ukraine on a monthly basis at Corporate Services Committee, on dates when there are no other light ups programmed.

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

8. NOTICES OF MOTION:

(a) Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Cathcart and Councillor Cummings:

That this Council recognises the amazing work undertaken by care workers in caring for vulnerable people in our Borough, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is deeply regrettable that care workers have received penalty charge notices (PCN) for parking on double yellow lines whilst performing their caring duties.

The Council, therefore, agrees to write to the Infrastructure Minister to urge that the Department amends the Parking Enforcement Protocol to add that care workers, whilst on duty are added to the list of exemptions to restrictions to allow parking outside an address of who they are caring for, to ensure that they can provide essential care in a timely manner.

(Councillor Cathcart joined the meeting – 8.29pm)

Councillor Cathcart indicated that he had a minor amendment to make to the proposal and that would be to amend “write to the Infrastructure Minister” to “write to the Permanent Secretary at the Department for Infrastructure.”

Councillor Cathcart proposed, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the above Notice of Motion be adopted with the outlined amendment.

Outlining his proposal, Councillor Cathcart, told the Committee that he had been saddened to have been contacted by an elderly gentleman who, along with his wife had severe mobility issues and required care workers to attend their house four times a day. He was upset that carers who provided wonderful care to him had been fined for parking on double yellow lines outside his house.

He lived in the city centre of Bangor. There was very limited on-street parking and during the working day it was very difficult to park close to the house. Care workers

only had 15 to 20 minutes allocated for each visit so, time spent finding a car parking space or parking in a car park a distance away was time away from those who they were caring for.

Councillor Cathcart had encouraged the carers to appeal but he was yet to hear the outcome and DfI had confirmed there were no parking exemptions for care workers under the Department's Parking Enforcement Protocol which parking attendants were required to follow.

On reading that, he had been baffled that, given an extensive list, there were no allowances for care workers yet it made exemptions for customs officers, utility companies and postal workers and courier services.

Carers were a lifeline to the most vulnerable in society. To many they were the only people they saw throughout the day. During the pandemic, care workers had stepped up, taking on extra shifts so colleagues could self-isolate. They brought iPads and phones to keep residents connected to their loved ones and endured endless testing to protect those at greatest risk from Covid. Like other jobs in healthcare, they were underpaid and undervalued.

Councillor Cathcart felt he was suggesting something that was simple and doable that would make care workers' jobs that bit easier. A blue badge scheme was already available for those with mobility issues, a badge could be displayed on carers car, perhaps, whilst they were on duty. A lot of the times it would not be needed as it was relatively easy to park near a house in the suburbs but for city and town centre locations, this could allow a carer to park outside the houses of those that they were caring for and immediately start providing that important and necessary care. This was not asking for all day parking, he understood that for example a blue badge allowed up to 3 hours on a double yellow lines, although carers wouldn't need that long.

He added that this NOM was focusing on paid, professional carers rather than unpaid or those that claimed carers allowance that were usually family members. They played a critical role too, however, they usually had access to a blue badge from the person they were caring for (those employed by companies did not). He was, however, happy for this to be looked at as well to ensure that they were covered.

In closing, Councillor Cathcart reflected on a lot of debates recently in the Council regarding protocols but he hoped that Members could all agree that the DfI's Parking Enforcement protocol needed to be amended to assist the Borough's wonderful carers and allow them to provide timely care to the most vulnerable in society.

The seconder, Councillor Gilmour, recognised that carers were key workers, carrying out essential services for the most vulnerable. They were vital and a lifeline to the people who depended on them. Often care workers were not the highest workers and under extreme time pressures to meet specific schedules of their clients and delays to the service caused a major upset.

Time should not be wasted trying to find parking spaces. Examples of people having tickets were not acceptable and the Motion was asking for legislative change to allow carers to carry out their duties. During the pandemic the public stood on their doorsteps and clapped in support of care workers but this was more practical assistance that could go a long way to help them do their jobs. Parking would only be for a limited time and there were other professions that were assisted by exemptions so she was pleased to support the Motion.

Alderman McIlveen supported the Motion but wished to point out that in relation to Customs exemptions, this was to allow for activities such as raids and he understood why the exemption was there. He agreed that the role of the carer was relieving stress on other parts of the health service in terms of enabling people to be released from hospital. That would go one small step to help care workers and relieve them of the pressure of worry of getting a ticket. He felt the Motion was an excellent idea.

Councillor Chambers supported the Motion and recognised the task of care workers and felt they did a thankless job. He was aware of carers who had received tickets but wondered what the regulations were in terms of how far away carers would be able to park and if there was a limit to the distance and how the traffic warden would be alerted to the fact the vehicle belonged to a carer.

Summing up, Councillor Cathcart had spoken to one of the local care providers and they were not aware of notices that could be put on a dashboard but he felt that longer term a badge would be suitable. He was not sure about the distances but given the short period of time it was not right to force care workers to park further away when a blue badge holder could park anywhere. He also felt that if the patient was a car driver they would qualify for a blue badge anyway. He felt though it was an easy workable solution that the DfI needed to look at it. He thanked Members for their comments.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Cathcart, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that this Council recognises the amazing work undertaken by care workers in caring for vulnerable people in our Borough, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is deeply regrettable that care workers have received penalty charge notices (PCN) for parking on double yellow lines whilst performing their caring duties.

The Council, therefore, agrees to write to the Permanent Secretary at the Department for Infrastructure, to urge that the Department amends the Parking Enforcement Protocol to add that care workers, whilst on duty are added to the list of exemptions to restrictions to allow parking outside an address of who they are caring for, to ensure that they can provide essential care in a timely manner.

(Councillor Cathcart left the meeting – 8.46pm)

(b) Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor McRandal and Alderman Wilson and Councillor Irwin

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.

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.

(Councillor McRandal and Alderman Wilson were admitted to the meeting – 8.47pm)

Before proposing, Councillor Irwin advised of a minor amendment to the original motion which was to change 'the Royal College of Surgeons' to the 'Royal College of GPs'.

Councillor Irwin proposed, seconded by Councillor McRandal, that the Notice of Motion be adopted with the above amendment.

The proposer had brought this Motion due to the situation regarding Priory Surgery. If partners were not found to take over the contract before February of next year, services would cease, affecting over 14,000 patients, primarily across Bangor West and Holywood.

She felt that the health service was in crisis, and primary care services, which should be citizens' first point of contact for many health issues, were a prime example of this. With emergency departments facing a perennial battle during the Winter rush, shockingly long waiting lists for procedures and planning and budgeting issues throughout the workforce, it was vital that people could access GP services easily to ease the burden on an already struggling health service.

The issue of potential closures of GP surgeries was not isolated to Priory Surgery, however the impact that could have in the Borough could not be overstated. Priory Surgery was the second largest practice in Northern Ireland, and with other practices struggling with similar issues, the 14,000 patients affected would likely struggle to find a new surgery to register with, without the potential for knock-on effects in those surgeries. Across Northern Ireland there was a domino effect of GP surgeries facing potential closure, patients moving to other surgeries causing increased pressure on the existing partners, causing partners to potentially move or retire, leaving those practices at risk.

There needed to be a long-term solution to secure primary care services, but in the short-term, it was vital that everything was done to ensure continuity of care was secured and improved for those over 14,000 patients registered with Priory Surgery.

Councillor Irwin's Alliance Party colleagues Stephen Farry MP, Andrew Muir MLA and Connie Egan MLA had been proactive in engaging and meeting with Department of Health officials, the BMA and the Royal College of GPs since the announcement regarding Priory Surgery was made, ensuring that planning was underway to protect the patients affected, whether partners could be found or not.

The news coming from the Department of Health in relation to Priory had been cautiously hopeful that a resolution could be found, however given the February deadline was rapidly approaching, it was vital that plans were put in place and patients were kept informed should partners not be found. This was why the Motion called for the Council to agree to a deputation from the agencies stated to receive an update on progress and an update on planning for a potential Plan B for the Trust to take over services if required.

Seconding the Motion, Councillor McRandal told the Committee that he was a registered patient at the Holywood surgery along with his family. Patients had received a letter in August notifying them of the resignation of the existing practice and that a replacement practice was sought to be in place by February 2023. Patients had been given no further information which was alarming given that access to a GP was considered to be a basic healthcare requirement.

He was grateful to all those representatives working to get a positive outcome and aware that his party colleague Andrew Muir MLA had received correspondence from the relevant body, the Strategic Planning and Performance Group, which advised that the process to find a contractor had begun and there had been expressions of interest over the vacancy but while there was some hope this did not provide any guarantees. It was important to get clarity on what the Department of Health would do if there was no replacement in the planned timeline and how it would deliver GP services to the affected 14,000 patients.

He hoped that Members could support the Motion.

Alderman Irvine was supportive of what he described as a critical issue and the amount of people affected as phenomenal. The Department had already had significant time to sort the contract and the patients' deserved answers on what was happening. Many elderly and vulnerable people were facing uncertainty and needed to know what alternative plans would be put in place. He also noted there was a freeze on new registrations at other surgeries in the areas so he looked forward to getting some movement on the issue.

Councillor Gilmour felt that the lack of communication with the patients across the practices had been the most shocking factor in the entire situation, as patients had received little reassurance or update from the relevant authorities. She was aware that her colleague Stephen Dunne MLA had delivered a petition to the Department of Health calling for the retention of the two surgeries with a clear succession plan. The response had outlined that GP practices were independent businesses and outlined the role of the SPPG in terms of contract management for GP surgeries. More recently, the Minister of Health had responded with a statement that the SPPG was seeking to ensure a replacement practice was in place by 1st February 2023. That was in October and there had been no update announced since. Patients were in limbo and answers were required. Rumours and scaremongering were growing legs and would only exasperate the situation.

Councillor Chambers stated that he had intended to bring an amendment but had been unable to do so within the timeframe set out within the Standing Orders. The amendment would have been along the lines of Council welcoming the

arrangements for a replacement service and to write to the Secretary for an update. While the Motion was well intended and he understood the reasons for bringing it, he did not think it would be helpful or achieve anything to bring in the relevant agencies for a deputation. He wondered what role the BMA would play in the process but it was his belief that the best interests of the patients involved were being served behind the scenes.

He understood that negotiations for a replacement were at an advanced stage and it would not be helpful to cause any delay to those talks. He also understood that in the event of a gap in contract, it was the intention for locum GPs to be put in place until a replacement was found. Alan Chambers MLA and Alderman M Smith had met with Health Minister, Robin Swann MLA, and two officials that worked directly with GPs. He understood from that meeting that a lot of work had already taken place and they were working towards a successful conclusion. The contracts were commercial arrangements and details had to be kept confidential which explained why there had not been a running commentary of events conveyed to the public. It was clear from that meeting that developments were progressing well and he understood a positive public announcement would be imminent.

In response, Alderman McIlveen stated that he did not take any reassurance from Councillor Chambers given that the attempts of reassurance he referred to had come from an Ulster Unionist Health Minister to his Ulster Unionist colleagues. His own mother-in-law and father-in-law were patients at the Hollywood practice and he could understand how people in their late 70s could be struck by fear to be told their GP practice was closing and then to have complete silence after that news. He did agree with Councillor Chambers in terms of what little would be achieved from a deputation given the commercial and confidential sensitivities associated with the process.

He supported the Motion however to move along the process and highlight the concerns that were affecting a huge number of patients. Even if it resulted in just getting a response, the Motion would be successful but it was incumbent of the Department that those patients were provided with a GP service.

Summing up, Councillor Irwin thanked Members for their comments and appreciated that news from the Department of Health had been helpful and she agreed that given the scale of the issue and the number of patients that would be affected, it was not in the interests of the Department of Health to not address the matter, but it was important that the Council sought that reassurance for those people.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Irwin, seconded by Councillor McRandal, 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 Hollywood. We ask that this Council calls for a deputation from the Department of Health and British Medical Association alongside the Royal College of GPs 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.

(Councillor McRandal and Alderman Wilson left the meeting – 9.10pm)

(The meeting went into recess at 9.10pm and resumed at 9.25pm)

(c.) Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor MacArthur and councillor Gilmour

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 joined the meeting – 9.25pm)

Councillor MacArthur proposed, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

Outlining her proposal, Councillor MacArthur explained the events of the late Queen's Coronation on 2 June 1953, fourteen months after her ascension to the throne. She had learned that the Coronation bouquet had included white carnations from Northern Ireland and that the Coronation, 69 years ago, had made history as the first televised Coronation. Her mother-in-law had recalled making so many sandwiches for the street party and had been disappointed to have been unable to watch the coverage but remembered joining with people afterwards for a street party.

Another resident had recalled going to Conway Square in Newtownards with his school to receive a mug to mark the celebration. There was a sense of national pride despite hard times when money was tight following the war. Despite that, memories were made. King Charles III had attended his mother's Coronation and on 6 May 2023 millions again would be viewing his Coronation and become a part of history. It would be a sight that most of the population had never witnessed before.

It was therefore imperative that the Council's 2023/24 budget included provision for community celebrations to take place. Community Groups had availed of funding up to £1,000 for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee over the previous summer and events had included street parties, dancing, lighting of beacons, fancy dress parades and other activities. Those events for the Jubilee had provided a focal point for communities after the previous two years of lock downs and Covid-19 restrictions.

For events for the Coronation of the new King she had thought about the possibility of engagement with schools, exhibition of the life of King Charles, colouring in and designing crowns etc, along with commemorative tree planting and tester sessions for traditional crafts and apprentice trades that King Charles was reportedly fond of such as willow weaving and stone masonry.

Pointing to any concerns over budgets, she reminded Members that the financial hardships of 1953 had not stopped the communities from celebrating and the recent Jubilee celebrations and the events around the Queen's recent passing had shown that communities wanted to come together for such occasions. There was also great appreciation when the Council helped out.

Continuing, she explained the costs of events that had been held in Donaghadee for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and how the Council contribution of £1,000 had only been a small but important part of the overall cost, but it had brought much enjoyment to the families who had attended free of charge.

In order to save costs, she felt it could be prudent to re-use the beacons from those events if possible.

In closing, she requested that Members support the Motion to celebrate a moment of national importance for the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth.

The seconder Councillor Gilmour felt it only fitting the Council mark the momentous occasion. She too referred to the events and celebrations of the Queen's Coronation and she had heard of a story from a resident who remembered receiving a commemorative penknife. Although a penknife would not be deemed appropriate for a school child in 2023, it was an example of the impact and lasting memory that the Coronation had had on residents. We were living through history and that needed to be noted and celebrated. She recalled a strong desire to celebrate around the Jubilee in the summer and then a coming together following the Queen's passing.

The Coronation would be a boost in difficult times for the nation and she looked forward to a report with costs and options with whatever direction came from Buckingham Palace.

Alderman McIlveen spoke of the significance of the Coronation whether you were a royalist or not, and that was how eras were marked in the United Kingdom. He wanted to flag up that many of the people wishing to organise such events were not necessarily part of a constituted group and would often miss out on opportunities for funding due to the criteria that was set in funding programmes. This was something that he had taken onboard following feedback around the Queen's Platinum Jubilee funding scheme. He hoped the report would look at alternatives to giving out funds for events and how Council could provide assistance in other ways such as distributing materials to groups for decorations, for example.

Alderman Irvine agreed it was important to set money aside in the rate setting process as community events were vital to mark such historic occasions. He appreciated that some of the traditional provisions for large events, such as big screens, could often be cost prohibitive but it was important that the Council supported the celebrations over the Coronation weekend that had been extended with the confirmation of an additional bank holiday.

While it was important to mark the Coronation, Alderman Girvan was mindful of the Council's financial status and wondered what the costs would be and the impact it would have on next year's rate and other areas of spend in the upcoming budget setting process. She also wondered if there was a possibility for external funding, through the Treasury for example.

The Director of Finance and Performance said it was difficult to give details of the affect it would have on the rates without a cost but as an example the £100,000

budget allocated for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations would have represented 0.2% of the rate increase. It would ultimately be the choice of Members as to what they would want to keep and take off the list of discretionary spend throughout the estimates process.

Given that response, Alderman Girvan felt it would be prudent for officers to bring back a report detailing the activities and the costs and she would be happy if the proposer and seconder could take that on board and include in the Motion.

Councillor Greer agreed with that approach and felt that any funding needed to reflect the cost-of-living crisis and it was right to explore other funding options.

In response, Councillor T Smith stated that he was annoyed at the view taken by the Alliance Party Members given that they had supported funding for other causes that he felt were not a good use of rate payer's money. There was no way that the Council could not support the Motion for such an occasion, he added. It was a perfect time to bring people together to support the Coronation of the new King.

Summing up, Councillor MacArthur explained that the Motion had called for officers to look at the costings, with consideration as to what was spent in the past and might be spent in future, and also to consider other funding sources such as NIO or Department for Communities.

It was also her understanding that any agreed spend would have to be signed off by Members in the rate setting process anyway, so it was important to get to that point given the timescales involved for agreeing those estimates. She agreed with Councillor T Smith that there were quite a number of spend items that Members felt were trivial, with significant cost attached, and she was quite happy to provide suggestions of where Council could make cuts elsewhere to make funding available for this.

She agreed that many areas such as Bangor East in her own DEA, did not have constituted groups, which she felt was a particular issue. At a time of celebration people wanted a focal point and she was aware that some other Councils had provided big screens but it was possibly a suggestion for areas of where there was not an option for funding as referred to. She suggested that the Council could step up and organise something. She looked forward to seeing a substantive report brought back and ideas and options attached to it.

Councillor T Smith requested a recorded vote.

One being put to the meeting with 12 voting FOR, 0 voting AGAINST, 0 ABSTAINING and 4 ABSENT, the motion was declared CARRIED.

The voting was as follows:

FOR (12)	AGAINST (0)	ABSTAINED (0)	ABSENT (4)
Aldermen:			Aldermen:
Girvan			Gibson
Irvine			Keery

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Mclveen
Councillors:
 Blaney
 Chambers
 Douglas
 Dunlop
 Gilmour
 Greer
 Irwin
 Smith, P
 Smith, T

Councillors:
 Cooper
 McKimm

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Gilmour, that the notice of motion be adopted. Further Agreed to recommend that an officer's report be brought back exploring options including costs and externally funded sources.

(Councillor MacArthur left the meeting – 9.55pm)

9. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There were no items of any other notified business.

NOTED.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted items of confidential business.

10. RENEWAL OF TENDER FOR EVENT SUPPORT SERVICES (CC22ADMIN)

****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)

11. RENEWAL OF TENDER FOR COUNCIL ADVERTISING (RECRUITMENT, PUBLIC NOTICES AND TENDERS) (CC22ADMIN)

****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)

12. RENEWAL OF TENDER FOR SIGNAGE AND FIXINGS****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)

13. EXTENSION OF LEGAL SERVICES CONTRACT (PRO100)****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)

14. RENEWAL OF THE TENANCY AGREEMENT FOR THE GATE LODGE, ABBEY STREET****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)

15. REQUEST FROM MARKET PLACE EUROPE LIMITED TO HOLD AN INTERNATIONAL MARKET AT CONWAY SQUARE 16TH TO 18TH MAY 2023 (LP2G (3))****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. RENEWAL OF RNLI LEASE OF STATION AT THE PARADE (LP99)****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)

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

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

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 10.05 pm.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A virtual meeting of the Community and Wellbeing Committee was held via Zoom on Wednesday 9th November 2022 at 7:00 pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor Edmund

Alderman: Wilson

Councillors:

Boyle	McRandal
Chambers	Moore
Douglas	Smart
S Irvine	T Smith
Johnson (7.25 pm)	Thompson
MacArthur (7.06 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 Aldermen Carson and Irvine and Councillor Woods. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Moore and MacArthur.

NOTED.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman asked for any Declarations of Interest at this stage and the following declarations were made:

Councillor Chambers – Item 27 – Leisure Insourcing – HR Update.

NOTED.

3. VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL PLAY AREA RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 24 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the following motion was agreed by Council in June 2022:

“That this Council task officers to enter into discussions with the Education Authority concerning the redevelopment of the play area fronting Victoria Primary School (which is a shared facility between the school and public) as a potential Peace Plus project to enhance recreation and sports facilities for Ballyhalbert.”

The area of land in question, outlined in red below was currently owned by the Education Authority. Therefore, in order to develop anything on that piece of land agreement with the Education Authority would be required.

Contact had been made with the Department of Education and the Education Authority who stated the following:

“The Education Authority has a statutory duty to promote and facilitate Community Use of Schools. This includes working with statutory and other partners on capital projects which increase use of school facilities by their local communities.

Any such projects, including those that were substantially funded through external organisations, would be subject to due diligence processes carried out by EA for schools over which it had managing authority (i.e. Controlled schools). As well as confirmation that funding was in place, that due diligence also included the completion of a business case which demonstrated an identified need for the project within the community and confirmed that the use of the facility was financially sustainable in the long term.”



In previous discussions with the Education Authority in the past it had pointed to the fact that there was a grass pitch and a 3G pitch at Glasstry College which was available for community use and which was 0.8km to the west of the village.



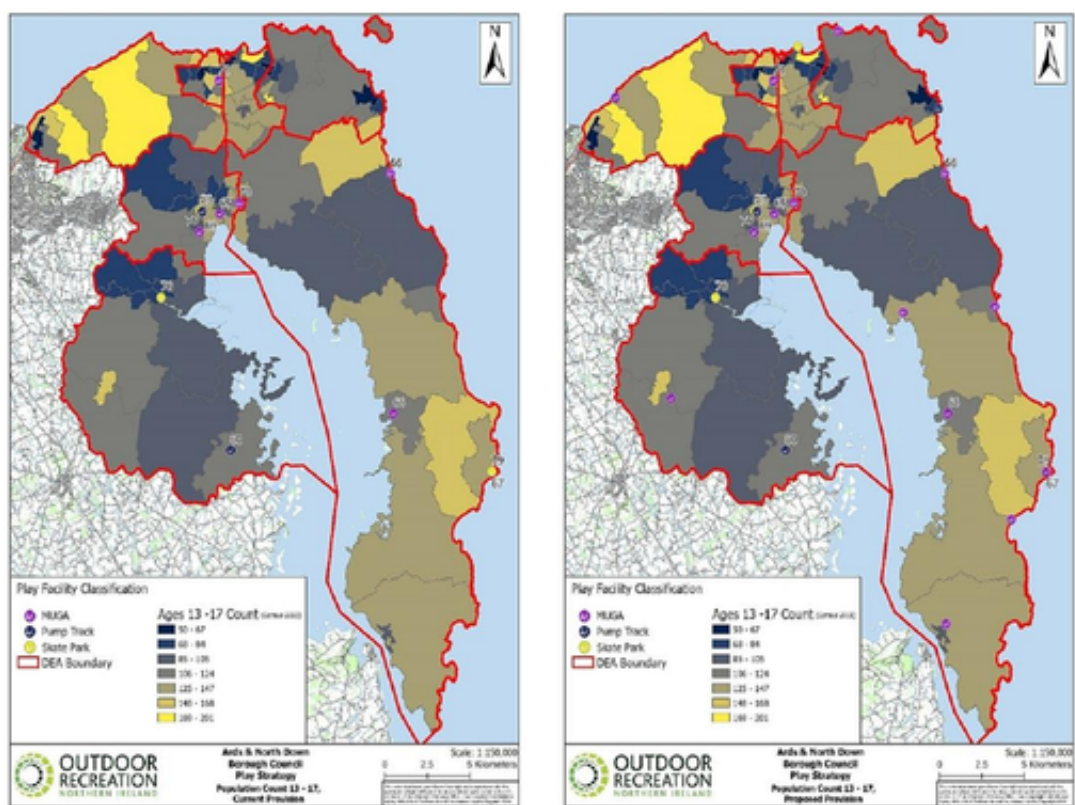
Play Strategy

In terms of older children provision the Play Strategy stated the following:

The delivery of such provision was to be focused in areas which were identified as having a higher concentration of older children (from the census data). It would also follow the settlement hierarchy with the larger settlements (in terms of population)

being provided for as a priority and also to provide an even geographical spread across the Borough. The availability of Council owned land or the acquisition of additional land (and its associated implications and costs etc) was also a consideration for locating such facilities. For example, Bangor only had one MUGA and Holywood and Donaghadee had no provision at all for older children at present, with Holywood having one of the highest concentrations of older children in its DEA and across the Borough. The aim was to provide an even distribution of such facilities across the Borough with those having the greatest need (population/demographic) being provided for in the first instance.

The delivery of the provision for older children would require the securing of additional capital funds to construct them by completing the required business cases for approval. There may be opportunities to deliver such facilities using external funding which may be location specific (such a Village Renewal funding etc.). In some instances, the delivery of that additional older children provision would be in conjunction with other proposals at a settlement level in terms of upgrades and removals etc. Public consultation exercises would be undertaken in the proposed locations to establish the type of facility that the local community would like to see delivered and where it should be located.



Existing and proposed older children and young people provision.

Existing Provision

Location	Facility
Bangor	MUGA Clandeboye Road
Newtownards	MUGA x3 West Winds Bowtown (managed by the Community Association) Londonderry Park (partial MUGA) Skate Park, ABMWLC Pump Track, ABMWLC
Comber	Skate Park, Muckers Field
Millisle	MUGA Ballywalter Road
Portavogie	Skate Park, New Harbour Road
Kircubbin	MUGA, Parsons Road (partial MUGA)
Killinchy	Pump Track

Proposed Provision

The locations identified in the Play Strategy for Older Children Provision were as follows:

- Bangor
- Holywood
- Donaghadee
- Groomsport
- Ballygowan
- Ballywalter
- Kircubbin
- Cloughey
- Greyabbey

The type of facility to be delivered and the locations within the settlements would be the subject of local Community consultation. The locations identified in the Play Strategy were to ensure an even geographical spread across the Borough and could be delivered using Council owned land.

Ballyhalbert was not identified for any older children provision over the course of the Play Strategy.

PEACEPLUS

In terms of identifying projects to be taken forward for PEACEPLUS the Council had established a new PEACEPLUS Partnership for the new PEACEPLUS Programme 2022-2027 for the Ards and North Down Council area. The PEACEPLUS Partnership would oversee the design and implementation of a co-designed overarching PEACEPLUS Action Plan for the Borough area.

The Ards and North Down Borough Council (ANDBC) PEACEPLUS Programme, would build upon the work of previous PEACE programmes and enable and empower local community partnerships, led by the Council to co design, select and deliver priority projects on a cross community basis, which would result in shared and inclusive local services, facilities and spaces and make a significant and lasting contribution to peace and reconciliation.

The three core themes were as follows:

- (i) Local community regeneration and transformation;
- (ii) Thriving and peaceful communities; and
- (iii) Building respect for all cultural identities.

There was a process to follow in terms of which projects would be taken forward for delivery funded by PEACEPLUS.

- Community Consultation
- Online Survey
- Development of a co-design process
- Development of an Action Plan
- Identification of priority projects
- Application submission under the Themes

Therefore, until that process had been completed, it could not be guaranteed that a project to deliver a facility at Ballyhalbert would be identified as being one of the priority projects identified for PEACEPLUS funding.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approve that Ballyhalbert community continue to avail of the existing facilities at Glastry College. The potential for a project in front of Victoria Primary could potentially be added to the list of projects being put forward for PEACEPLUS and considered by the PEACEPLUS Partnership and progressed through the process outlined above. Consideration should also be given to the other sites identified in the Play Strategy for older children provision as part of the PEACEPLUS process that could be delivered on Council land.

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

Councillor Boyle thanked officers for the detailed report explaining where the Council stood and where it might be able to channel its thoughts for the future. In his opinion it would be important for Ballyhalbert to get something from this work but warned about overly building up expectations at this stage and instead continue to explore every opportunity available.

Councillor Smart was in agreement and also praised officers for their endeavours to put this work together in the hope that PEACEPLUS could come up with something. For now, he viewed it as a positive step forward.

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

(Councillor MacArthur entered the meeting at 7.06 pm)

4. **ITEM WITHDRAWN**

5. **ASHBURY PLAY PARK – LINEAR PARK / BALLYCROCHAN**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 24 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that under the legacy North Down Borough Council 2014 Playpark Strategy and the more recent Ards and North Down Play Strategy in 2021, the Bangor East area was identified as having a lack of playground provision. An area around Ashbury Avenue (Ashbury shops) and Linear Park was identified as being the best location to locate a play facility in that area to serve the local population.

A Public Consultation exercise was undertaken in 2019 to determine the preferred site. The sites considered were a site located on the grass area to the front of the shops (Site A) and another site in Linear Park (Site B).

The results were that 42% of respondents favoured Site A and 46% favoured Site B with 3% having no preference and 9% didn't specify a preferred location. At a subsequent Council meeting in August 2020, it was determined that the play area should be delivered at Site A.



Figure 1. Map which was shown at public consultation events.

Following the Council decision, Council Officers started negotiations with the landowners as well as Land and Property Service to establish if the land could be obtained to deliver the play area and under what conditions. The landowners had aspirations of extending their commercial units at the site and following lengthy negotiations it was finally agreed that they would submit a planning application for their commercial extension. That application included additional commercial units, an extension of the car park and the play area. The play area was designed by the Council's contracted Play Park Installers in line with the normal Council specifications and the drawings were issued to the landowner's agent for inclusion in the planning application. The Council also paid the element of the planning fee attributable to the play area (£848). Indication was given by the landowners that when they received planning permission, they would then transfer the land needed for the play area to the Council and the Council would deliver the play park. The conditions of the land transfer would be determined at that point.

Given that the land was not yet in Council ownership the normal planning permitted development rights did not apply, so the play park could not be delivered and had to be brought forward as part of the wider planning application.

The planning application was submitted on 20th July 2022:

LA06/2022/0750/F: Two class 1 shop units and 1 hot food unit to the ground floor and first floor accommodation for use as class B1(a) or class A2 financial

professional and other service use with associated car parking and children's play area.

At present NI Water had responded with the following:

For the reasons detailed below NI Water recommend that this application for planning approval should be Refused.

There is a public foul sewer within 20m of the proposed development boundary. A high-level assessment has indicated potential network capacity issues. This establishes significant risks of detrimental effect to the environment and detrimental impact on existing properties. For this reason, NI Water is recommending connections to the public sewerage system are curtailed.

The landowner's agent was now required to undertake a study in relation to the network capacity in that area.

Until that had been completed, submitted and reconsidered by Planning and NI Water the planning application could not be determined.

The play area could not be delivered until the planning process had been completed. The terms of the transfer would then be determined, and the legal transfer process would need to be undertaken. Should the application not be successful then further negotiations would be required.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note that the Ashbury Play Area cannot be delivered until the planning application has been determined.

Councillor T Smith asked to make an amendment to the proposal which was seconded by Councillor Chambers.

This Council expresses its disappointment at the latest delay to this project. It therefore asks officers to bring back another report no later than 3 months from now. That report should provide an update on the planning application and should also explore other options for the delivery of this much needed play park.

Councillor T Smith explained that he had brought the amendment forward since the matter had been ongoing for many years now and it seemed to present a struggle at every step. He highlighted that this was no criticism of the landowner but rather another impasse by NI Water which had raised an objection and as a result further uncertainty. Thousands of children who might have benefitted from this had now grown up and had missed out on that play provision and he did not want to see it further unnecessarily delayed. He urged the Council to continue to review the position and believed that it had an obligation to deliver play facilities in that area.

He wondered if the application could be split as a way to take the permission forward with the playpark separate from the retail units. He recognised that this was the Council's preferred site but he suggested that an alternative, such as Linear Park, should be looked at if a reassessment was needed in three months' time.

Councillor Chambers thanked Councillor T Smith for bringing the proposal and was sure that Members would be in agreement with it. He knew that the Council wanted to deliver this project but there was a general public perception that it was failing to deliver which was unfortunate. He worried that the NI Water objection could mean that the Council's chosen site could be unviable, and he called for the Council to monitor developments closely. He asked if the officers concerned had a back-up plan and how long the Council intended to pursue this option.

The Head of Parks and Cemeteries appreciated the disappointment being expressed and the report had been intended to be an update to Members on the current position. Presently the application was going through the planning process and the Council was in regular communication with the landowner and he would endeavour to bring back a further report on progress over the next few months.

Councillor Boyle also shared his disappointment having read the report and considered that NI Water seemed to be interrupting a range of project plans within the Borough. He understood Councillor T Smith's reasoning and asked officers if they believed that progress could be made in a relatively short period of time.

The Director reminded Members that this was not the Council's planning application so it had limited influence on the detail but that work would continue with the landowner to progress the application as much as possible. The Head of Parks and Cemeteries had nothing further to add but he gave assurances that an update would be provided after the Christmas break.

In summing up Councillor T Smith thought that the onus was on the Council to build what was a much-needed playpark and that the application should be closely monitored over the coming months.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor T Smith, seconded by Councillor Chambers, that this Council expresses its disappointment at the latest delay to this project. It therefore asks officers to bring back another report no later than 3 months from now. That report should provide an update on the planning application and should also explore other options for the delivery of this much needed play park.

6. DISPLAY BED APPLICATIONS (Appendix I)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 24 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that on the 27 February 2019, Council agreed a policy for the use of Display Beds in the Borough. That policy required Officers to report to the Council any applications received by external organisations. The Council had received three applications for use of the display beds. Officers had assessed applications and had determined that the requests met the criteria in the policy and were recommended for approval. The applications were deemed by Officers to not require equality screening.

The Parks team would endeavour to replicate the design as far as possible, however detail design may alter to facilitate installation. If necessary, the Officer would liaise with the applicant if the installation may have to be significantly different from that proposed.

The applications were as follows, and the proposed design of the display was included in the attached appendix.

Name of Group / Organisation	Display Bed Location	Proposed Dates of Display	Reason for the Display
Glenlola Collegiate School	Adjacent to Bangor Post and Sorting Office	09/01/2023 - 20/03/2023	To celebrate 125 years of educating girls in Bangor
North Down Parkinsons Support Group	Adjacent to Bangor Post and Sorting Office	01/04/2023 – 30/04/2023	Celebrate World Parkinsons Day 11 April 2023
Donaghadee Women's Institute	East Street, Donaghadee	01/05/2023 - 31/05/2023	To mark the 80 th anniversary of Donaghadee Women's Institute

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the above applications for the display beds.

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

7. SCHOOL GROWING CLUBS (Appendix II)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 24 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Ards and North Down had 74 Schools accommodating circa 14,000 pupils. The Council's Parks Service actively engaged

with many of those schools through Ards and North Down 'In Bloom'. The structure of the 'In Bloom' initiative recognised the importance of educating young people on environmental responsibility, benefiting the Borough now and for future generations. The Community Competitions included categories specifically aimed at entrants aged under 16. Schools were further engaged through the #STAND4TREES initiative which put young people at the heart of many tree planting schemes and climate change education.

Council Parks Officers regularly held educational workshops throughout the Borough themed around horticulture, biodiversity and the environment. Parks Service hoped to build on that success through a new School Growing Clubs initiative.

School Growing Clubs were a great opportunity for schools to promote healthy eating as well as a deeper understanding of sustainable food issues. Pupils and teachers would be inspired to work together in their outside space, learn gardening skills for life and learn to take care of their local environment. Research suggested schools taking part benefitted through healthier and happier children spending more of their time outside.

Schools would be able to use this initiative as a tool for development, enabling them to provide an exciting curriculum for children and young people. Schools could introduce children to the natural environment and in particular to gardening in a variety of ways. Gardening was not just a science subject, but the arts, language, geography, and technology, could all be employed to further a pupil's understanding, knowledge and skills of planting and growing.

Growing areas in schools could be created with as little as container planting, up to more extensive gardening areas. Growing areas offered pupils the benefit of practical hands-on activities, helping to motivate and enhance their learning experience. Gardening had many positive benefits, particularly in increasing younger children's likelihood of trying new fruit or vegetables that they had grown and improving all pupils' understanding of healthy eating.

Educating children in the planting and harvesting of fruit and vegetables supported transition to a healthy, sustainable, and more equitable food system, in line with the Council's membership of Sustainable Food Places. Ards and North Down Sustainable Food Community recognised the need to support local communities in reclaiming existing outdoor spaces, aiming to connect and support a wider food network to improve partnership working and share skills and ideas.

The Parks Service was committed to offering guidance to schools through the 'Let's Grow Together' Strategy. The Council wanted to assist schools to set-up successful growing areas, developing a positive link with the wider Ards and North Down In Bloom initiative. This School Growing Clubs initiative would provide practical advice and a support package to set-up or improve an existing gardening club within six schools each year. Extension of the In Bloom initiative re-enforced Council's

commitment to support communities in achieving horticultural excellence, increasing community participation and promoting environmentally sustainable practices. Since 2019 Ards and North Down In Bloom funding had awarded more than £54,000 supporting 64 projects.

The School Growing Clubs was aimed at promoting sustainable outdoor education to inspire and support learning around horticulture, growing your own, sustainability, biodiversity, the 'reduce reuse recycle' message, and encouraging civic pride within young people. The programme would be delivered by the Council's Parks Service and funded within the Council's existing grants budget. Parks Officers would commit to delivering four gardening sessions with each of the six schools (24 sessions in total), to include a celebration event at the end of the programme. The Parks Service would also supply a tool and growing equipment kit to the six schools.

The School Growing Clubs Package aimed to support schools and youth organisations to:

- Create a growing area within the school grounds
- Plan, sow, tend and harvest a range of fruit and vegetables at school
- Produce crops which can be eaten in school
- Show schools how you can work together, making the best use of resources.
- Extend pupils understanding of sustainable food issues
- Promote healthier eating and drinking messages for pupils
- Inspire pupils to take care of, and respect, their local environment
- Work towards Eco School criteria and Green Flag

Selected schools would receive: -

- A four-session programme between January and October 2023.
- A Schools Growing Club Starter Kit including tools, equipment and resources.
- Certificates for participating pupils.

All schools in the Borough would be invited to apply to become a School Growing Club in Autumn 2022, with six schools being chosen by the panel (made up of Council Staff), with the programme running from January to October 2023 with publicity throughout.

RECOMMENDED that the Council supports the implementation of Ards and North Down School Growing Clubs.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Smart, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur welcomed the initiative and even though it was on a small scale with the participation of six schools it had the potential to help schools that might be struggling to start on this food journey. She pointed to the fact that there was an abundance of information on the topic, and it formed part of the Northern

Ireland Curriculum. She encouraged schools to participate and referred to the success of it in her own school.

Councillor Smart agreed thanking officers for their efforts and he was encouraged that the Council had been able to support some local schools who were starting on this food journey.

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

8. LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2022 – 2032 (Appendices III & IV)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 14 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the purpose of the report was to seek approval for the public consultation of the Second Ards and North Down Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2022–2032.

Biodiversity was the variety of plant and animal life in the world, or in a particular place or habitat, and included all species of plants and animals, and the habitats in which they lived. Humans were a part of biodiversity, and the way the land was used and managed across various habitats could have a knock-on effect for many other species.

The biodiversity of Northern Ireland was of international importance and around 20,000 species were found in a wide variety of habitats.

A vast range of habitats could be found throughout the Ards and North Down Borough Council area including saltmarsh, rivers and lakes, fens, sand dunes, woodland, and grassland. Urban habitats within parks, cemeteries and gardens were also important for biodiversity. Notable habitats within the Borough and the species they support were outlined in the plan. Many of the habitats present in Ards and North Down, such as unimproved grasslands, species rich hedgerows and inter-drumlin wetlands were under severe risk of damage or loss. The main drivers of biodiversity loss included:

- Habitat Loss and Fragmentation
- Invasive Species
- Invasive Non-native Plant and animal Species
- Pollution
- Climate Change
- Land Management

The Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) placed a statutory duty on all public bodies to “further the conservation of biodiversity in exercising any function.” The

production of this Local Biodiversity Action Plan would assist in demonstrating the Council's compliance with the statutory duty. Under the WANE Act, the Council was responsible for considering five key aspects of biodiversity. Those were:

- Protection of Biodiversity
- Maintenance of Biodiversity
- Enhancing Biodiversity
- Restoring Biodiversity
- Promoting Biodiversity

The development of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for ANDBC, (in appendix), was an important step in recognising the importance of local biodiversity. It aimed to ensure that international, national, regional and local biodiversity objectives were achieved through a range of partnerships.

An essential part of the LBAP process was to establish, through a biodiversity audit, which of the internationally important, and UK and Northern Ireland priority, habitats and species occurred in the Council area. The audit provided essential information on local species and habitats under threat. That was then used to identify those habitats and species to be prioritised for conservation action. A total of six Priority Habitats and 29 Priority Species were identified through the audit process. The LBAP report expanded further providing additional information on each of those habitats and species, identifying key locations within the Borough where they could be found and the specific threats they faced.

A series of actions had been designed to conserve and enhance the priority habitats and species identified that were of international, national, regional, and crucially local significance within the Council area, (in attached appendix). The proposed LBAP Actions fell under one of four themes:

- Theme 1: Education and Awareness
- Theme 2: Research and Monitoring
- Theme 3: Land Management
- Theme 4: Building Partnerships

A total of 77 Actions had been proposed across all four Themes.

The habitats and species listed in in the LBAP represented a selection of what was present in the North Down and Ards area. That selection would be prioritised for action. It was likely that other habitats and species may be added to this list as priorities may change over the life span of the plan.

The Plan would be a dynamic document which would be subject to constant review. It would guide the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in Ards and North Down Borough Council over the next ten years. Progress towards the targeted actions would be assessed and reported annually and LBAP would be reviewed after

five years. Reporting on progress would be undertaken by the Council on behalf of the LBAP Partnership.

To conserve our habitats and the species they supported we must take ownership and get involved now to protect them.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for ANDBC 2022 – 2032, Appendix 1, and associated actions, Appendix 2, for public consultation.

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

Councillor McRandal welcomed the report and explained that he had taken part in some consultation events which had led to the report. He thanked all the officers who had been involved in that process. He referred to the links the Council had with established charities and agencies and wished to see the local communities involved as much as possible in that and wondered how the Council planned to develop those links.

The Head of Parks and Cemeteries stated that community events were part of the Local Biodiversity Plan and gave an example of a summer programme that the Council had run earlier in the year at Castle Park, Bangor. That would be expanded in the coming year drawing in to established events such as a butterfly count. This Council area was well represented in the United Kingdom for the Citizen Science programme which the Council supported, and it involved many people of all ages in the community working to support biodiversity.

Alderman Wilson also welcomed the report and had received an email earlier that day from the local conservation group Greenspaces which welcomed the plan. That group had suggested a central communication point to share information about the removal of trees and shrubs locally. He referred to Translink having removed shrub at Stricklands in Bangor and hoped that a mechanism could be built to make everyone aware of such local environmental developments.

(Councillor Johnson entered the meeting at 7.25 pm)

The Head of Parks and Cemeteries explained that the Council had its own tree and woodland strategy, and it did engage with communities and intended to pull together statutory agencies to have more regular contact regarding biodiversity issues. Alderman Wilson acknowledged that it was not an easy exercise but better communication going forward would be helpful.

Councillor MacArthur raised the challenges of dealing with invasive species and referred to Japanese Knotweed, growing on the Commons, Donaghadee as well as

Rhododendrons and asked if any mapping of these invasive species had been carried out since there was some local concern being expressed.

The Head of Parks and Leisure informed Members that the Council had a strategy for removing such species and had developed an App for Council staff to record where those were being found. The Council was working with Queen's University, Belfast, and had had a student work with it for three months over the summer progressing the list. Over the Autumn months the Council would inject those species with weed control but noted that it was unfortunate that the vegetation spread rapidly.

Councillor MacArthur continued asking about further education to local schools about the biodiversity on the Borough's doorstep. The Head of Parks and Cemeteries assured her that that would be developed significantly over the coming years and much information was already available due to the Citizen Science projects.

Councillor Douglas welcomed the report thanking officers and agreed that public consultation was of crucial importance. She praised the work of the Citizen Science events and that the Walled Garden in Bangor had had some success in that. There was a desire locally to be engaged in environmental and sustainability issues and the Council should seek the broadest range of consultation possible.

At the close of the discussion Councillor T Smith stated that he would support the recommendation but with one caveat. In actions of conservation of the Red Squirrel he could not support the culling of the Grey Squirrel since it was also a species in its own right.

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

9. CEMETERY PRICING (Appendix V)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 25 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing 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 the 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 net cost to the ratepayer 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% increase to the cemetery charges for 2023/24, rounded to the nearest £1 for each charge. That was above the 5% already submitted by the service for the estimates process, a 5% was also submitted for information. Members were reminded that the current rate of inflation was 10.1%.

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

In addition, Officers would suggest that Members consider 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' from 1st January each year.

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

RECOMMENDED that the Council adopt and approve the charges 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 Boyle proposed the recommendation but this was not seconded and therefore not moved.

10. GROOMSPORT PADDLING POOL / SPLASH PAD PLAY UPGRADE

(Appendix VI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 25 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would recall in September that an update was given on the play areas that would undergo refurbishment this financial year, including the proposed upgrade to the paddling pools at Groomsport to splash pads. A proposal was subsequently agreed at Council as follows:

"That a full report detailing the maintenance issues with Groomsport Paddling Pool and costs to repair these issues is brought to Committee and that an assurance is given that a paddling pool area is retained."

There had been issues with drainage and leakage at the paddling pool in Groomsport so given that there was additional budget available as a result of the Rural Development Funding, it was determined that the existing paddling pool could

be converted into a splash pad area, similar to that at Pickie, providing a significant upgrade to the facility.

The Council's Property and Assets Department had encountered leakages due to a faulty valve, as well as several instances of surface cracking. Full resurfacing had been carried out in the pool in the last four years, as well as ongoing localised surface repairs and resurfacing.

Currently there was a leak, believed to be related to the old drainage pipe work below the pool. That could potentially require excavating through the pool surface to repair or replace the old pipework. There were also additional further localised surface repairs to undertake. On top of the ongoing repairs there was regular reactive and planned power washing, and cleaning.

Parks and Cemeteries also cleaned the pools and changed the water on a weekly basis with power washing occurring generally at the start of the season prior to the first filling of the pool for the summer season. Below was a breakdown of the costs associated with the pool over the last 3 years.

Groomsport Paddling Pool								
PARKS								
	Hours	Staff	Rate	Occ	Per Week	Season		
Filling	4	2	£ 21.78	2	£ 348.48	26	£ 9,060.48	per year
Checking	0.4	1	£ 21.78	7	£ 60.98	26	£ 1,585.58	per year
							<u>£ 10,646.06</u>	per year
PROPERTY & ASSETS							<u>£ 31,938.19</u>	over 3 years
Repairs							£ 2,000.00	over 3 years
Remedial drainage works							£ 3,000.00	over 3 years
Resurfacing							£ 6,000.00	in last 3 years
Cleaning							£ 1,100.00	over 3 years
Water Bills							<u>£ 660.00</u>	over 3 years
							<u>£ 44,698.19</u>	over 3 years

Following the discussion at the September Committee and Council meeting, the contracted playground designer, Garden Escapes, was asked to revise the designs to retain a pool area and remodel the splash pad design previously submitted to work within the allocated budget - attached was the revised design. The splash pad area was fully accessible to those with mobility issues and an area of pool was retained. The contractors would, as part of the works, resolve the valve/pipework issue and resurface the pool. The design attached may be subject to change in relation to the Splash Pad elements (jets etc) depending on confirmation of technical suitability, following exploration works.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the attached amended designs, and that Officers can progress implementation.

Proposed by Councillor Chambers, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Chambers believed that this matter had been debated enough and he was pleased with the design of the pool and believed, like others, that it offered the best of the old and the new design. The splash pad was fully accessible to those with mobility issues and he thanked officers knowing that the proposal was something that would satisfy many people.

He went on to refer to a report which was being brought to the Regeneration and Development Committee describing that similar at Pickie in Bangor was now thought to be outdated and costly to update and that had caused him some concern. He asked the officer to explain the difference in the two and hopefully give reassurance to Members that the right decision was being taken in respect of the water features.

The Head of Parks and Cemeteries stated that he was unaware of the position at Pickie but would follow it up with the relevant officers, but it may be simply older and in need of attention because of that. He explained how the splash pads could be adjusted and that this was new spec design and officers were confident that what was being proposed was a reasonable and good option for Groomsport.

Seconding the recommendation Councillor T Smith was in agreement and was pleased to see the design which retained the history and yet looked to the future. He hoped the plans would be progressed soon.

Councillor MacArthur welcomed the consideration which had been given to children with mobility issues and thanked officers for the work which had been undertaken so far.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Chambers, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that the recommendation be adopted.

11. ENVIRONMENT HEALTH PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 21 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that under the Council's scheme of delegation and in order to allow for timely service delivery, the application of legislation relating to Environmental Health matters had been delegated to officers to implement. A condition of that delegated authority was that related activity be reported to Council from time to time. The following was the report for the 2021-2022 year and included such delegated activity.

1. Summary of Environmental Health Protection and Development Service Activity 2021-22

The role of the Environmental Health Protection and Development Department was to contribute to ensuring a better quality of life for all. From the Health Protection perspective, the service monitored, advised and enforced compliance with Food, Public Health, Pollution, Health and Safety at Work, Consumer Safety and Housing legislation and standards to protect the public from physical, chemical and biological agents, and conditions that may cause ill health or harm.

During the 2021-22 year the service faced significant challenges including redeployment of staff into Covid enforcement, a significant increase in noise complaints, increased number of new food business, catching up on works not progressed during 2020-21 and significant staff recruitment and retention issues. Regardless, the performance of the team remained positive with the majority of KPI's, and targets being reached.

1.1 Functions within the department

The range of statutory and non-statutory functions delivered on behalf of the Council were as followed:

1. Food Control (including food manufacturing and fisheries).
2. Consumer Protection. (Safety of consumer goods)
3. Health and Safety at Work
 - Caravan Site Licensing
 - A wide range of commercial premises
 - Petroleum Licensing
 - Sunbeds
 - Fireworks
4. Pollution Control
 - Noise
 - Air quality
1. Public Health (nuisance)
 - Pest Control
 - Private rented Housing
2. Health and Wellbeing / Health initiatives
 - Affordable Warmth.
 - Tobacco Control
 - Home Safety
 - Community Planning lead for Age Friendly, Community Resuscitation,
 - Health Development

1.2 Service Provision

Service provision included

- service requests,
- planned inspections and proactive visits to commercial premises and
- wellbeing intervention activities.

1.2.1 Service Requests

Service requests related to individuals' requests for assistance for example in relation to pest control, or when the activities of one party caused an adverse effect on another for example in relation to nuisance and pollution.

The number of service requests by category 2021-22.

Department Function	Number of Requests
Pest Control	720
General Environmental Health	712
Food Hygiene and Standards	661
Pollution Control	936
Private Tenancies Complaints	169
Health and Safety	439
Consumer Protection	25
Tobacco Control	2
Caravan/Petroleum Licensing	4
Total	3668

In addition to the above, 89 property inspections were carried out under the Private Tenancies Order to have homes assessed against the fitness standard.

A total of 93 statutory notices were issued under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, to secure environmental improvements and abatement of nuisances.

Officers responded to 323 consultations from the Council's planning department on planning matters that could potentially affect public or environmental health.

The performance indicator target for a response to service requests was 94% within two working days. For the year 2021/22 the target was achieved.

The number of service requests received was 14% lower than for 2020/21, but still markedly higher (30%) than pre-Covid levels.

1.3 Planned Inspection and Proactive visits to commercial premises

There were currently 4420 operating commercial premises on the Environmental Health database. During the year 1253 (28%) of those premises were visited to assess compliance with legislation, to educate business operators on new legislation and requirements and to obtain samples. In order to reduce the burden on business many of those visits were carried out concurrently with officers assessing a range of legislative compliance - for example food hygiene, food standards and tobacco control addressed by an officer during one visit. Businesses and premises were risk assessed to ensure that those which might present the greatest potential risk to public health were visited most frequently.

2. Area specific performance

2.1 Food Control

The Food Control Service continued to meet the requirements of the FSA's Recovery Plan in 21/22. The Recovery Plan was devised to ensure that resources were targeted where they added the greatest value, such as identifying risks with new businesses and ensuring more routine operation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

In addition to the routine inspection of food premises and the reactive work in dealing with complaints and notification of food poisoning incidents, a food sampling programme was undertaken. Food sampling was an essential and effective tool in ensuring that consumers were provided with safe food and the information to enable them to make informed choices about food purchases.

2.1.1 Food Hygiene

- Inspected all category A premises
- Investigated 35 food poisoning identifications on behalf of the Public Health Agency
- Reacted to and actioned 91 complaints regarding premises hygiene.
- Collected 623 food samples for microbiological analysis.
- 69.4% of new businesses received an onsite inspection.
- Served 5 Hygiene Improvement Notices.
- Served 1 Remedial Action Notice.
- 2 Food businesses voluntary closed.

2.1.2 Food Standards

- 16 A rated premises inspected for food standards.
- Collected 345 food samples for chemical analysis.
- Investigated 139 complaints regarding allergens, composition, and labelling irregularities.
- Conducted a fish speciation survey to identify if substitution was being carried out.
- Mailshot sent out to 679 premises outlining the legal requirements for labelling foods that were prepacked for direct sale.

- 183 Businesses contacted either via email or mailshot regarding reformulation of cheesecake workshop hosted by the Food Standards Agency.

2.2 Consumer Protection

The consumer protection team provided a support and advisory service to local manufacturers, suppliers, and distributors of non-food consumer products in respect of their safety. The activities that had been undertaken included:

- Populated a database with details of all known local manufacturers, importers, and first-time distributors (and most retail and other outlets)
- Planned a targeted programme of work on a quarterly basis
- Participated in the work of the Northern Ireland Consumer Protection Group (NICPG) and provided a delegate to their subgroup working on links with Economic Development and the production of a training resource and on-line information pack for businesses.
- Disseminated information and advice provided through NICPG various areas such as product recall, e-cigarettes, hired goods, second-hand goods.
- Investigated complaints.
- Provided advice following requests from local manufacturers of toys, golf buggies, upholstered furniture, and cosmetics.

2.3 Health and Safety, Caravan Site and Petroleum Licensing

The responsibility for both advice in relation to and enforcement of the Coronavirus restriction regulations fell largely to the H&S and Licensing Officers with the knock-on effect being that focus was shifted from planned inspections of premises based on risk ratings allocated on the Tascomi data management system to dealing with complaints. Queries and requests for advice in relation to this novel legislation. The focus in 2021-22 was on assisting open businesses to comply with social distancing requirements; monitoring and advising closed businesses; and issuing advice on operating safely.

While there were no lockdowns in this period, restriction regulations were regularly changing. That led to a high demand from the service in relation to explaining the Covid rules to both businesses and members of the public. Officers from the department helped develop advice and guidance for businesses at a local, regional, and national level to assist them, in mitigating the Covid pandemic.

2.3.1 Health and Safety

A total number of 2654 premises were registered for health and safety on 31 March 2022, and 380 visits were completed during the year. The breakdown of those visits was as followed:

196	Visits in relation to Covid-19 requirements
35	H&S Inspections and Revisits
10	Visits to investigate accidents
6	Visits in response to requests for advice
10	Visits in response to complaints about premises or work activities

13	Sunbed Premises Inspections
36	Caravan Site Inspections and Revisits
71	Petroleum Site Licensing inspections and revisits
3	Firework and MSER site visits

Visits to assess compliance with general Health and Safety legislation were impacted by response to service requests in relation to Covid-19, with restrictions being relaxed from February 2022, and replaced with ongoing guidance.

While 7 Improvement Notices were served in relation to serious contraventions or continuing non-compliance, no Prohibition Notices were issued, and no prosecutions instituted in respect of issues presenting a serious risk to health or safety.

2.3.2 Caravan Site Licensing

That involved an annual assessment visit to each of the 26 Caravan Sites located throughout the Borough, and revisits as necessary. Officers also completed a Health and Safety inspection of sites where that was due. In 2021-22, 26 inspections and 10 revisits were undertaken.

2.3.3 Petroleum Licensing

During the period 49 inspections and 22 revisits were completed of filling stations located within the borough in order to ensure that licences were issued in a timely manner. Health and Safety Inspections of the premises had been completed in a single combined visit where appropriate.

2.3.4 Sunbed Test Purchase Exercises

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic test purchase exercises were not carried out however 14 Sunbed premises were visited in relation to compliance with the requirements of both the Sunbeds Act (NI) 2011 and Covid-19 restrictions.

2.3.5 Firework Licence Applications

Officers were warranted by the Department of Justice Firearms and Explosives Branch (FEB) and provided comments and where necessary additional conditions to the FEB, who in turn issued Licences for fireworks display if officers were content that it was safe to do so.

Nine Firework Licence applications were assessed by officers for displays held within the Borough. That was significantly less than the number assessed in previous years, most likely due to restriction on gatherings during the pandemic. Officers also inspected one premises where Fireworks or flares were stored and which was registered under the Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations.

2.4 Pollution Control

2.4.1 Noise

765 complaints about noise were received in 2021/22. That was a further rise over the significant increase in complaints recorded between 2019/20 and 2020/21.

While part of the increase could be attributed to the fact that, prior to 2020 complaints relating to dog barking were received by the Neighbourhood and Environment team in the first instance, this alone did not account for the sustained level of complaints. It was possible that this may be due in part to impacts of the pandemic, including working from home arrangements, or particularly in relation to dog barking and the subsequent return to the workplace.

100% of the complaints that were made received a response. Of the 765 complaints received approximately 39% wanted to proceed after their initial contact. Complaints may not progress past initial information and advice for a number of reasons including; where a disturbance was reported as a side issue to a wider neighbour dispute or a reciprocal complaint; where complainants were unwilling to provide their details or engage in the necessary procedures; where complainants were reluctant to proceed fearing a negative reaction from noise sources or on social media, or where complainants were open to approaching the source directly. At the stage of a formal investigation, complainants may again choose not to proceed if they were not prepared to collect the evidence required or appear as a witness in court.

Noise Abatement Notices

Of the 113 complaints formally investigated, nine abatement notices were served with other continuing investigations leading to further notices outside of the reporting period. An abatement notice was served in all cases where a statutory nuisance was established, and legal proceedings consequently instituted, if continued disturbance was reported and breach of notice was established.

Of the abatement notices served seven related to dogs barking excessively, one related to music and amplified noise from a Public House and one to loud music, singing and shouting from a domestic property.

No legal proceedings were instituted during the period in relation to noise nuisance in breach of a Noise Abatement Notice.

2.4.2 Air Quality

This is a shared service with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. Local air quality was monitored at 16 sites in the Borough, with annual reports being submitted to DAERA as required by legislation. A successful grant application was made to DAERA for staff resource and equipment maintenance. Additional funds were also received in relation to the 'Engine Off, Prevent the Cough' campaign which aimed to reduce vehicle emissions outside local primary schools.

Monitoring was also undertaken in relation to radiation levels in the Borough, via sampling of foodstuffs and a permanent monitoring station in Portavogie. There were no incidents of concern during the year.

2.5 Public Health

Service Requests

Much of the work of the Public Health and Housing service unit related to service requests from residents. For the year 2021/22, Officers responded to 1601 service requests relating to pest control, housing/drainage issues and neighbourhood nuisance (excluding noise).

The most common types of service request related to pest control, with rodent and flying insect complaints being received in the greatest numbers. The service provided investigation and advice, which ensured that the root cause of pest problems could be properly identified, and effective solutions could be made. Support was also provided to Officers carrying out the food hygiene function when assistance was required in relation to pest control matters.

Other types of service requests received included neighbourhood complaints in relation to housing defects, malodour, smoke, and problems with drainage/flooding.

2.6 Private Rented Housing

Regulation of the private rented housing sector was carried out, primarily through the enforcement of the Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and ancillary regulations. Officers inspected rented properties to ensure they were fit for habitation, free from disrepair and that they were not in a condition that was prejudicial to health. During 2021/22, the service unit issued 78 Certificates of Fitness, while 11 properties were found to be unfit, and Notices of Refusal were served on the landlords.

Housing officers also worked to ensure that landlords complied with tenancy deposit and landlord registration requirements. The legislation was reviewed during the year with the aim of correcting current weaknesses in its wording; that would aid regulation but would likely increase demand for the services. Housing officers also proactively searched for properties which may require a Certificate of Fitness to ensure that residents in the private rented sector were living in acceptable housing. At any given time, Officers would be investigating 75-100 properties to determine if there were any breaches of housing legislation.

Notices Issued and Prosecutions

84 notices were served using the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011, following service requests or housing standards inspections.

There were 3 successful prosecutions during this financial year:

One landlord was prosecuted for failing to apply for a certificate of fitness for a property. Incurring a £100 fine, and the Council was awarded £250 costs.

One landlord was prosecuted for failing to comply with a Notice of Unfitness. Incurring a £200 fine, and the Council was awarded £250 costs.

One landlord was fined £200 for failing to register with the NI Landlord Registration Scheme, with the Council awarded £150 costs.

2.7 Health Development and Wellbeing

The department supported the Take Five Steps to Wellbeing principles which developed public health and wellbeing both within the organisation and externally.

That included initiatives to enhance the lives of the fuel poor, the safety of young and old in the home, mental health, and other issues.

During the 2021-22-year partnership work with Community Planning progressed, including supporting the Community Recovery process from the pandemic and rebuilding services and operations to as close to pre-pandemic levels as possible.

2.7.1 Affordable Warmth

The Affordable Warmth Scheme had been designed to target support at those households which needed to spend 25% or more of their income on heating and lighting their home. It is open to both owner occupiers and tenants from the private rented sector with a household income of less than £23,000. Full grant was available to owner occupiers and landlords made a 50% contribution towards the cost of the energy efficiency improvement work.

Working from targeted lists, the number of referrals that could be made each month was set at 30 for 2021/22 but that was not always easy to achieve. There was a reluctance from some householders to have visits; and although Covid safe measures were introduced, with enhanced technical support, many still refused to have contractors attend to complete the measures once approved.

In 2021/22 the NIHE statistics for the Ards and North Down area were as follows: -

Referrals to NIHE by Council	342
Properties Visited by NIHE	306
Approved Works	231
Value of Approved Works	£861,913.35
Measures Installed	392
Homes Improved	241
Grant Expenditure 21/22	£843,213

The management of the Scheme remained challenging due to decreasing annual budgets and changing targets. The concerns of Members and Officers were regularly raised both at meetings and in writing with the Department of Communities (DfC).

2.7.2 Tobacco Control

The Tobacco Control function was currently operated as a shared service between Ards and North Down Lisburn and Castlereagh and Newry, Mourne and Down.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the approach to inspections was risk based with an education focus and written warnings were issued rather than fixed penalty notices.

There was a marked fall in compliance rates compared to previous years.

In Ards and North Down, 713 inspections were carried out with 304 written warnings subsequently issued for non-compliance. The TCO also signposted 154 ANDBC premises to smoking cessation services and worked with 711 businesses to promote smoking policies.

107 Tobacco Retailers were visited in ANDBC to promote compliance with age of sale legislation and ensure compliance with all tobacco related legislation. Five written warnings were issued for offences under the legislation. Advice was provided to over 115 premises on the new e-cigarettes age restricted sales legislation.

A new initiative working with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) commenced in Quarter 3. Under Community Planning a Community Resuscitation Group was established to promote the chain of survival across the Borough.

Officers promoting the NIAS Regional Registration programme for Defibrillators by assisting with citing location of those devices for use across Northern Ireland and provided signposting information to relevant premises regarding how to register their device. To date 109 premises had been contacted.

2.7.3 Home Safety

The Home Safety Scheme was operated as a shared service by Ards and North Down Borough Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh and the Down portion of Newry, Mourne and Down. Target visits to priority groups (older people, children under 5, those with disabilities/vulnerabilities) are agreed with Public Health Agency (PHA) which co-funded the service. A total of 794 home safety checks were carried out with 338 in Ards and North Down, (212 Older Persons & 126 under 5s) exceeding the PHA target of 270.

Home Safety Officers provided over 1498 pieces of equipment to older people in ANDBC and 1201 to households with children under the age of 5 during these Home Safety Checks.

Home Safety Officers made a total of 221 onward referrals (133 of which were from Ards and North Down) to other organisations and departments.

PHA and PCSP funding facilitated the regional production of a range of videos and accompanying teacher packs covering BeSafe topics such as internet safety, water

safety, transport and road safety and farm safety. 17 schools availed of the virtual sessions offers with positive feedback on the approach. Social media campaigns were used to highlight regional safety messages including burns and scalds and button battery dangers.

2.7.4 Age Friendly

Having committed to achieving World Health Organisation's Age Friendly status in October 2017, work was undertaken to develop a Strategy and Action Plan 2019 - 2022 for the Council area through the establishment of an Age Friendly Alliance (AFA). Much of the work was still at an early stage when the Covid-19 pandemic arrived and many of the partner organisations, including the Council, had changes in priorities and personnel over the next 12 months as resources were diverted to address the pandemic. In 2021/22 the PHA agreed to provide funding for an Age Friendly Coordinator AFC in every Council area with the AFC in Ards and North Down starting 1 February 2022.

The AFC spent time connecting with partner organisations and other AFCs throughout the UK and Ireland. Key priorities over the next 5 years were agreed with PHA and short-, medium- and long-term targets were set to achieve those.

2.7.5 Health Development

Mind Body and Business

Working closely with Economic Development, the Mind, Body Business (MBB) project supported local businesses to put the health and wellbeing of their staff higher up on the business agenda. 28 business signed up to MBB in 2021-22, exceeding the target of 10. They were provided with an employee/lead officer health and wellbeing box containing information, games and ideas including a step challenge. The MBB website was kept updated and promoted, with e-zines and emails to connect with businesses and promote activities and health messages. MBB business cards were produced and distributed to promote programme, website, activities and fitness videos.

A survey was undertaken to assess the needs of businesses and employees, to inform the MBB programme. Further promotion of the exercise videos produced by MBB in 2020/21 took place to encourage those working from home/sitting at desks to be more active. Free health checks were also offered to businesses alongside a selection of online health webinars with an interest/focus for the Business Community. Accredited Mental Health First Aider courses to support local businesses were also delivered, recognising the increased need to focus on mental health following the pandemic.

Employee Health and Wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing also lead on Employee Health and Wellbeing, delivering over 20 different events and activities to improve staff morale, encourage self-awareness of health issues and promote the Take 5 messages.

In 2021/22 there were 8 creative workshops covering cookery, ceramics, Christmas wreaths and wood carving with almost 100 staff taking part. Wear it Pink and Christmas Jumper days raised over £270 alongside donations to Woman's Aid, Foodbanks, Mission Christmas Toy Appeal and Silver Santa.

107 employees under 50 were vaccinated as part of the flu prevention programme and 70 staff undertook Action Cancer Health Checks with a further 30 attending sessions with qualified Leisure and Fitness Instructors in Ards Blair Mayne.

Men's Health Week was well supported with the usual activities of football, craft, lunches and newspapers. Two employees did Grow a Mo in Movember to raise awareness of Men's health and 17 more undertook the Move for Movember Challenge. Over 30 joined in the Step Challenge and all staff received winter road safety information, world mental health day communications and competitions and lots of articles in News AND Info.

The launch of the new Employee Health and Wellbeing website STAY Well took place, with all staff given a pen with the website details and a Kit Kat to take a break and go online to access it. The site, in association with the Local Government Staff Commission, was an excellent source of reputable health and wellbeing information. It highlighted all the key health campaigns throughout the year and also provided space to advertise in house events and an online booking system to sign up.

3. Summary

During the 2021-22 year the service faced significant challenges including redeployment of staff into Covid enforcement, a significant increase in noise complaints, increased number of new food business, catching up on works not progressed during 2020-21 and significant staff recruitment and retention issues.

Regardless, the performance of the team met the majority of KPI's and targets and had a significant positive impact on the community planning outcomes.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the above report.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Johnson, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur thanked officers for the comprehensive report particularly in what had been a difficult time in the environmental health department with staffing issues. She asked the Head of Environmental Health Protection and Development if those difficulties had now been resolved. It was explained that the backlog in workload was being dealt with and while there were now a smaller number of vacancies of a temporary nature in the department, targets were being reached and the work was progressing in the right direction.

The Member went on to refer to the Home Safety Checks which were offered by the Council and how referrals could be made for those. The officer explained that most came through a healthcare practitioner and were for more vulnerable Members of the community such as older people or those who had very young children in the home and that it was not a means tested service. Priority to services depended on the personal circumstance of any individual. It was possible for Members to refer people to officers for consideration if they fell into those priority groups.

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

12. PEACEPLUS MINUTES 8TH SEPTEMBER 2022

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Minutes of PEACEPLUS dated 8 September 2022.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Smart, seconded by Councillor Chambers, that the minutes be noted.

13. PEACEPLUS VACANCY (Appendix VII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 24 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Council had agreed that the PEACEPLUS Partnership should be comprised of a total of 31 representatives under 4 designated pillars:

- 11 Elected Members (10 Selected by D'Hondt +1)
- 9 Public Sector Bodies
- 5 Social Partners – Geographical Community Representatives/Civic Society
- 6 Social Partners – PEACEPLUS Target Groups; S75/under-represented groups

A breakdown of the membership is attached along with the nominations from each partner agency/sector.

The only remaining vacancy was the place allocated to Invest NI. However, Invest NI had recently advised that it did not wish to take up a position on the Partnership as it was not a "fit" for its organisation.

As ANDBC agreed the composition of the PEACEPLUS Partnership, it would now be necessary for the Council to nominate an alternative Public Sector partner.

The matter had been discussed by the PEACEPLUS Partnership and some of the suggestions for Council consideration, based on engagement in previous peace programmes, was to offer the vacancy to one of the following sectors/agencies:

- Sport NI

- The Chambers
- Trade Unions

In terms of a nomination from the Chambers, it should be noted that the Business Sector was already represented on the PEACEPLUS Partnership, through the "Social Partners – Geographical Community Representatives/Civic Society" appointment.

Whilst Trade Unions had been represented on previous PEACE Partnerships, a significant proportion of previously delivered projects had been sports based programmes, which was a tool to engage people and young people in peace building activities. Therefore, it should be noted that a partnership with the Sports Council NI could be very beneficial for the ANDBC PEACEPLUS Programme and assist the Partnership in the achievement of its targets.

RECOMMENDED that the Council agrees to invite and if agreeable appoint an alternative sector/agency to the PEACEPLUS Partnership, based on the information detailed within this report.

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

The Director sought clarity on if the recommendation being made was that the PEACEPLUS partnership was to decide which of the three organisations should be invited, or did it wish Council to nominate one to be approached. The committee agreed that it would at the discretion of the Partnership which organisation it approached.

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

14. PCSP ANNUAL REPORT 2021 – 2022 (Appendix VIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 24 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that the AND PCSP was required under the Local Government Justice Act (2011) to submit an Annual report to the Joint Committee of the NI Policing Board and Department of Justice.

A report was attached for information.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes the report.

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

15. 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF KIRKISTOWN CASTLE
(Appendix IX)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 11 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the following Notice of Motion was agreed by Council in April 2022:

“To mark the 400th anniversary of the building of Kirkistown Castle, Council tasks officers to work with the Department of Communities (Historic Monuments Division), local community groups and schools, to deliver a community programme of events to mark this important milestone in the history of the village of Cloughey.”

On Saturday 8 October 2022 an event took place between 12pm-4pm to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of Kirkistown Castle.

The event was postponed from 10 September due to the death of HRH Queen Elizabeth II and although some momentum was lost in marketing and on social media the event was very well supported with a steady stream of 1,150 visitors throughout the day.

A traffic management plan was put in place due to the limited access to the site and a Park and Ride operated from the car park adjacent to Cloughey Pavilion. That was greatly appreciated by local residents and visitors.

The event was delivered by the Councils Arts team in conjunction with the Community Development team, working in partnership with the Department of Communities Heritage Environment Division (HED) which provided significant funding to help animate the site with music, storytelling and re-enactments. £1,000 funding was also gratefully received from Trinity Presbyterian Church. The shortfall was met by the Arts and Community Services budgets. A full budget breakdown could be found in the appendix.

The following was a summary of the activities that visitors enjoyed on the day:

Musical Interludes

Atmospheric music was played throughout the day from trio Seefin and traditional music from a trio of Ards Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. A highlight of the day was a performance by Kirkistown Castle Pipe Band with lots of visitors using the deck chairs provided to enjoy the performances.

Storytelling

Inside the Castle visitors were given historical information by HED Officers and enjoyed family friendly tales of myths and legends by Janice Witherspoon and Willie Drennan.

Medieval Combat Group

MCG is an Historic European Martial Arts (HEMA) group based in Belfast. Visitors enjoyed the swords clashing as they demonstrated medieval martial arts using techniques from surviving 14th to 15th century manuscripts.

Valhalla Street Theatre

Valhalla Street Theatre brought history to life with a specially commissioned story featuring characters and tales from 400yrs ago. Visitors enjoyed taking photographs with the characters.

Craft

Traditional Rope Making skills were demonstrated by Paul Whitla and traditional Pole Lathe Woodcraft demonstrated by Craig Sands. Visitors enjoyed being able to try their hand at these traditional skills.

The stone house played host to children's craft activities and a Treasure Hunt.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this update report.

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

Councillor Boyle thanked officers for the work that had been put in to organising the event and to those who had contributed to funding the programme. The success of the day had undoubtedly been helped by the excellent weather and the bus transport to the site had eased traffic congestion and helped to keep people safe.

He referred to the two-way traffic on the stairwell and the low head room in that part of the Castle and thought that could have been dangerous but thankfully everyone had been kept safe. He was pleased to see the large group of visitors and the steady flow of people many of whom had expressed the hope that the building could be opened to the public on a more regular basis.

Councillor Douglas agreed that the day had been fantastic and she thanked Councillors Adair and Edmund for bringing the Castle to everyone's attention with their Notice of Motion. She also thanked Council officers who had helped to make the event happen, particularly the Arts and Heritage Manager. She hoped the public would continue to enjoy the Borough's historic sites and the Castle could be opened on future dates.

The Chair, Councillor Edmund commented on the 1,150 visitors to the fun day and expressed his thanks to Trinity Presbyterian Church for the financial support it had provided and the Department of Communities heritage section along with Council officers.

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

16. PERCY FRENCH COLLECTION

(Appendix X)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 24 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that on 17 November 1997, North Down Borough Council entered into a 25-year agreement with the Percy French Society. In this document, the Trustees of the society agreed to deliver their collection of Percy French materials into the care of the Council and in return the Council would look after, store, display and loan out artefacts as required.

As the term of the agreement was to finish in November 2022, the Percy French Society had decided to gift the collection to Ards and North Down Borough Council.

North Down Museum held the collection in its own secure storeroom under museum standard conditions including archival materials and environmental and pest monitoring. Over the past 10 years at least one exhibition per year had gone on display either in the museum or online.

The collection had been externally audited in the past and would be audited before any formal handover. A copy of which would be given to the society.

The offer also stated that upon agreement the Council would not break up or sell any part of the collection. That fitted in with the museum's Collections Development Policy that there was a strong presumption that collections were not sold.

The offer also asked for a biannual audit to take place. That would need to be discussed with the Society as the museum did not fully audit its collections every two years. The Council's process involved carrying out an annual spot check of the assets audit and the Percy French Collection would fall under that programme.

RECOMMENDED that the Council accepts the offer of the Percy French Collection subject to reaching agreement on the auditing arrangements for the collection, with the Percy French Society.

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

17. NORTH DOWN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2023-2027

(Appendix XI)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - A report dated 5 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the revised Collections Development Policy 2023-2027 for North Down Museum was an updated version of the Council's previous Collections Development Policy 2017-2022.

The only amendments included:

- The addition of the new museum Digital Image Database in conjunction with eight local Historical Societies. That database would become the central repository for digital images across the Borough.
- The themes for future collecting had been updated to reflect the limited storage space for future collecting and focus future acquisitions so that they fit in the space currently provided.

This policy had been developed in line with UK Museum Accreditation guidelines and standards.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the revised Collections Development Policy 2023-2028 for North Down Museum.

Proposed by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Douglas, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor Johnson congratulated the North Down Museum for its work stating that it was a valuable resource supporting the area's local heritage. Councillor Douglas agreed and put on record her thanks to the former Manager of the Museum, Heather McGuickan, who had now left the Council. Heather had carried out sterling work over the years with schools and historical societies and would be a significant loss to the Museum.

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

18. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS ASSESSMENT 2023-2024

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 25 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that the Community Development (CD) Fund was managed by the Council's Community Development Service. The total budget for the fund was £93,000, of which in 2022-23 £41,083.18 was funded by the Department of Communities (DfC) and £51,916.82 was match funded by the Council.

The CD fund was split into two categories:

1. Running costs up to £2000, for administration and overhead costs. The majority of the applications received were from community houses/bases to assist with their heating and electric costs.

2. Project costs up to £1000, for community-based projects.

Feedback from communities, through the Council' Community Support Group and the Poverty Forum, demonstrated that our community groups were relying on the fund to continue to operate, particularly during the current cost of living crisis. At present many groups were creating plans to open their doors more frequently to allow members of their community to attend those warm spaces to ease the pressure of the rising energy prices. It was crucial to those groups that they had increased funding to ensure they could provide those spaces.

In 22/23 £16,915.54 was awarded from the fund for community-based project costs and £76,914.15 was awarded to running costs. It was proposed that in order to assist groups during the cost of living crisis that project costs were removed from the fund and 100% of the fund was allocated to running costs. Furthermore, it was recommended that the budget for individual applications be increased from £2000 to £2500. That would enable the Council to provide groups with more support towards their energy bills and provided an opportunity for more groups to apply for the fund.

At this crucial time, it was important that community groups were supported by Council with their increasing running costs. In 2022 successful applicants received only 80% of their costs applied for. By increasing the eligible amount to £2500, it would give more groups the opportunity to apply and allow the percentage of successful costs applied for to increase.

For those groups which required funding for project costs, Community Development officers had access to Grant Finder, an online resource which searched for external funding streams.

The expected outcomes for the Community Development Fund were:

- To strengthen local communities
- To increase community participation
- To promote social inclusion through the stimulation and support of community groups
- To encourage and promote community activity
- To increase the amount available to apply for to £2500 in recognition that the rising cost of living was putting extra strain on community groups
- To focus on funding small community groups working a grassroots level
- To build community capacity and enable groups to continue to run and support their areas
- By removing project fund focus can put in ensuring more essential costs could be funded such as insurance, utilities, and rent/venue hire
- To increase the percentage awarded (80% of costs applied for was awarded in 2022) to each group by increasing the amount of running costs available to apply for

There were no viable alternatives to providing that support. As the Community Development Fund was part funded from Department for Communities the Council was obligated to match fund the stream to maximise support for community groups as stated in the Letter of Offer and Memorandum of Understanding from DfC. Over the years there had been an increase of groups whose primary focus was not community development, that included groups who delivered community development outcomes however had a different core focus. i.e., sports, arts, religious, heritage and culture. The Council and DfC had alternative funding streams for those sectors, therefore it was recommended that those groups/sectors were omitted within the criteria and guidance so local grassroots community and voluntary groups only could apply to the fund.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approve that:

1. Project costs are removed from the CD fund and 100% of the fund is allocated to running costs.
2. The maximum available for individual applications is increased from £2000 to £2500.
3. The criteria and guidance for the grant is amended so only grassroots community and voluntary groups can avail of the fund.

Proposed by Councillor MacArthur, seconded by Councillor Chambers that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor MacArthur remarked on the significant work which was carried out across the Borough by community groups which, like everyone, had been hit by the rapidly rising cost of energy. Many were struggling to keep their doors open and she asked if there was a mechanism within the Council to support people. She also referred to charities and the churches which had begun to support the community by offering warm and safe spaces.

The Head of Community and Culture replied that the Council was collecting a database of what was being provided and making that available to the public to help everyone tackle the cost of living crisis.

With reference to point three in the recommendation only grass root community groups could be helped. Faith based organisations were excluded from receiving financial support due to the limited pot of funding that the Council had.

Councillor T Smith indicated that he was broadly in favour with the recommendation but had concerns about the removal of the project costs and the impact that would have on local communities. He would also have been interested to have seen the list of different projects that were carried out last year. It was a finally balanced decision and he understood that costs were at an all-time high. He asked to abstain from making a decision at the moment and asked for examples of projects that had been supported during the previous year. The Head of Community and Culture undertook to provide some examples from previous years.

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

19. SUMMER SCHEME EVALUATION 2022
(Appendices XII & XIII)

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 25 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that in 2022 the Council led summer schemes were delivered by the Community Development Team in the following Community Centres/locations:

- Alderman George Green Community Centre
- Ballygowan Village Hall
- Bowtown Community Hall
- Carrowdore Community Centre
- Portavogie Primary School
- Redburn Community Centre
- Westwinds Community Centre

Five Community Led Summer Schemes were to be delivered in the following areas:

- Breezemount, Green Road Community Centre – Breezemount Community Association
- Bangor, Kilcooley Community Centre – Kilcooley Women's Centre
- Killinchy, Killinchy Community Hall - Killinchy and District Community Development Association
- Millisle, Millisle Community Hub - Millisle Youth Forum
- Portaferry, Steel Dickson Avenue - Ballyphilip Youth Club

Two Community Partners withdrew from receiving assistance from the Council to deliver their schemes. Breezemount Community Association withdrew as it received funding from another source to deliver its scheme, while Killinchy withdrew as it raised concerns around the tight time frame in which it could build its capacity enough to deliver its scheme. That meant of the five agreed partners only three would be able to deliver Community Led Summer Schemes funded by the Council, whilst one other was delivered using an alternative funding source.

Across both schemes there was a total of 476 child places (336 Council places, 140 Community partner places) available each week across the period 18/07/2022 to 05/08/2022). That equated to an increase of 112 places per week compared with 2021 figures.

Table 1

Council Led locations x 2 weeks	Number of children 2021	Number of children 2022	Community Partner location	Number of children 2021	Number of children 2022
Ards-Bowtown	N/A	48	Breezemount x 3 weeks	32	N/A
Ards-Westwinds	12	48	Kilcooley x 2 (x3) weeks	50	60
Ballygowan	38	48	Millisle x 2 weeks	60	30
Bangor	64	48	Portaferry x 1 week	32	50
Carrowdore	N/A	48			
Hollywood	38	48			
Portavogie	38	48			
Total Per Week	190	336	Total Per Week	174	140

The heat maps in the attached appendices demonstrated the increase in the Council's Summer Scheme provision from 2021 to 2022 and showed an equitable spread of provision across the Borough.

The Process

This year the Community Development Team provided an online registration process. Not only did that significantly reduce the costs that were usually associated with registration such as venue hire and staff wages, but also increased the availability of summer scheme places to residents of the Borough as they could register from home and work etc.

Within the first 30 minutes of the online registration process for summer scheme going live, 340 children had been registered onto the scheme.

Face-to-face verification of forms (birth certificates, utility bills etc.), was provided at Ards Blair Mayne and Well Being Centre (ABMWBLC), where summer scheme fees could be collected. Again, that was well received as it was the first year that electronic card payments could be received from parents. Where parents struggled with producing the necessary paperwork or making payment officers provided individual support.

Further provision was supported for those parents who were unable to attend ABMWBLC. They could bring their documents for ratification and their cash payment along to the centre in which their child was registered on the first day of the summer scheme.

Staffing

The Council Led Schemes employed 56 agency staff, supplied by The Recruitment Co. The approach of bringing Summer Scheme Coordinators into planning meetings was not employed due to the time constraints laid upon the Community Development Team to deliver the Summer Schemes.

Summer Scheme Promotion

Registration for both Council and Community Partner schemes was advertised through Council's website and Facebook pages. Flyers were delivered around the areas where summer schemes were being delivered.

In terms of marketing the schemes, a photographer was engaged to take photos for dissemination across social media and the Council website.

Programme delivery

This year programme delivery relied heavily upon the agency staff that had been recruited. Those staff used initiative and understanding to help them deliver education and physical sessions to the young people.

Facilitators costs were reduced dramatically as activities were able to be offered outdoors, due to the good weather and activity-based trips were once again able to take place, due to Covid-19 restrictions being eased.

Parent Surveys

89.53% of parents that responded to the summer scheme survey showed they found the online registration process easy, with 8.57% of parents finding the process moderate and 1.9% of those surveyed found the online process difficult. 84.76% of parents showed they thought the programme content was excellent, with 10.48% describing it as very good and the remaining 4.76% describing it as good.

100% of parents that responded to the survey said they would travel to other locations to access summer scheme provision and thought the schemes were value for money. They also rated the summer scheme staff as good or above (84.76% excellent, 12.38% very good, 2.86% good).

Children feedback

Feedback from the children was very positive, with children stating they enjoyed a positive experience, with particular reference made to the interactive experiences delivered throughout the summer scheme. Children displaying negative behaviours were at an all-time low, which demonstrated the programme to be full, enriched, challenging, educational, exciting, and attractive to children attending. Parents endorsed that view saying their children were happy and exhausted each day, with the scheme being excellent value for money.

RECOMMENDED that the Council notes this report.

Proposed by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that the recommendation be adopted.

Councillor T Smith stressed that the summer schemes were very valuable and he hoped that at some point they could be extended further within communities but he did recognise the challenging financial times that everyone was living through.

Councillor MacArthur agreed entirely and pointed to the information within the report that showed that the feedback from the children had been excellent. To her that showed that the children had been fully engaged. She trusted that in the coming year Donaghadee would be in the mix.

Councillor Boyle thanked the Head of Community and Culture and her team for the work which went into summer schemes and the benefits and positive returns they had within the Borough. There had been a sizeable increase in the programme at Portaferry and he wondered if it was the Council's intention to spread the scheme further or keep the same pattern in future years. The Head of Community and Culture reported that the Breezemount scheme had been withdrawn because it had obtained alternative funding but that generally evaluations were made from what had taken place and that formed the basis for moving forward.

Following a question from Councillor Irvine about the Council linking in with other providers the officer explained that all of the provision from as many providers that it was aware of was considered for any area by the Council when it was making decisions on where to hold its summer schemes but that it did not go into partnerships with other organisations.

The Chair congratulated the team for the work which had been organised for the summer months and he knew that the schemes made a huge difference to the lives of parents and children, many of whom had indicated that they would be willing to travel to ensure that their child got a place.

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor T Smith, that the recommendation be adopted.

**20. ARDS AND NORTH DOWN SPORTS FORUM GRANTS (WG
OCTOBER 2022
(Appendices XIV – XVII)**

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 17 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that on the 26 August 2015 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 September 2022, the Forum received a total of 29 grant applications: 1 Coaching, 5 Goldcard, 22 Individual Travel/Accommodation and 1 Club Travel/Accommodation. A summary of the 17 successful applications was detailed in the attached Successful Coaching, Goldcard and Individual Travel & Accommodation Appendices.

For information, the annual budget and spend to date on grant categories was as follows:

	Annual Budget	Funding Awarded September 2022	Remaining Budget
Anniversary	£1,000	£0	£250
Coaching	£3,000	*£495	£1,038.75
Equipment	£11,000	£0	*£3,406.84
Events	£6,000	£0	£1,700
Seeding	£500	£0	£250
Travel and Accommodation	£14,500	*£1,950	£1,484.09
Discretionary	£1,000	£0	£1,000
New category under development	£3,000	£0	£3,000

Goldcards proposed during the period September 2022 is 3.

* The proposed remaining budget for Coaching of **£1,038.75** was based on a proposed award of **£495** for Approval. *The proposed remaining budget for Equipment of **£3,406.84** was based on reclaimed costs of £10.14. The proposed remaining budget for Travel and Accommodation of **£1,484.09** was based on a proposed award of **£1,950** – for Noting, and withdrawn costs of £24.14.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the attached applications for financial assistance for sporting purposes valued at above £250, and that the applications approved by the Forum (valued at below £250) are noted.

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

Councillor Boyle welcomed the sports forum grants going out to applicants and again acknowledged that this Borough was punching well above its weight when it came to sporting achievement. He mentioned and congratulated Rhys McClenaghan from Newtownards who had recently won a gold medal at the world championships in Liverpool as an example of what could be achieved. He asked about what made an organisation eligible to receive funding from the Council. The Head of Leisure Services informed Members that the safest mechanism was to ensure any group applying was tied into the appropriate governing body recognised by Sport NI. If the

Council was to move from that set standard it would be required to visit each club to make decisions on its constitution and governance and that that would be very unwieldy.

He suggested that it was not an issue for the Council but perhaps more one for Sport NI and the Sports Forum could work to take that forward. He reminded the committee that most other Councils operated in the same way as this Council.

Seconding the recommendation Councillor S Irvine agreed with Councillor Boyle and he was aware of many local clubs which had benefitted greatly due to these grants and hoped that the great work carried out in the past would continue.

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

21. ARDS PENINSULA 3G MULTI-USE PITCH

PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED: - Report dated 14 October 2022 from the Director of Community and Wellbeing detailing that Members would be aware that it was agreed at the Community and Wellbeing Committee in February 2022 to commission an Integrated Design Team (IDT) to progress the project to the design and planning stage and to commission a suitable consultant(s) to carry out the appropriate site investigations.

As a result of a delay due to other demands on the Council's Procurement and Capital Projects Units, the tender process commenced in September 2022 and a draft set of tender documents had been established. To that end, a timetable had now been agreed with Procurement and key dates were outlined in the table below.

ACTIVITY	DATES
Preparation of PQQ documents	Early October 2022
Publication of PQQ via eTendersNI	End of October 2022
Closing date for return of PQQ	21 November 2022
Evaluation panel to meet	6 December 2022

Issue ITT Invitations via eTendersNI	Before end of December 2022
Closing Date for return of ITT Submissions	February 2023
Evaluation panel to meet	20 February 2023
Seek Committee & Council Approval (March)	March 2023
IDT appointed, and award letter issued	April 2023
Concept Design and Site Investigations	April – August 2023
Developed Design	August – October 2023
Planning (Major Application): Pre- Application Community Consultation	25 August 2023 – 2 December 2023
Planning Application Process	December 2023 – December 2024
Technical Design	December 2024 – March 2025
Contractor Procurement and Appointment	March 2025 – September 2025
Construction on site	September – June 2026
Facility available for opening	Summer 2026
Defects Period	One year from handover
Post Project Evaluation	August 2027

In parallel to above land ownership discussions would continue to be progressed with the relevant parties. Members should be aware that the above schedule was indicative at this stage and dependant on availability of funding and permissions being granted as planned.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the above draft programme and that following presentation of that to Council, Council Officers would engage further with key stakeholders.

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

Councillor Boyle thanked the Head of Leisure Services for the report following on from the update some months previously. He was keen to progress the 3G pitch on the peninsula and hoped NI Water would not be putting up obstacles to this one too. He hoped that the Council would keep this matter on its radar and follow up progress regularly.

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

22. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR COOPER AND COUNCILLOR IRVINE

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 Irvine requested to defer the Motion to another date due to the absence of Councillor Cooper. The Director clarified that that was possible and that it was normal to defer the Motion to the meeting the following month. That, however, was a matter for the proposer and he should resubmit the request to the Chief Executive 5 working days in advance of a Council meeting for consideration as before.

AGREED.

23. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There were no items of Any Other Notified Business.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED, on the proposal of Alderman Wilson, seconded by Councillor Douglas, that the public/press be excluded from the meeting.

24. PCSP MINUTES 20TH JUNE 2022

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

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

NOTED.

25. COFFEE CURE CONTRACT EXTENSION

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

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

NOTED.

26. PADEL TENNIS

(Appendices XVIII – XX)

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

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

NOTED.

(Having declared an interest in Item 27 Councillor Chambers left the meeting at 8.37 pm)

27. LEISURE INSOURCING – HR UPDATE

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

SCHEDULE 6 – INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL OR BUSINESS AFFAIRS OF ANY PARTICULAR PERSON (INCLUDING THE COUNCIL HOLDING THAT INFORMATION)

NOTED.

RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC/PRESS

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

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 8.39 pm.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

A special meeting of the Corporate Services Committee was held remotely via Zoom on Thursday 17 November 2022 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Councillor P Smith

Aldermen: Irvine (8.43pm)
Keery
McIlveen (7.01pm)

Councillors:	Blaney (7.09pm)	Gilmour
	Chambers (7.09pm)	Irwin (7.01pm)
	Dunlop	McKimm
	Greer	T Smith

Officers: Chief Executive (S Reid), Director of Organisational Development and Administration (W Swanston), Director of Finance and Performance (S Christie), Director of Regeneration and Development (S McCullough), Director of Environment (D Lindsay), Director of Community and Wellbeing (G Bannister), Head of Finance (S Grieve), Head of Strategic Transformation and Performance (S Denny) and Democratic Services Officer (P Foster)

1. APOLOGIES

(Alderman McIlveen and Councillor Irwin joined the meeting at this stage – 7.01pm)

The Chairman (Councillor P Smith) sought apologies at this stage.

An apology had been received from Alderman Girvan.

An apology for lateness had been received from Alderman Irvine.

NOTED.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Chairman made no remarks at this stage.

NOTED.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair sought Declarations of Interest at this stage and none were notified.

NOTED.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC/PRESS

AGREED TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Greer, seconded by Councillor Dunlop, that the public/press be excluded during the discussion of the undernoted items of confidential business.

4. STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION AND EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT (Appendix I)

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)

5. CAPTIAL PROJECT PRIORITISATION ANNUAL REVIEW (Appendix II)

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)

6. ESTIMATES 2023/24 UPDATE 2 (FILE FIN149) (Appendix III)

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 TO RECOMMEND, on the proposal of Councillor Gilmour, seconded by Alderman Irvine, that the public/press be re-admitted to the meeting.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 9.01pm.

Dear Consultee

Waterways Ireland is consulting on its **Draft Equality Action Plan 2023-2025** and **Draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2025** and would welcome your views on the content and actions contained within the draft Plans.

Consultation Documents are available on our website [Waterways Ireland | About Us | Public Consultations](#) or we can email or post documents directly to you. All documents can also be made available in alternative formats upon request.

Meeting in Person or Virtual

If you prefer a meeting with us to give your comments face-to-face or virtually, we will do our best to meet your request. Please contact me by phone at 028 6632 3004 or email informationrequest@waterwaysireland.org


Consultation Open Days

We are planning to hold a small number of Consultation Open Days in November 2022 where the Action Plans will be available to view and discuss with us. Details of dates and times will be advertised on our website [Waterways Ireland | Home](#) and social media channels once finalised.

Consultation will commence on Tuesday 18 October 2022 and close on Tuesday 10 January 2023 at 4 pm.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries or wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely



Roisin MacRory
Equality Unit, Corporate Services

Waterways Ireland
2 Sligo Road
Enniskillen
Co Fermanagh
BT74 7JY

Tel: +44 (0) 28 6632 3004

Email: informationrequest@waterwaysireland.org

[Waterways Ireland | Home](#)



DRAFT

Disability Action Plan

2023-2025



This document is presented by Waterways Ireland for public consultation.

Alternative Format

Copies of this document are available on the Waterways Ireland website and in paper format. Documentation will be made available on request in formats such as Easy Read, Braille, audio formats, large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

To request an alternative format, please contact us at:

Equality Unit, Corporate Services,
Waterways Ireland
2 Sligo Road
Enniskillen
Co Fermanagh
BT74 7JY

Tel: +44 (0)28 663 2004

Email: informationrequest@waterwaysireland.org

You can also read and / or download this document from our website. Go to www.waterwaysireland.org

Consultation on this document will commence on Tuesday 18 October 2022 and close on Tuesday 10 January 2023 at 4 pm.

We intend to also use other consultation methods to seek views and it may be that you will receive further communication from us in due course. We value the contribution of our consultees and hope that you will find time to comment on this document.

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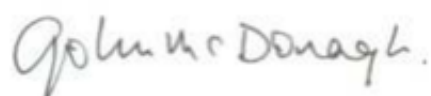
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Foreword from the Chief Executive

The Waterways Ireland Disability Action Plan 2023-2025 is a statement of our commitment to fulfilling the statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006).

The successful implementation of this Disability Action Plan will ensure that the services, facilities and waterways we manage present a positive, inclusive and engaging experience for all. It will also ensure that as an employer we continually develop how we attract and facilitate the employment and development of those with disabilities.

The Plan provides a strategic framework that will encourage and facilitate the participation of disabled people in public life and will consider disabilities at the heart of policy and decision-making within our organisation. It outlines positive action measures which will be mainstreamed and prioritised across all of our work programmes.



JOHN MC DONAGH
Chief Executive Officer

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995), as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, Waterways Ireland is required, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life

1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, Waterways Ireland is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a Disability Action Plan showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.

2.0 Purpose of the Disability Action Plan

2.1 Waterways Ireland is committed to the fulfillment of its disability duties in relation to its business functions, and in making these duties central to our aim of creating the right conditions to support inclusion, equality of opportunity and increasing public participation and appreciation of the waterways' environment.

This Plan outlines the positive action measures Waterways Ireland will deliver during 2023-2025. It builds upon the achievements of previous Action Plans, whilst also identifying new opportunities to make disability issues an integral part of Waterways Ireland's work programmes.

3.0 About Waterways Ireland

3.1 Waterways Ireland is one of six North-South Implementation Bodies, established under the British-Irish Agreement Act of 1999.

We are the cross-border navigational authority responsible for the management, maintenance, development, and restoration of 1,200 km of inland navigable waterways principally for recreational purposes, comprising:

- Lower Bann Navigation
- Erne System
- Shannon-Erne Waterway
- Shannon Navigation
- Royal Canal
- Grand Canal
- Barrow Navigation
- Ulster Canal

In July 2007, it was agreed by the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) to include responsibility for the reconstruction of the Ulster Canal from Upper

Lough Erne to Clones, and following restoration, its management, maintenance, and development, principally for recreational purposes to Waterways Ireland's remit.

Our Headquarters are in Enniskillen Co Fermanagh, with regional offices in Dublin, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim, and Scarriff, Co Clare.

At an operational level, Waterways Ireland is responsible for a vast range of infrastructure assets including navigation channels, embankments, towpaths, adjoining lands, harbours, jetties, fishing stands, bridges, culverts, aqueducts, overflows, locks, sluices and lock houses along with buildings and archives.

Waterways Ireland's work programmes are critical to providing a safe and high-quality recreational environment for customers, whilst preserving the industrial and environmental heritage of the waterways for future generations.

Our Mission is to be the custodian of the inland navigations and collaborate to reimagine, maintain, develop, and promote them to sustain communities, environment, and heritage.

Our mission statement is: "Creating inspirational inland navigations and waterways experiences through conservation and sustainable development for the benefit of all."

4.0 Implementation of the Plan

- 4.1 Waterways Ireland is committed to the effective implementation of this Plan throughout the organisation.
- 4.2 The Action Plan will be monitored on an annual basis by the Senior Management Team who will review progress in implementing previously agreed actions together with consideration of any new developments in the intervening period. Where appropriate, the Action Plan will be revised to reflect any new developments, consultations, the outcome of any new Equality Impact Assessments or any additional information not previously available.
- 4.3 Responsibility for the delivery of this Disability Action Plan lies with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team. Day to day responsibility lies with the Corporate Services Section who will be responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that Waterways Ireland complies with its disability duties when carrying out its functions.
- 4.4 Necessary resources, in terms of people, time and budget, will be allocated in order to effectively implement this Plan and also deliver associated objectives and targets relating to disability duties in our corporate and business plans. Waterways Ireland is committed to ensuring that this Plan is communicated to all staff and will provide the necessary training and guidance on disability duties on the implementation of this plan.

- 4.5 Waterways Ireland will also ensure appropriate internal arrangements are in place to monitor and report on compliance with the disability duties, and implementation of this Action Plan. A three-year review of the Plan will be carried out in consultation with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

5.0 Annual Report

- 5.1 Waterways Ireland confirms its commitment to submitting an annual report to the Equality Commission based on the implementation of this Plan. A copy of the annual report will be made available on our website and can be provided in alternative formats on request.
- 5.2 Details of progress on meeting objectives in relation to Disability Duties will also be included in Waterways Ireland's Annual Report.

6.0 Effective Engagement

- 6.1 We are committed to engaging effectively with people who have disabilities and their representative groups on the development, implementation and review of this plan.

7.0 Consultation

- 7.1 Waterways Ireland is committed to carrying out meaningful consultation in the development of its disability duties. Consultation is integral to the effective development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Plan. It is intended that this reflective and forward looking engagement of consultees will ensure that the actions Waterways Ireland put in place bring about sustainable change for people with disabilities.
- 7.2 The involvement of consultees is designed to assist Waterways Ireland by:
- Identifying barriers faced by people with disabilities in participating in public life in general and specifically any barriers they have encountered when dealing with us.
 - Identifying circumstances in the past in which we have not promoted positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and by identifying future opportunities to promote such attitudes.
 - Setting priorities and identifying solutions to take remedial action; and
 - Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of measures taken.
- 7.4 The consultations process will consist of:
- Requests for responses to stakeholders and target groups on the draft Plan.
 - Online consultation with placement of the draft 2023-2025 Disability Action Plan on Waterways Ireland's website with social media advertising.

- Face to face meetings with advisory groups and use of other methodologies identified as best practice; and
- Removal of barriers to participation by offering to make consultation documents available in alternative formats

7.5 Consultation responses will be accepted in a variety of formats including:

- Consultation response questionnaire
- By e-mail to informationrequestwaterwaysireland.org
- By requesting a one-to-one meeting; and
- Any other method which could be reasonably accommodated.

7.6 On completion of the consultation process, Waterways Ireland will review the feedback received and update the Disability Action Plan as necessary. All consultees will receive a copy of our response to the consultation comments received.

8.0 Public Life Positions over which Waterways Ireland has Responsibility

8.1 Waterways Ireland does not have direct control over public life positions; however, we will continue to clearly communicate our commitment to encouraging the participation of people with disabilities in public life through recruitment.

8.2 Opportunities are also provided for involvement of our staff in policy and decision-making groups through the following channels;

- Joint Industrial Relations Forum
- Trade Union National Negotiating Committees
- Health & Safety both regional and organisation wide representation

9.0. Previous Measures

9.1 The following measures are indicative of the many positive actions we have taken in delivering previous Disability Action Plans, with a number of these actions established as part of our continuing commitment to promoting good equality practices.

- All capital and maintenance projects are designed in accordance with best practice.
- Events on and along our waterways are encouraged and facilitated to widen the appeal of the waterways for everyone, including people with disabilities. We collaborate and support a number of governing bodies to deliver recreation programmes to ensure they are accessible for people with disabilities.

- We support and encourage access for all events and programmes on and along our waterways. These are supported and promoted as part of our ongoing promotional reach.
- All job vacancies recruited externally are posted on the website and social media channels, opening career opportunities to a much wider audience and promoting equality of opportunity. It is Waterways Ireland's policy to provide employment equality to all existing and potential employees, irrespective of disability.
- All selection processes address the special needs of applicants on an individual basis.
- Employees, who have requested assistance to carry out their duties, have been provided with additional support, additionally, we invite employees to notify us if they wish to have a personal evacuation plan developed to accommodate their needs, in the event of an evacuation from our office buildings.
- Where public meetings are planned, consideration is given to ensuring that the venue and required services are accessible to all attendees

9.2 Whilst we are cognisant of the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on delivery of some elements of our previous Equality and Disability Action Plans, priority focused on the mental health and wellbeing of our staff, with employees completing online courses on:

- Managing Stress in the Workplace;
- Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace;
- Protecting Yourself when Home Working; and
- Diversity and Inclusion.

Section 10 of this Plan details the action measures and associated performance indicators and outputs Waterways Ireland commits to delivering between 2023-2025.

10. Action Measures

Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006), Waterways Ireland is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people

Staff Training and Awareness

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
1.	<p>Provide disability equality legislation training which will include information on employers and employees duties under the DDA and the WI equal opportunities policies and procedures.</p> <p>Deliver disability awareness and etiquette training to all staff to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people. • Developing understanding of the barriers faced by disabled people, including attitudinal and environmental factors. 	<p>Number of staff that have received disability equality training.</p> <p>Levels of reported bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation.</p>	<p>Keeps staff informed on disability issues and influences them to affect positive change opportunities.</p> <p>Staff have the training they need to identify what support they can offer customers/users with different needs and be aware of the support available to facilitate their interaction with users.</p> <p>Increased awareness of Waterways Ireland's shared disability obligations and provide staff with a</p>	Annual	<p>Corporate Services</p> <p>Human Resources</p>

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the social model of disability. • Information on the use of appropriate language and etiquette. • Challenging stereotypes/misconceptions about disabled people. 		<p>confidential opportunity to advise if they have any related requirements.</p> <p>Disabled employees requiring reasonable adjustments receive timely support and provide positive feedback about their experience</p>		
2.	<p>Provide enhanced training to key staff members to ensure integration of disability, equality and inclusion into leadership management and other key roles within the organisation.</p> <p>To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management & Extended Leadership Teams • Corporate Services Equality staff • Front facing Reception and Operational staff 	Number and type of training interventions provided to key staff members.	Improves staff knowledge of disability issues and provides them with an up-to-date understanding of legislation and potential access opportunities.	Reviewed & updated annually	<p>Equality Unit, Corporate Services</p> <p>Human Resources</p>
3.	Encourage participation of disabled employees in training and development programmes	Number of uptakes of training and development programmes by disabled staff.	Increased opportunities for staff with disabilities.	Ongoing	Line Managers

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
			Effective succession planning for future workforce needs.		
4.	Integrate and deliver disability equality into recruitment training to ensure that where reasonable; applications in alternative formats are accepted, reasonable adjustments proactively offered and made.	Number of training interventions to key staff members. Number of requests for alternative formats, reasonable adjustments.	Staff have the training they need to identify what support they can offer job applicants with different needs.	2023	Human Resources

Communications

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
5.	Run regular communication campaigns to build inclusion, raise awareness of our challenges, and celebrate our diversity.	Number of campaigns.	Increased staff knowledge and awareness of specific disability issues and their shared obligations to implement the disability agenda.	Annual	Equality Unit Marketing & Communications
6.	Use positive imagery to promote the accessibility of the waterway environment for people with disabilities.	Positive images, podcasts, video, etc in corporate publications, on social media and on our website.	Encourages people with disabilities to experience the waterways. Such imagery removes pre-conceived perceptions of the capabilities of people with disabilities.	Ongoing	Equality Unit Marketing & Communications

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
7.	<p>Continue to create opportunities for the organisation to listen to staff and understand the personal impact of inequalities on disabled persons and to reduce barriers.</p> <p>Expand opportunities to make the waterways accessible through the use of the WI Google Maps app, podcasts and Stories of the Waterways.</p> <p>Increase awareness for these channels and promote the accessibility to a broader audience.</p>	<p>Number of blogs, podcasts created using disabled employee focussed personal experiences, target one per annum.</p> <p>% increase of users to online channels.</p>	<p>Increased awareness of Waterways Ireland's disability obligations and provide staff with a confidential opportunity to advise if they have any related requirements.</p>	2023-2025	<p>Corporate Services</p> <p>Marketing & Communications</p>
8.	<p>Review our user communications to make sure they are clear and easy to understand, meet the needs of all users, and are available in other languages and alternative formats.</p> <p>Review and evaluate current communication channels available for disabled users and consider other potential</p>	<p>Number of requests for information in alternative format.</p> <p>Number of complaints about our information or service delivery.</p>	<p>Accessibility of Information and Services for staff and visitors to our facilities and waterways who experience information barriers.</p> <p>Creation of accessible communications, where applicable - written, spoken, digital and signed.</p>	2024	<p>Corporate Services</p> <p>Marketing & Communications</p>

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
	<p>channels to improve engagement.</p> <p>Continue to analyse equality related complaints to identify emerging trends which will allow for targeted intervention to improve the service and support we provide our disabled users.</p>				Corporate Services / HR

Encourage participation by disabled people in public life

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
9.	<p>Address identified gaps in equality data to ensure that data is sufficient to allow meaningful equality analysis.</p> <p>Audit the level of public participation by disabled people.</p> <p>Identify any existing barriers to participation of disabled people.</p>	Accurate and up to date reflection of the equality groups within our workforce to inform statutory reporting, and to guide policy making.	Informed feedback which will help WI identify barriers to equality of opportunity for disabled people.	2025	Corporate Services
10.	Affirmative action measures to attract more applications from people with disabilities	Number of applications received.	Disabled people acquire skills and experience that will equip them to apply for public life positions.	2023-2025	Human Resources

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
	<p>for vacancies across all areas of our organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use welcoming statement in recruitment exercise to encourage applications. • Engage with disability organisations and asking them to promote recruitment exercises. • Provide placement, work experience or job shadowing opportunities. • Support capacity building measures in the voluntary/community sector, for example giving support to disability groups or others in relation to the provision of training for disabled people in, for example, interviewing or other relevant skills. • Consider the implementation of a guaranteed interview scheme and shortlist disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the position. 		<p>Workforce diversity data shows increased representation of disabled people.</p> <p>Compliance with Government targets for employment of persons with disabilities.</p>		

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
11.	Collate information about applicants for jobs and our staff to enable us to take appropriate action and make improvements with attracting, recruiting, retaining and progressing people with disabilities	Progression and retention of staff with disabilities within the organisation	Progression and retention of staff with disabilities within the organisation	2025	Human Resources
12.	Liaise with local disability groups or representative bodies to ascertain the most effective way of raising awareness and getting input from their disabled members on communication, participation and engagement with Waterways Ireland.	Quantity and quality of feedback identifying barriers to equality of opportunity for disabled people.	Increased methods of raising awareness and engagement amongst disabled people and explore new initiatives to increase participation and engagement. Improved opportunities for disabled people to engage with and influence policy makers.	2023	Corporate Services
13.	Encourage the participation of disabled users by involving service users and external stakeholders where possible to work collaboratively, share information and build supportive, trusting and professional relationships.	Number of recreational activity programmes with opportunities for people with disabilities for participate.	People with disabilities are encouraged to visit and enjoy our waterways and take part in a water sport. Increase the participation of people with disabilities in waterway activities, and in doing so, build their confidence, skills enhance	2023-2025	Corporate Services

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
	Ensure provision made for access for participants with a disability is managed and supported in all Waterways Ireland work with third parties to increase use of the inland waterways for recreational activity.		<p>their social well, and positively change their lives</p> <p>Increase in number of applications to Waterways Ireland seeking approval for events targeting people with disabilities.</p>		
14.	<p>Consider the needs of disabled people across all our services.</p> <p>Apply the principles of Universal Design in the design, upgrade and development of facilities on and along our waterways to ensure these are accessible and usable for everyone.</p> <p>Internal and External communications/information material will, where possible and appropriate use positive imagery to promote the accessibility of the waterway environment for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Online and digital information is accessible to everyone by</p>	Number of complaints.	<p>Removal of any structural barriers which limit physical access.</p> <p>Facilities on and along our waterways are designed and built, where applicable to the highest standards of accessibility for all to use and enjoy.</p> <p>Access for All to our services and facilities.</p> <p>Promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Operations / Technical Services</p> <p>Marketing & Communications / IT</p>

	Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
	maintaining WI managed social media and websites to a high standard.				

11.0 Publication of the Plan

- 11.1 Following submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, this Disability Action Plan will be made available at:

www.waterwaysireland.org

Waterways Ireland will, through its ongoing work with people with disabilities, seek out further opportunities to communicate the Plan and develop collaborative disability programmes. Additionally, the Plan will be highlighted through advertisements, mail shots and meetings directly with disability organizations and representative groups, where requested. A copy of the Plan will also be made available to all employees.

- 11.2 The Plan will be made available in alternative formats on request. It may also be provided in other minority languages, subject to demand.

For further information on the content of this Plan or to discuss your specific format / translation requirements, please contact:

Equality Unit, Corporate Services
Waterways Ireland
2 Sligo Road
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DRAFT

Equality Action Plan

2023 – 2025



1. Introduction

This document is presented by Waterways Ireland for public consultation. It reports the outcome of the Audit of Inequalities conducted by Waterways Ireland and the proposed Section 75 Equality Action Plan 2023-2025.

Alternative Format

Copies of this document are available on the Waterways Ireland website and in paper format. Documentation will be made available on request in formats such as Easy Read, Braille, audio formats, large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

To request an alternative format, please contact us at:

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You can also read and / or download this document from our website. Go to www.waterwaysireland.org

Consultation on this document will commence on Tuesday 18 October 2022 and close on Tuesday 10 January 2023 at 4 pm.

We intend to also use other consultation methods to seek views and it may be that you will receive further communication from us in due course. We value the contribution of our consultees and hope that you will find time to comment on this document.

2. Background

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires Waterways Ireland to comply with two statutory duties: the Equality of Opportunity Duty and the Good Relations Duty.

- (1) A public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
 - a) between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - b) between men and women generally;
 - c) between persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - d) between persons with dependants and persons without
- (2) Without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1), a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Waterways Ireland has undertaken an Audit of Inequalities to establish whether any of the above-mentioned Section 75 categories are or could be adversely affected or negatively impacted by the activities of Waterways Ireland and, where such inequalities were detected or suspected has developed this Action Plan to address them. While a lot of work has been done to promote equality and good relations, persistent inequalities will remain within our society.

This Action Plan aims to reduce these inequalities through the identification and implementation of key strategic actions, with the aim of outcomes improving over time.

This Equality Action Plan 2023-2025 has been linked to the Waterways Ireland Corporate Plan 2023-2025 planning cycle.

Four themes have been identified:

1. Promote awareness of the Equality Agenda among Waterways Ireland staff.
2. Provide a working environment where employees are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.
3. Attract, recruit and retain a diverse range of employees in a culture which celebrates diversity and inclusion.
4. Deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to visitors to our property and waterways.

Actions are categorised according to the theme they contribute to. Each action includes a timescale for delivery, a performance indicator and the name of the department responsible for delivery.

We will also seek to promote good practice across the range of our policies and in respect of all equality categories. The Plan will build on existing equality work undertaken by Waterways Ireland and assist in meeting future equality requirements.

It is designed to be flexible and will be reviewed regularly, with the support of the Equality Commission. It is recognised that the timescale of the plan may have to be amended in response to other work priorities and available resources.

3. About Waterways Ireland

Waterways Ireland is one of six North-South Implementation Bodies, established under the British-Irish Agreement Act of 1999.

We are the cross-border navigational authority responsible for the management, maintenance, development, and restoration of 1,200 km of inland navigable waterways principally for recreational purposes, comprising:

- Lower Bann Navigation
- Erne System
- Shannon-Erne Waterway
- Shannon Navigation
- Royal Canal
- Grand Canal
- Barrow Navigation
- Ulster Canal

In July 2007, it was agreed by the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) to include responsibility for the reconstruction of the Ulster Canal from Upper Lough Erne to Clones, and following restoration, its management, maintenance, and development, principally for recreational purposes to Waterways Ireland's remit.

Our Headquarters are in Enniskillen Co Fermanagh, with regional offices in Dublin, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim, and Scarriff, Co Clare.

At an operational level, Waterways Ireland is responsible for a vast range of infrastructure assets including navigation channels, embankments, towpaths, adjoining lands, harbours, jetties, fishing stands, bridges, culverts, aqueducts, overflows, locks, sluices and lock houses along with buildings and archives.

Waterways Ireland's work programmes are critical to providing a safe and high-quality recreational environment for customers, whilst preserving the industrial and environmental heritage of the waterways for future generations.

Our Mission is to be the custodian of the inland navigations and collaborate to reimagine, maintain, develop, and promote them to sustain communities, environment, and heritage.

Our mission statement is: "Creating inspirational inland navigations and waterways experiences through conservation and sustainable development for the benefit of all."

4. Key Equality Considerations

Waterways Ireland strives to fulfil its Section 75 obligations as an employer and as a public body delivering a service to the public. Its service to the public is to manage, maintain and promote the inland navigable waterways principally for recreational use. Waterways Ireland is therefore a provider of public space for outdoor recreation, boats as a navigation authority and a wide range of water-based sports alongside walking and cycling. Whilst Waterways Ireland's remit covers 1,200 km of waterways, just 15% of its geographical remit on the inland navigable waterways is in Northern Ireland covering the Erne System in County Fermanagh and the Lower Bann from Lough Neagh to Coleraine.

Waterways Ireland has a total staff of 366¹, 93 of these are employed in Northern Ireland.

Responsibility for the delivery of this Equality Action Plan lies with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team. Day to day responsibility lies with the Corporate Services Section who will be responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that Waterways Ireland complies with its equality and good relations duties when carrying out its functions.

5. Monitoring and Review Process

The Action Plan will be monitored on an annual basis by the Senior Management Team who will review progress in implementing previously agreed actions together with consideration of any new developments in the intervening period. Where appropriate, the Action Plan will be revised to reflect any new developments, consultations, the outcome of any new Equality Impact Assessments or any additional information not previously available.

Waterways Ireland will submit an Annual Review of Progress on Section 75 implementation to the Equality Commission.

The collation of information on progress will allow for regular and ongoing review of the Action Plan to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to Waterways Ireland's functions. Any changes or amendments to the Action Plan will be reported to the Equality Commission.

¹ May 2022

6. EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2023-2025

Themes

1. Promote awareness of the Equality Agenda among Waterways Ireland staff.
2. Provide a working environment where employees are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.
3. Attract, recruit and retain a diverse range of employees in a culture which celebrates diversity and inclusion.
4. Deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to visitors to our property and waterways.

1. Promote awareness of the Equality Agenda among Waterways Ireland staff

Ref	Actions	Performance Measure	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
1.	<p>Continue to deliver a suite of equality, good relations and diversity-awareness training to all staff including equality, diversity, disability.</p> <p>Provide enhanced training to key staff members to ensure integration of disability, equality and inclusion into leadership management and other key roles within the organisation.</p>	<p>Number of staff that have received training.</p> <p>100% of PTA staff complete refresher training annually</p> <p>Enhanced training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management & Extended Leadership Teams (2023) • Corporate Services Equality team (2023) • Customer service – Reception and operations teams (2024) 	<p>Staff have a robust understanding of equality and good relations and feel confident to apply relevant principles in practice.</p> <p>Integration of Section 75 duties into all planning and decision-making processes</p>	<p>2023-2025</p> <p>2023</p> <p>2023</p> <p>2024</p>	HR / CS

Ref	Actions	Performance Measure	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullying & harassment advisors (2024) Recruitment & selection panels (2023) Access auditors (2025) 		2024 2023 2025	
2.	Appoint Equality 'Champion' to drive programme delivery	Integration of Section 75 duties into all planning and decision-making processes.	Successful delivery of Action Plan measures.	2023	CS
3.	<p>Develop and incorporate equality and good relations actions for all aspects of the Body's work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek regular updates to capture work done and/or identify ongoing/persistent inequalities. Monitor the number of complaints received in relation to equality / disability / good relations. Ensure that Equality and Good Relations is embedded to all WI corporate documents 	<p>Integration of Section 75 duties into all planning and decision-making processes</p> <p>Positive images, podcasts, video, etc in corporate publications, on social media and on our website.</p>	Accessibility of Information and Services for staff and visitors to our facilities and waterways who experience information barriers.	2023-2025	All

Ref	Actions	Performance Measure	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
4.	Create a calendar of events and awareness campaigns to celebrate diversity and inclusion across our workforce.	Number of campaigns. Increased opportunities for staff collaboration and participation.	Increased awareness and celebration of diversity and inclusion.	Ongoing	CS / WG / M&C

2. Provide a working environment where employees are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
5.	Continue to provide a range of workplace, work-life balance policies and flexible working for staff in the organisation. Develop Hybrid Working Policy	Number and range of policies.	Workplace where staff feel valued and safe.	Ongoing 2023	HR
6.	Annual performance appraisal process to be updated to reflect contributions to discharge of the S75 statutory duties, where relevant and promotion of positive attitude.	Performance appraisal forms for Senior Management Team and Extended Leadership Group include provision for reporting.	Integration of Section 75 duties into all planning and decision-making processes	2024 2025	HR

3. Attract, recruit and retain a diverse range of employees in a culture which celebrates diversity and inclusion

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
7.	Undertake voluntary staff census to gather relevant information on equality categories covered by legislation.	80% return of questionnaires from Northern Ireland workforce.	Accurate and up to date reflection of the equality groups within our workforce to inform statutory reporting, and to guide policy making	2025	HR
8.	<p>Develop entry to employment workforce actions within new HR Strategy to underpin detailed workforce planning across the organisation.</p> <p>Consider issues such as hard to recruit / retain posts and ways of effectively succession planning for future workforce needs.</p> <p>Positive targeting of under-represented groups through recruitment/promotion campaigns and engagement with representative groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled • Racial group • Protestant 	<p>Increased applications received for vacant posts.</p> <p>Increase in representation of men/women in traditional work roles</p> <p>Increased representation of young people in the workforce.</p> <p>Increased representation of disabled people in the workforce.</p> <p>Increased representation of Protestants in the workforce.</p>	<p>Robust understanding of our workforce and have identified and responded to areas for improvement.</p> <p>Effective succession planning for future workforce needs</p>	Ongoing	HR / CS

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
	<p>Use of welcoming statements, where applicable.</p> <p>Engage with disability umbrella groups to promote recruitment opportunities.</p>				
9.	<p>Seek to offer a range of work experience opportunities for young people, from a range of educational achievements and background.</p> <p>Raise awareness of WI jobs/skills through schools/colleges eg engineering, marketing/digital marketing, legal, HR, etc to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview skill training • Student mentor programme • Develop/run competition for students ie build a bridge / explore biodiversity/climate action within Waterways Ireland 	Engage 2 schools/colleges per annum on each waterway in Northern Ireland.	Young people acquire skills and experience that will equip them to apply for positions.	2023-2025	CS / WG

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to Support national programmes ie Engineers Week Support and engage female participation in STEM subjects 				

4. Deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to visitors to our property and waterways.

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
10.	<p>Continue to provide Education and Heritage/Environment programmes online which cost the school/pupil minimal or no amount of money and that eliminate the risk of cost or disability being a barrier to access or participation.</p> <p>Expand Education and Heritage Programmes to increase uptake by special needs schools.</p>	<p>Increase in online educational, heritage and environment content.</p> <p>Engage with one special needs school per annum to provide an Education and Heritage programme and participation.</p>	Children living in poverty or with disability have access to educational programmes.	2023-2025	M&C / E&H

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
11.	<p>Continue to develop and work with strategic partners across Ireland to promote our facilities for engagement in recreational activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canoe Ireland • Rowing Ireland • Get Ireland Walking • CANI • Sport NI <p>Identified target groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people • Women • Disabled • Those living in areas of deprivation adjoining our waterways. 	<p>Number of programmes supported, providing opportunities for each of the identified target groups to participate in recreation/leisure:</p>	<p>Increased visitor experience for those accessing WI facilities.</p> <p>Improved profile and understanding of our activities.</p> <p>Increased participation of under-represented groups on and along our waterways.</p> <p>Increase in number of applications to WI seeking approval for events targeting under-represented groups approval.</p>	2023-2025	WG
12.	<p>Increase Event / Awareness Programme in partnership with other government agencies, community groups, S75 groups etc.</p> <p>Consult with Department of Communities and Equality Commission to create a NI</p>	<p>Establishment of at least one collaborative working group.</p>	<p>Partnerships to develop and increase opportunities for participation in leisure / recreation.</p> <p>Accessibility of Information and Services</p>	2024-2025	WG

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
	wide collaborative Working Group amongst public bodies such as Councils and ourselves				
13.	<p>Apply the principles of Universal Design in the design, upgrade and development of facilities on and along our waterways to ensure these are accessible and usable for everyone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor accessibility of our buildings and facilities through Access Audits • Explore opportunities to create quiet /sensory space along our waterways • Engage umbrella groups such as Irish Wheelchair Association <p>Consult with the public and relevant interest groups on major capital works as appropriate to ensure views of equality groups form part of the decision-making process.</p>	<p>Number of Staff trained to undertake Access Auditing.</p> <p>One Access Audit completed</p> <p>Compliance with best practice and legislation.</p> <p>Number of Greenway / Blueway development accredited.</p>	<p>Facilities on and along our waterways which are designed and built, where applicable to the highest standards of accessibility for all to use and enjoy.</p> <p>Reduction in obstacles to participation in leisure / recreation</p> <p>Accessibility of the built environment for all.</p>	<p>2025</p> <p>2025</p>	AM / TS / Ops

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
14.	<p>Ensure all third-party activity provider leases/agreements – include equality/disability clauses to ensure inclusivity.</p> <p>Collaborate with WI licensed providers to promote /encourage increased opportunities for S75 groups experiencing obstacles to participation to take part.</p>	Number of events run by third party licenced providers supported and/or promoted by WI per annum.	Obstacles to participation in leisure / recreation	2023 2023-2025	P&L CS / WG
15.	<p>Review our user communications to make sure they are clear and easy to understand, meet the needs of all users, and are available in other languages and alternative formats.</p> <p>Continue to analyse equality related complaints to identify emerging trends which will allow for targeted intervention to improve the service and support we provide our disabled users.</p>	<p>Number of requests for information in alternative formats.</p> <p>Number of complaints of equality/disability nature</p>	Creation of accessible communications, where applicable - written, spoken, digital and signed.	2024	CS / M&C

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
16.	<p>Develop an accessible information policy to highlight the organisation's commitment to communicating effectively with everyone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop opportunities to use alternative formats to communicate information for staff and public eg use of caption, audio description, sign language on podcasts, training videos, etc Explore the use of accessible public communication boards/signage incorporating pictogram images, illustrations systems, QR code, etc on our facilities and at locations along our waterways. 	<p>Website (under development) will be fully compliant with current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.</p> <p>% of promotional video, podcasts blogs which include an alternative format of communication</p> <p>% of Training video, podcasts, blogs which include an alternative form of communication.</p>	<p>Accessibility of Information and Services for staff and visitors to our facilities and waterways who experience information barriers.</p>	<p>2023</p> <p>2024</p> <p>2025</p>	<p>CS / M&C / CEO</p>

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
17.	Explore opportunities to promote the accessibility of Waterways Ireland's facilities in national advertising campaigns.	One dedicated national advertising campaign showcasing the Accessibility of WI facilities/waterways	<p>Accessibility of Information and Services for visitors to our facilities and waterways.</p> <p>Improved profile and understanding of our activities among women, young people, people with disabilities and people from minority ethnic backgrounds</p>	2025	M&C
18.	Develop links with advocacy and representative organisations to improve under representation in decision making processes across the S75 groups.	Number of links established.	<p>Improved opportunities for engagement with and influence policy makers</p> <p>Robust understanding of the needs of our users and stakeholder groups and have identified and responded to areas for improvement.</p>	Lifetime of Plan	CS
19.	Explore opportunities to source funding from other sources to support events, improved infrastructure.	<p>Sources identified, where applicable</p> <p>Support / Funding Principles and Guidelines developed and approved by SMT</p> <p>Providers invited to apply for support funding</p>	Improved accessibility to information and services for visitors to our facilities and waterways.	<p>2023</p> <p>2024</p> <p>2025</p>	CS/I&D

Ref	Actions	Performance Indicator	Outcome	Timescale	Function Lead
20.	Embed equality of opportunity, including good relations and sustainable development into procurement procedures.	Number of contracts/tenders awarded.	Social value in procurement of goods and services and award of contracts	2023-2025	FP

Key to Function Lead abbreviations:

WG Working Group

HR Human Resources

E&H Environment & Heritage

I&D Innovation & Development

CEO Chief Executive's Office

Ops Operations

CS Corporate Services

TS Technical Services

M&C Marketing & Communications

P&L Property & Legal

AM Asset Management

FP Finance/Procurement



Department of
Justice

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The Draft Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Topics: [Courts and Tribunals \(/topics/courts-and-tribunals\)](/topics/courts-and-tribunals)

Consultation opened on **25 October 2022**. Closing date **20 December 2022** at **23:59**.

Summary

The Department of Justice is seeking views from key stakeholders in the public and private sectors on the fees to be charged for planning appeals and deemed planning applications from 1st April 2023.

Documents



[Consultation document](#)

Word (136 KB) (<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/justice/PACWAC%20Consultation.docx>)



[Equality Screening document](#)

PDF (559 KB) (<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/justice/PACWAC%20Equality%20Screening%20.pdf>)



[Rural Screening Impact Assessment](#)

PDF (431 KB) (https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/justice/PACWAC%20Rural%20Screening_0.pdf)

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Consultation description

The Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) is an independent body, set up under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, which deals with a wide range of land use planning issues and related matters. PAC makes decisions on appeals against Council decisions on a wide range of planning and environmental matters.

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. This consultation concerns amendments to the fees to be charged for planning appeals and deemed planning applications from 1st April 2023. It is considered that changes are required at this time as the planning fees charged by Councils and the Department for Infrastructure (DFI) have already been increased and the fees to apply to PAC should be keeping pace with these.

Alternative Formats

Hard copies of this document and copies in other formats, including Braille, large print etc., are available upon request. If you require an alternative format or in a language other than English, please let us know and we will do our best to assist you. If you require any further information on this consultation or the content of this document, or any other assistance to make a response, please contact the Department.

Ways to respond

Email -

AtoJ.Consultation@justice-ni.gov.uk (<mailto:AtoJ.Consultation@justice-ni.gov.uk>)

Write to -

Civil Justice and Judicial Policy Division

Access to Justice

Department of Justice

Massey House

Stormont Estate

Belfast

BT4 3SX

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Unclassified

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ITEM 8.2

Ards and North Down Borough Council

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Planning
Date of Report	24 November 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	Department of Justice Consultation on Fees regarding planning appeals
Attachments	Item X - Consultation

The **Planning Appeals Commission**, often referred to as the **PAC** is an independent appellate body which deals with a wide range of land use planning issues and related matters.

The Commission's functions fall 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 these matters is taken by the relevant Department.

Unclassified

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The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service (NICTS) has responsibility for the administration of PAC, and Department of Justice has 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 has 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 has increased planning fees once since 2015, the PAC has not had the benefit of any increase in that time, and the increases proposed are minor in relation to the 2015 rates.

The increase in fees does not in any way benefit the Council, and therefore it is not considered that the Council should have any objection to the proposed revision to the Regulations relating to the PAC. Officers therefore recommend responding to the consultation to set out that the Council is supportive of the proposed increase.

RECOMMENDATION

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.



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Máinnystrie O tha Laa

The draft Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022

CONSULTATION PAPER ISSUED TO TARGETED CONSULTEES

25th October 2022

This consultation begins on 25th October 2022

This consultation closes on 20th December 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) is an independent body, set up under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, which deals with a wide range of land use planning issues and related matters. PAC makes decisions on appeals against Council decisions on a wide range of planning and environmental matters. These may be made by a single Commissioner (a single decision) or by a panel of not fewer than four Commissioners (a panel decision).

1.2 The Water Appeals Commission (WAC) is a separate body which exercises a wide range of functions in relation to water, fisheries and drainage legislation. Its proceedings are governed by The Water and Sewerage Services (NI) Order 1973 as amended, although there are no detailed procedural rules to be followed. The WAC has generally two types of functions – inquiry and appellate. These arise under the 1973 Order; the Water (NI) Order 1999 as amended, the Water and Sewerage Regulations (NI) 1973, the Drainage (NI) Order 1973, the Drainage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 2001 and the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966.

1.3 The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service (NICTS) has responsibility for the administration of PAC/WAC, and DoJ has the power to create Regulations that prescribe its procedure.¹

1.4 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.

1.5 This consultation concerns amendments to the Regulations as regards the fees to be charged for planning appeals and deemed planning applications from 1st April 2023. It is considered that the increase is required at this time as the planning fees

¹ The Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016/76)

charged by Councils and the Department for Infrastructure (DFI) have been increased and the fees to apply to PAC should be keeping pace with these fees.

2. THE DRAFT PLANNING FEES (DEEMED PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND APPEAL) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2022

2.1 The proposed amendments to the Regulations change the fees charged for planning appeals and deemed planning applications prescribed within the Regulations in order to reflect the changes to administration costs for such appeals and applications.

2.2 The proposed amendments to the Regulations are as follows:

- Where an application is deemed to have been made for an Environmental Impact Assessment development, the fee payable in respect of the deemed application is amended from £10,632 to £10,844;
- The fee for an appeal to the appeals commission is amended from £126 to £128;
- In relation to the erection of a dwellinghouse:
 - Where the development comprises a single dwellinghouse, the fee is amended from £851 to £868.
 - For 2 or more dwellinghouses, where the number of dwellinghouses comprised in the development is 50 or fewer:
 - The fee for two dwellinghouses is amended from £1000 to £1020; and
 - The fee for each additional dwellinghouse is amended from £357 to £364.
 - Where the number of dwellinghouses comprised in the development exceeds 50:
 - For 2 or more dwellinghouses, the fee is amended from £18,136 to £18,492; and

- The fee for each additional dwellinghouse in excess of 50 dwelling houses is amended from £106 to £108;
 - Subject to a maximum in total, which is amended from £265,806 to £271,104.
- In relation to the extension, improvement or alteration of an existing dwellinghouse:
 - The fee is amended from £285 to £291 for each dwelling.
- In relation to the erection of industrial, commercial, community and other buildings, other than dwellinghouses covered above:
 - Where no floor space is created in the development the fee is increased from £181 to £185.
 - Where the area of gross floor space created by the development does not exceed 40 sq. m the fee is increased from £181 to £185.
 - Where the area of gross floor space created by the development exceeds 40 sq. m but does not exceed 75 sq. m the fee is increased from £357 to £364.
 - Where the area of gross floor space created by the development exceeds 75 sq. m but does not exceed 3750 sq. m the fee is increased from £357 to £364 for each 75sq. m of that area.
 - Where the area of gross floor space created by the development exceeds 3750 sq. m, the fee is amended from £17,930 to £18,200. The additional fee of £106 in relation to each 75 sq. m in excess of 3750 sq. m is amended to £108 and the maximum fee is amended from £265,806 to £271,028.
- In relation to the erection, alteration or replacement of plant and machinery including telecommunications equipment, a single wind turbine and wind farms:
 - Where the site area does not exceed 5 hectares the fee is amended from £357 to £364 for each 0.1 hectare of the site area.
 - Where the site area exceeds 5 hectares the fees are amended from:
 - £17,834 to £18,200;
 - £106 to £108 for each additional 0.1 hectare in excess of 5 hectares;

- Subject to a maximum in total which has changed from £265,806 to £271,028.
- In relation to the erection, on land used for the purposes of agriculture, of buildings to be used for agricultural purposes and for agricultural and commercial glasshouses:
 - The fee is amended from £949 to £968 for each 500 sq. m of floor space subject to a maximum which is amended from £12,582 to £12,826.
- In relation to the winning and working of peat:
 - The fee is amended from £1,887 to £1,925 for each 5 hectares of the site area subject to a maximum which is amended from £33,971 to £34,650.
- In relation to the winning and working of minerals (other than peat), the carrying out of any operations connected with exploratory drilling for oil or natural gas, and the use of land for the disposal of refuse or waste materials for the deposit of material remaining after minerals have been extracted from land or the use of land for the storage of minerals in the open:
 - The fee is amended from £365 to £372 per 0.1 hectare of the site area subject to a maximum which is amended from £40,828 to £41,664.
- In relation to the construction of single level car parks, service roads and other means of access on land used for the purpose of a single undertaking, where the development is required for a purpose incidental to the existing use of the land:
 - The fee is amended from £252 to £257.
- In relation to the continuance of a use of land or the retention of buildings or works on land, without compliance with a condition. subject to which a previous planning permission has been granted (including a condition requiring discontinuance of the use of the removal of the building or works at the end of the specified period):
 - The fee is amended from £252 to £257.
- In relation to material change of use:
 - Where the use relates to a dwellinghouse the fee is amended from:
 - £692 to £706 for the first dwellinghouse;
 - £252 to £257 for each additional dwellinghouse;

- subject to a maximum which is amended from £12,582 to £12,850.
- For any other use, the fee is amended from £252 to £257 for each 75 sq. m of floorspace subject to a maximum fee which is amended from £12,582 to £12,850.

3 PURPOSE OF CONSULTATION

3.1 The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the draft Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

3.2 Responses are welcomed from anyone with an interest in or views on this consultation paper.

4. NEXT STEPS

4.1 The Department will consider the responses to this consultation and depending upon the outcome of that consideration, will take forward the draft Regulations.

5. IMPACT

5.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires that all public authorities in Northern Ireland comply with a statutory duty to:

- have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, or sexual orientation, gender, and those with or without a disability and those with or without dependents; and
- have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.

5.2 In addition, public authorities are also required to meet legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006,² particularly in the formation of public policy making.

5.3 The Department is committed to fulfilling those obligations and proposals arising from this paper have been subjected to screening to determine impact on equality of opportunity, good relations and other statutory duties (see screening form at Appendix 4). The proposals have also been screened for rural needs impact (see Appendix 5). The Department welcomes views on these screening documents.

5.4 The Department has carried out a regulatory impact screening exercise and considers that a regulatory impact assessment is unnecessary as the amended procedural Rules will not have a direct or indirect impact on businesses. The Department does, however, welcome views on this.

6. HOW TO RESPOND

6.1 The consultation will run from 25th October 2022 and all responses should be submitted by 20th December 2022. Appendix 2 provides a template for completion by respondents which is also available on the Department's website. Responses can be sent by e-mail or post as below.

6.2 For queries and responses to the consultation please contact:

*Civil Justice and Judicial Policy Division
Access to Justice
Department of Justice
Massey House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SX*

*Tel: 028 9016 9539
Textphone: 028 9052 7668
Email: AtoJ.Consultation@justice-ni.gov.uk*

² S.I. 2006 No.312 (N.I.1)

6.3 When responding, please state whether you are making a submission as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

Additional copies and alternative formats

6.4 An electronic copy of this document is available to view and download from the consultation section of the Department of Justice website (<http://www.justice-ni.gov.uk>).

6.5 You may make copies of this document without seeking permission and if you require further printed copies, we would invite you to access the document through our website. If you do not have access to the internet and require us to provide you with further copies, please contact us with your specific request.

6.6 Copies in other formats, including Braille, large print or audio cassette may be made available on request. If it would assist you to access the document in an alternative format, or a language other than English, please let us know and we will do our best to assist you.

Freedom of information and General Data Protection Regulations

6.7 The Department intends to publish a summary of responses on its website on completion of the consultation process. Any contact details that will identify a respondent as a private individual will be removed prior to publication.

6.8 All information will be handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Respondents should be aware that the Department's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 may require that any responses, not subject to specific exemptions under the Act, be disclosed to other parties on request.

6.9 For further information about Freedom of Information and GDPR please contact the Information Commissioner's Office at <https://ico.org.uk>.

Complaints

6.10 Any comments, queries or concerns about the way this exercise has been conducted should be sent to the following address:

*Standards Unit
Department of Justice
Knockview Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SL*

or e-mail to standardsunit@justice-ni.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – The Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022

STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2022 No. 0000

PLANNING FEES

The Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022

Made - - - - - *XX 2022*

Coming into force - - - - - *XX 2022*

The Department of Justice makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred on it by sections 223(7) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

Citation and commencement

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022 and shall come into operation on XX month 2022.

Interpretation

2. In these regulations—

“the 2011 Act” means the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011;

“deemed application” means an application for planning permission deemed to have been made under section 145(5) of the 2011 Act;

“dwellinghouse” means a building or part of a building which is used as a single private dwellinghouse, and for no other purpose;

“glasshouse” means a building which—

- (a) has not less than three quarters of its total area comprised of glass or other translucent material;
- (b) is designed for the production of flowers, fruit, vegetables, herbs or other horticultural produce; and
- (c) is used, or is to be used, solely for the purposes of agriculture;

“relevant enforcement notice” to relation to any deemed application means the enforcement notice stating the matters to which that deemed application relates;

“use of land” includes use of land for the winning and working of minerals.

Amendment of the Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

3. The Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 are amended as follows.

Amendment of Regulation 7

4. In regulation 7 omit “£10,632” and insert “£10,844”.

Amendment of Regulation 9

5. In regulation 9(1) omit “£126” and insert “£128”.

Amendment of SCHEDULE

6. For the Schedule substitute:

“SCHEDULE Fees in Respect of Deemed Applications

Reg 3(2)

PART 1

General Provisions

1. The fee payable under regulation 3(2) in respect of a deemed application shall be calculated in accordance with the provisions of Part 2 and (where applicable) paragraphs 4 to 7.
2. Where a deemed application relates to development stated in the relevant enforcement notice to have been carried out without planning permission, the amount of the fee payable shall be calculated in accordance with the provisions of Part 2 as if the deemed application were one for permission to carry out that development.
3. In this Schedule—
 - (a) references to the development to which any deemed application relates shall be construed as references to the use of land or the operations (as the case may be) to which the relevant enforcement notice relates;
 - (b) references to the floor space or the number of dwellinghouses to be created by the development shall be construed as references to the floor space or the number of dwellinghouses to which that enforcement notice relates; and
 - (c) references to the purposes for which it is proposed that the floor space shall be used shall be construed as references to the purposes for which floor space was stated to be used in the enforcement notice.
4. Where in respect of any category of development specified in Part 2, the fee is to be calculated by reference to the site area—
 - (a) that area shall be taken as consisting of the site area to which the relevant enforcement notice relates; and
 - (b) where the area referred to in sub-paragraph (a) is not an exact multiple of the unit of measurement specified in respect of the relevant category of development, the fraction of a unit remaining after division of the total area by the unit of measurement shall be treated, for the purposes of calculating the fee, as a complete unit.

5.—(1) In relation to development within category 3, 5 or 10(b) specified in Part 2, the area of gross floor space to be created by the development shall be ascertained by external measurement of the floor space, whether or not it is to be bounded (wholly or partly) by external walls of a building.

(2) In relation to development within category 3 or 10(b) 10(c) where the area of gross floor space is not an exact multiple of 75 square metres, the area remaining after division of the total number of square metres of gross floor space by the figure of 75 shall be treated as being 75 square metres.

(3) In relation to development within category 5 where the area of gross floor space is not an exact multiple of 500 square metres, the area remaining after division of the total number of square metres of gross floor space by the figure of 500 shall be treated as being 500 square metres.

6.—(1) Subject to the provisions in sub-paragraph 6(2) and paragraph 7(1), where a deemed application relates to more than one of the categories of development specified in Part 2—

- (a) an amount shall be calculated, in accordance with this Schedule, in respect of development which is within each category; and
- (b) the total of the amounts calculated for each of the categories of development shall be the fee.

(2) Where a building is to contain floor space which it proposes to use for the purposes of providing common access or common services or facilities for persons occupying or using that building for development within category 1 and for persons occupying or using it for development within category 3 and or category 5 (such floor space being referred to below as “common floor space”), the category 3 and or category 5 floor space shall be assessed, in relation to that building, as including such proportion of the common floor space as the category 3 and or category 5 floor space in the building bears to the gross floor space in the building.

7.—(1) Subject to the provisions of paragraph 6, where a deemed application relates to development which is within more than one of the site-based categories (4, 6 and 7)—

- (a) an amount shall be calculated, in accordance with this Schedule, in respect of the development which is within each category; and
- (b) the highest of the amounts so calculated shall be the fee.

PART 2

Scale of fees

<i>Category of development</i>	<i>Fee payable</i>
1. The erection of a dwellinghouse.	Where the development comprises a single dwellinghouse, £868. For two or more houses— (a) where the number of dwellinghouses comprised in the development is 50 or fewer, £1020 for two dwellinghouses and £364 for each additional dwellinghouse; (b) where the number of dwellinghouses comprised in the development exceeds 50, £18,492; and an additional £108 for each dwellinghouse in excess of 50 dwellinghouses, subject to a maximum in total of £271,104.
2. The extension, improvement or alteration of an existing dwellinghouse, including the erection of a building or the carrying out of other operations within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse for purposes ancillary to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such, or the erection or construction of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure along a	£291 for each dwelling.

- boundary or a curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse.
3. The erection of industrial, commercial, community and other buildings, other than dwellinghouses or buildings covered by category 1.
- (a) where no floor space is created by the development, £185;
- (b) where the area of the gross floor space created by the development does not exceed 40 sq.m., £185;
- (c) where the area of the gross floor space comprised in the development exceeds 40 sq.m., but does not exceed 75 sq.m., £364;
- (d) where the area of the gross floor space comprised in the development exceeds 75 sq.m., but does not exceed 3,750 sq.m., £364 for each 75 sq.m. of that area;
- (e) where the area of the gross floor space comprised in the development exceeds 3,750 sq.m., £18,200; and an additional £108 for each 75 sq.m., in excess of 3,750 sq.m., subject to a maximum in total of £271,028.
4. The erection, alteration or replacement of plant and machinery including telecommunications equipment, a single wind turbine and wind farms.
- (a) where the site area does not exceed 5 hectares, £364 for each 0.1 hectare of the site area;
- (b) where the site area exceeds 5 hectares, £18,200; and an additional £108 for each 0.1 hectare in excess of 5 hectares, subject to a maximum in total of £271,028.
5. The erection, on land used for the purposes of agriculture, of buildings to be used for agricultural purposes and for agricultural and commercial glasshouses. £968 for each 500 sq.m. of floor space subject to a maximum of £12,826.
6. The winning and working of peat. £1,925 for each 5 hectares of the site area subject to a maximum of £34,650.
7. (a) The winning and working of minerals (other than peat). £372 per 0.1 hectare of the site area subject to a maximum of £41,664.
- (b) The carrying out of any operations connected with exploratory drilling for oil or natural gas.
- (c) The use of land for the disposal of refuse or waste materials or for the deposit of material remaining after minerals have been extracted from land or the use of land for the storage of minerals in the open.
- (d) The carrying out of any other operation not coming within any of the above categories or within category 8.
8. The construction of single level car parks, service roads and other means of access on land used for the purpose of a single undertaking, where the development is required for a purpose incidental to the existing use of the land. £257.
9. The continuance of a use of land or the retention of buildings or works on land, without compliance with a condition subject to which a previous planning permission has £257.

been granted (including a condition requiring discontinuance of the use of the removal of the building or works at the end of the specified period).

10. Material change of use.

(a) Where the use relates to a dwellinghouse, £706 for the first dwellinghouse and £257 for each additional dwellinghouse subject to a maximum of £12,850;

(b) for any other change of use, £257 for each 75 sq.m. of floor space subject to a maximum of £12,850.
£831.”

11. Any other development not falling within categories 1 to 10.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Justice on date



Naomi Long
Minister of Justice

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

These Regulations amend the Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Appendix 2 - Questionnaire for Respondents

Please Note this form should be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately.

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr *Please tick as appropriate*

Surname

Forename

2. Postal Address

Postcode	Phone
Email	

3. Permissions - I am responding as... (choose one)

An Individual <input type="checkbox"/>	An Organisation <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public?</p> <p>Please tick as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(b) The name of your organisation will be made available to the public</p> <p>Are you content for your response to be made available?</p> <p>Please tick as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

COMMENTS [continue on separate sheet of paper as required]

<p>Comments on The Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeal) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022</p>

Comments:



Judicial Policy and Tribunals
Branch,
Civil Justice Policy Division,
Massey House,
Stormont Estate,
Belfast,
BT4 3SX <http://www.justice-ni.gov.uk>



Miscarriage Leave and Pay Consultation Team
Department for the Economy
Adelaide House
39-49 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8FD
Email: mlpconsultation@economy-ni.gov.uk

Dear Consultee,

24 October 2022

Public Consultation on Miscarriage Leave and Pay

The Department for the Economy is launching a public consultation on the introduction of new rights to Miscarriage Leave and Pay in Northern Ireland.

The consultation document can be viewed, and returns completed and submitted, via <https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/dfE/miscarriage-leave-and-pay-consultation/>.

Alternatively the consultation document and a response document can be viewed and downloaded from the Department for the Economy website at <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/consultations/miscarriage-leave-and-pay>.

That response document may be completed and emailed to mlpconsultation@economy-ni.gov.uk or sent by post to, and marked:

For the attention of the addressee only:
Miscarriage Leave & Pay Consultation
Department for the Economy
Employment Relations Work Life Balance
3rd Floor
Adelaide House
39-49 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8FD

However, would encourage consultees to respond by electronic means if at all possible.

10X

DECADE OF
INNOVATION



The consultation document may be provided by the Department in other formats upon request.

Responses should arrive no later than **5 p.m. on 19 December 2022.**

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gareth Dillon', is positioned below the text 'Yours faithfully'.

Gareth Dillon
Miscarriage Leave and Pay Consultation Team
Email: mlpconsultation@economy-ni.gov.uk
Tel: (028) 90257494

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

The questionnaire can be completed by individual stakeholders, members of the public, or on behalf of a group or organisation.

Please indicate if you are responding as:

A member of the public

On behalf of an organisation

Other (Please specify)

Your name (optional)

Organisation's Name (if responding on behalf of an organisation required)

If other: Please Specify

Communications Consent (optional)

Email:

If you wish to be added to the Board Communication emails please tick the box below and provide your email to confirm.

Email

Please note that replying 'yes' we will use your contact details to provide information on the role and work of the Board and PCSPs. Our privacy notice can be found at www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

1. Do you agree with the Board's objectives over the coming years?

Yes No

Please state the reasons for your answer including any additional suggestions for priority areas. *(3000 character limit)*

2. What is the Board doing well and what are the areas it could improve on?

Please state the reasons for your answer *(3000 character limit)*

Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Veterinary Service Animal Health Group
Animal Health and Welfare Policy Division



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

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Date: 25 October 2022

AHS & TSE Policy Branch
Jubilee House
111 Ballykelly Road
Limavady
BT49 9HP
Telephone: 028774 42303

Email: BVD.policy@daera-ni.gov.uk

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Consultation on Proposed Introduction of Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Herd Restrictions

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is seeking views on proposals to introduce herd restrictions as a disease control measure for Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD). The proposals made aim to reduce the transmission of the BVD virus within and between herds in Northern Ireland by further encouraging the prompt identification and removal of persistently infected animals, the main reservoirs of disease.

The consultation document, sets out the circumstances in which the Department proposes to apply herd restrictions, mainly targeting those herds that retain BVD positive or inconclusively tested animals. The Department is also seeking views on whether it should have the discretion to restrict herds that retain animals that have not been tested for BVD. It would initially intend to use any such power to restrict those herds that retain the largest number of untested animals. Finally, the consultation document proposes that there should be a new legal requirement to test animals that were born or entered a herd before the current statutory scheme came into effect in 2016.

The consultation is aimed at industry stakeholders who have an interest in BVD eradication as well as farmers who may be impacted by the introduction of the restrictions.

You can access the consultation document at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/BVD-herd-restrictions>.

Alternative formats such as paper copies, large print, Braille or other languages are available and can be requested via email to BVD.Policy@daera-ni.gov.uk or by telephone: 028774 42303

For those with hearing difficulties, a message can be left on the Department's text phone Text Relay: 18001 028774 42303

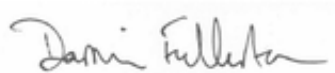
Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.



The consultation will run for an eight-week period from 25 October 2022 to 20 December 2022, and responses are invited to be made via the Citizen Space website at: <https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/daera/bvd-herd-restrictions>.

Yours faithfully,



Darrin Fullerton
AHS & TSE Policy Branch

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.



The Department of Justice has published a Call for Evidence on the abuse of position of trust offences as contained within the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008.

The Call for Evidence centres on recent amendment made to the abuse of position of trust provision by Section 5 of the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. It seeks supporting information on any specific areas of risk which would necessitate an extension of the law.

The Call for Evidence document and response form can be accessed on-line at [Abuse of Position of Trust Offences: Extension of the Law – A Call for Evidence | Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](#). A copy can also be obtained by emailing: CPU@justice-ni.gov.uk.

Responses can be submitted by post to: Criminal Policy Unit, Department of Justice, Massey House, Stormont Estate, Belfast, BT4 3SX; or via email sent to the above email address with 'Abuse of Position of Trust Call for Evidence' in the subject line.

The closing date for receipt of responses is **12pm on 22 December 2022**.

Please feel free to forward this email to any organisations which may have an interest in, or relevant experience of, this issue.

Dear Consultee

LAUNCH OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CLOSURE OF MUCKAMORE ABBEY HOSPITAL

The Department of Health invites you to respond to the consultation on the proposed closure of Muckamore Abbey Hospital. The consultation was formally launched on 25 October at 9am and will run until 24 January 2023. We would welcome your views on this proposal.

The consultation document and response questionnaire are both available via the Department's website at:

[Public consultation on future of Muckamore Abbey Hospital | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/public-consultation-on-future-of-muckamore-abbey-hospital)

You can respond online by accessing the consultation documents on the Northern Ireland Government Citizen Space website and completing the online survey there using the link below:

<https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/doh-1/public-consultation-on-proposed-closure-of-mah>

If, for any reason, you are unable to access the electronic versions of the documents you can request a paper copy by emailing MAHpublicconsultation@health-ni.gov.uk or by writing to the address below. The document and/or questionnaire may also be requested in an alternative format by contacting this address.

Department of Health
Muckamore Abbey Review Team
Room D2:17
Castle Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3SQ

Dear Chief Executive,

The Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland (BCNI) has today published revised proposals for Parliamentary constituencies in Northern Ireland, and commenced the third consultation period of the 2023 Boundary Review. In line with the legislation, the third consultation period lasts for four weeks, and will close on 15th December 2022.

Having considered the written representations received during the initial and secondary consultation periods, and the records of the public hearings, the Commission has revised its initial proposals. Written representations with respect to the revised proposals can be made during the third consultation period, as well as written representations with respect to representations made during the public hearings. Representations must be received by the Commission by 15th December 2022 and can be submitted using the online portal, by email, or by post. These representations will be published online after the end of the third consultation period.

The Revised Proposals, accompanying resources and more details about the 2023 Boundary Review process are available on the Commission's website at www.boundarycommission.org.uk/2023-review-parliamentary-constituencies. We are also grateful to you for displaying information about the Review, and a map showing the revised proposals, in your council building in order to support public engagement with the consultation.

Kind regards,

BCNI Secretariat

www.boundarycommission.org.uk

Follow BCNI on Twitter: @BCommNI

Unclassified

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ITEM 9**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	02 November 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Request for Deputation from Ards and North Down Dance Club
Attachments	Proposal

A request to make a deputation has 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.

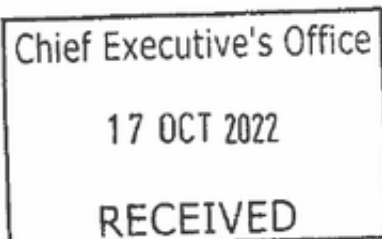
RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council considers the request from Ards and North Down Dance Club.

Mr S. Reid
Chief Executive Officer
Ards and North Down Borough Council
Town Hall, Bangor Castle
Bangor. BT20 4BT

17th October 2022

3 Wyndell Park
Newtownards
BT23 7UX



Dear Mr Reid

We would be most grateful if you would put the attached proposal document before the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors at an appropriate time for their consideration and hopefully formal adoption.

Yours faithfully



S.J.Barbour

On behalf of Ards and North Down Dance Club

(Tel 07814487583)

PROPOSAL TO

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN COUNCIL

REGARDING AGE FRIENDLY DANCING

FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

On behalf of Ards and North Down Dance Club
Submitted by S.J.Barbour October 2022

INTRODUCTION

Sequence dancing is the oldest and most popular form of dancing (Ballroom is an offshoot). It is internationally popular with many people, mainly retired from work and often after bringing up families, obtaining their mental, physical and social well-being from it.

Someone said it's a reason to get up, get dressed and get out. Some dancers are very fit others not so. Dementia sufferers still remember the steps and music. There are married couples, widows and widowers and it is not unusual to see someone over ninety dancing. Lasting friendships and companionships are established.

All the well-known rhythms from Slow Waltz through Quickstep, Jive, Latin American and the others are encompassed. Dances enjoyed by our Grandparents are still popular but also at this moment new variants are being scripted for competition and adjudication.

THE CLUB

Ards and North Down Dance Club was formed in February 2022 and has 50 members. Its purpose is to give dancers, musicians and dance teachers a voice and identity as well as promoting sequence dancing. (See attached constitution).

Membership is drawn from Ballywalter through Bangor to Ballygowan. These members often have strong affiliations to various dance groups throughout the Borough. The club does not normally run dances but did so on ten occasions to help recovery of dancing after the recent pandemic.

CURRENT SITUATION

Locally sequence dancing was hit badly due to the closures and illness caused by Covid and other factors. Several venues in the Borough (and elsewhere) never reopened and some that did are tenuous because of ageing and also lack of new dancers due to the cessation of teaching during lockdown. Some dancers who have access to transport are having to travel further and sometimes outside the area. Some are no longer getting to dance.

On a brighter note, some of the club members have recently assisted in the re-opening of a sequence dance class in the Hub, Hamilton Road,

Bangor. Grants may be obtainable to aid dancing but age-related problems prevent the holding of funds, related bank accounts and book keeping. Dancing has largely been run on a voluntary and charitable basis. This is not sustainable and, in some measure has already ceased.

Due to the two year closure of dance classes, dancing has seen no new entrants and it could be many more years before any were experienced enough to organise and host dancing.

THE PROPOSAL

Five of the eleven councils in Northern Ireland have been or are actively involved in running sequence dancing and there may be more. A recent report on local BBC news showed a free council run dance with a 6 or 7 piece band in the Guild Hall, Londonderry. The annual open-air council run series of dances has restarted in Lisburn Market Square (see attached poster) and Belfast City Council are running weekly tea dances. Some local people travel individually and in groups to attend these events making an "away day" out of it and stay for dinner.

It is proposed that the council consider organising and running, on a trial basis, a Sequence Dance event or events for the large and rapidly increasing proportion of the Borough of retirement age and beyond. This would be held in Council premises and staffed by Council employees and admission charges levied. Specifically Age Friendly Events in our area are difficult to find.

Various formats could be considered eg Tea Dances in different locations (as we are told was once run in Comber by the Council) and an open air dance next summer in the very imposing Conway Square. Ards and North Down Dance Club, if required, could work with Officers to select suitable venues, musicians, music, dances and fit and competent dancers to lead the dancing. Dancing would be available to all but control of numbers exercised. Advertising would be through normal channels and the Club network. Costs per occasion would be small.

Our dancing is a recognised Sport, Cross Community and Community based, an Art Form and Age Friendly. There can be few activities with so many qualifications for Council support.

OBJECTIVES

Increased footfall through the local shops and restaurants at times when business is normally slower. (Open air dance especially)

Promotion of dancing generally for the increased physical, mental and social well-being of the community.

Encouragement specifically towards the increasingly aged citizens to maintain or take up dancing, as an Age Friendly Activity.

To help relieve pressures on the Health and Social Services by maintaining fitness into later life.

To showcase major towns in the Borough and attract visitors and tourists through a wider audience and the various media.

To provide a "feel good" factor and enhance the relationship between the Council and its citizens.

CONCLUSION

Dancing has asked little or nothing of the public purse, yet overwhelmingly this age group are the ratepayers. Perhaps now is the time to ask for some modest support for this section of the population. Not so long ago groups such as Coldplay were engaged to play in Ward Park, Bangor, for the young people. We would be grateful for help which would be a lot less ambitious and the club is available to work with Council Officers on this proposal and towards an ongoing relationship for future projects in ensuring continuation of this community asset.

We hope our council will give this matter its full consideration and we take this opportunity to express our thanks for all the work done on behalf of the residents of the Borough.

Ards and North Down Dance Club Constitution.

Purpose. The club purpose is to encourage and stimulate Ballroom, Sequence, Latin American and Jive dancing for the physical, mental and social well-being of the older community in the Ards and North Down Council area.

Function. The function of the Club is to act as an umbrella organisation in the Ards and North Down area, providing an interface between amateur dancers, dance teachers and musicians, who are otherwise unorganised, and public authorities. The club is non-profit making and does not hold assets.

Organisation. The Club is governed by the Chairman, the Secretary and the Committee which consists of all members. A quorum shall consist of one club officer and two club members. All meetings and communications shall be online or by other electronic means. Notice of an annual general meeting will be posted one week before the event.

Membership. Membership of the Club is open to all irrespective of race, gender, religion or ability and being a non-associated private members club, by way of proposal of two members and acceptance by the club officers. At all times members are expected to have an appropriate and socially acceptable standard of dress, language and behaviour. Membership implies consent for the club to hold contact data.

There is no annual subscription, joining fee or other charge for membership.

something for the grown-ups...

MARKET SQUARE'S TUESDAY TEA DANCE WITH HOUSTY

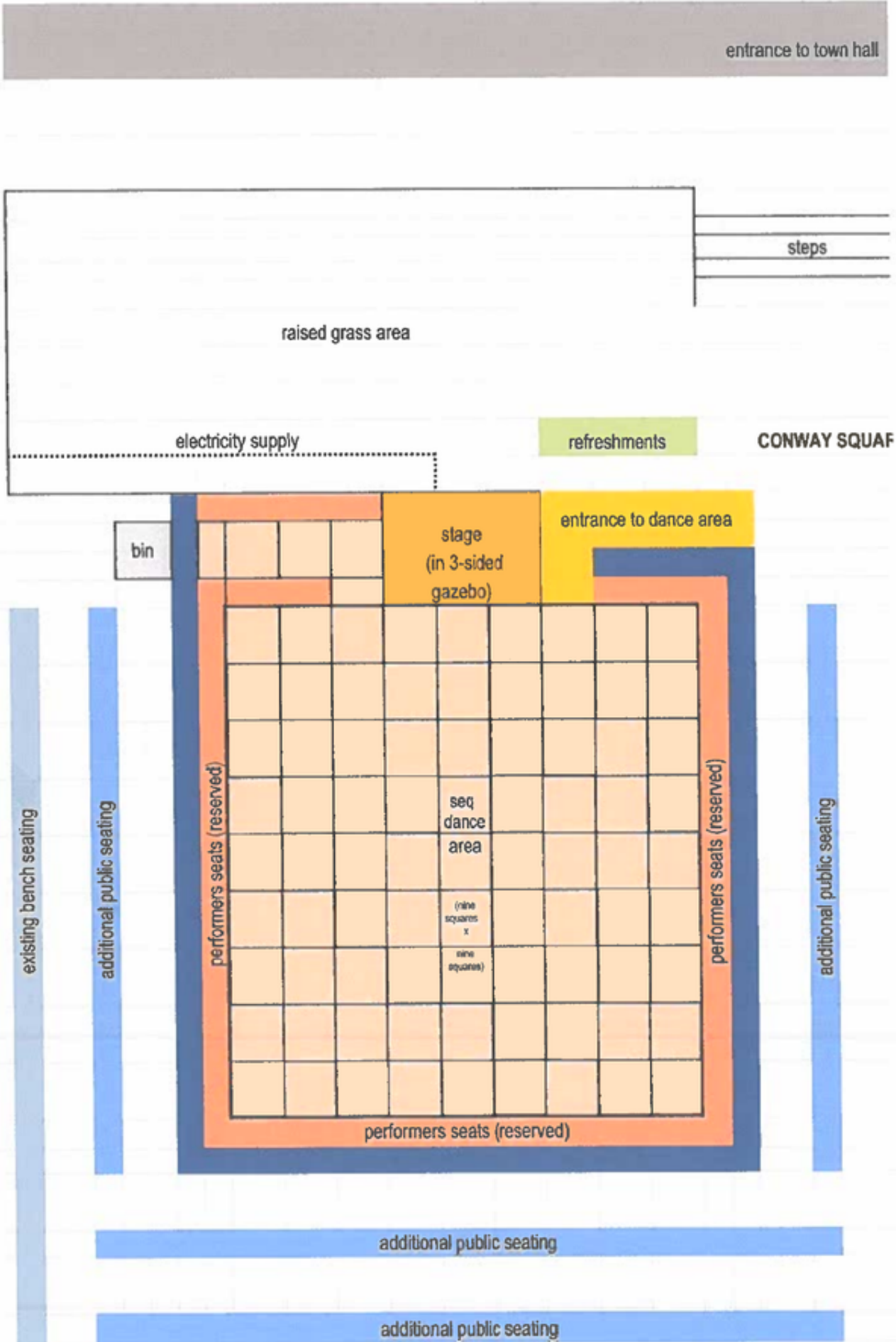
Tuesday 10th May, 2pm - 4pm
Tuesday 7th June, 2pm - 4pm
Tuesday 26th July, 2pm - 4pm
Tuesday 23rd August, 2pm - 4pm
Market Square, Lisburn City Centre

Liven up with the sounds of Housty and dance the day away
for FREE on our special state-of-the-art floor

Please contact ccm@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk
or call 9244 7543
for more details



LCCC
Lisburn &
Castlereagh
City Council



Deputation Request Form.

Making the Request – Sam Barbour

Date of Request – 28th October 2022

Organisation – Ards and North Down Dance Club

Council or Committee

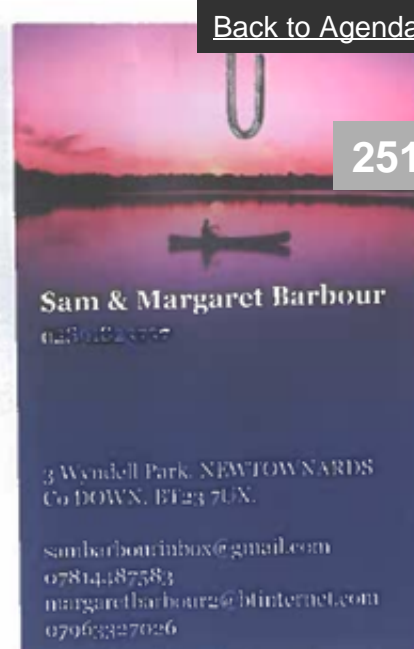
Council or Committee as appropriate. Attendance at meeting not requested but will attend to answer questions if required.

Summary

Please refer to document "Proposals to Ards and North Down Council Regarding Age Friendly Dancing for Senior Citizens" submitted on 17th October 2022.

The proposal is that the Council supports this popular form of dancing for the large and increasing number of elderly citizens of the Borough, as is done by other Councils. Many of this Community derive their physical, mental and social wellbeing in this way. However, this situation is tenuous.

It is our understanding that Councillors may submit suggestions for Council supported Coronation Events. We see our proposal being "tailor made" for such a great celebratory occasion and taking the form of dancing/entertainment in Conway Square and/or Donaghadee Community Centre. This would allow for assessment of longer-term adoption. Planning for such Coronation Events is underway in other areas,



Unclassified

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ITEM 10**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	23 November 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Request for Deputation from Holywood Football Club
Attachments	

A request to make a deputation to the Community and Wellbeing Committee has been received from Gordon Donaldson of Holywood Football Club.

The deputation request stated the following:

"Holywood 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 Holywood 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

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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.”

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council considers the request from Holywood Football Club.



Deputation Request Form

A 'deputation request' refers to a person or group of persons asking to appear in person before the Council or a Council Committee in order to address the Council or Committee (as the case may be) on a particular matter.

The procedure governing deputations is contained within section 12 of the Council's Standing Orders, a copy of which is set out below.

If you wish to make a deputation request, please complete this form and return it to Ards and North Down Borough Council via the following email address: member.services@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk, providing us with a contact email or postal address and contact telephone number when doing so (please do not include your personal contact details on this form – see privacy notice below).

Please note that it will be for the Council to decide whether to accede to your request and, if it does, to determine when and where the deputation will be heard. The Council will draw upon the information you provide in this form in order to reach its decision, therefore you are encouraged to clearly outline the topic of your request and the reason why you wish to raise the matter before the Council or a Committee.

Applicant Details

I/we apply to Ards and North Down Borough Council to make a deputation and should this application be successful, I/we agree to comply with section 12 of the Council's Standing Orders.

Name of person(s) making the deputation request:	Gordon Donaldson, Alan Little, Alan Harris, Mark Crawford
Date of request:	23 rd November 2022
If making the deputation on behalf of an organisation or a group of individuals, name of the organisation / individuals:	Hollywood Football Club – A community based football club within the Borough of Ards and North Down.
Name of Committee (if known) to which you wish to make your deputation:	Community and Wellbeing Committee

Please summarise below (continuing onto an additional page if required) the subject matter of your deputation request and the reason why you wish to raise the matter before the Council or a Committee.

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 is 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 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 Clubs 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.

-

Extract from Ards and North Down Borough Council's Standing Orders, Version 8, September 2021

12. Deputations

(1) Deputations, from any source, shall only be admitted to address the Council provided the Chief Executive has received seven working days notice of the intended deputation and a statement of its objective, and subject to the agreement of the Council.

(2) In the case of an emergency, deputations, from any source, shall only be admitted to address the Council provided the Chief Executive has received one working day's notice of the intended deputation and a statement of its objective, and subject to the agreement of the Mayor.

(3) The deputation shall be confined to the presentation of a statement, or copy of resolutions, and shall not make more than two short addresses by any two members of the deputation. The totality of the address shall not exceed 10 minutes followed by a maximum 15 minutes question and answer session.

(4) Deputations should not be repetitive and, where possible, issues of a similar or linked nature should be contained in one deputation. Where a deputation has made a presentation to the Council, the Council will decline to accept another deputation on the same issue from the same individual or group for a period of six months.

(5) No further discussion or proposals beyond questions shall take place at a Council or Committee meeting until after the deputation has withdrawn. Any subsequent proposal made should be limited to a request for officers to bring back a report on the matters raised by the deputation.

Privacy notice – how we will use information about you

Ards and North Down Borough Council is a Data Processor under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for the personal data it gathers when receiving and administering deputation requests.

You are providing your personal data to the Council whose lawful basis for processing it falls within the following three categories:

- a) **Consent** - you consent to the information being processed for the specific purpose of the Council considering your deputation request;
- b) **Public task** - the processing is necessary in order for the Council to consider your request in line with its Standing Orders which were established under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014; and
- c) **Legitimate interests** - the processing is necessary for your legitimate interests (or the legitimate interests of a third party) in order that Council may consider your deputation request.

The personal data you provide when making a deputation request may be shared internally within the Council with staff who are involved in decision making and administration in respect of Council and Committee meetings. This includes both the data contained within this form and any other data, such as an email address or other contact details, we may gather when you send the form to us.

The information you provide on this form only will be provided as a report to Council and potentially thereafter as a report to a Committee (depending on whether Council accedes to your request). Any such report will not usually be heard 'in confidence' and therefore the report will also be published on the Council website prior to the meeting. Members of the press and public may attend the Council (and Committee) meeting at which the report is discussed. An audio recording and written minute will be made of the meeting and both will be published on the website.

Your personal data will not be shared or disclosed to any other organisation without your consent, unless the law permits or places an obligation on the Council to do so.

Personal data is held and stored by the Council in a safe and secure manner and in compliance with Data Protection legislation and in line with the Council's Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.

If you have any queries regarding the processing of your personal data, please contact:

Data Protection Officer
Ards and North Down Borough Council
Town Hall, The Castle
Bangor
BT20 4BT
Email: dataprotection@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk
Tel: 0300 013 3333

ITEM 11**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Organisational Development and Administration
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Administration
Date of Report	23 November 2022
File Reference	DS 30
Legislation	Local Government Act (NI) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Schedule of Meetings 2023
Attachments	Meeting Schedule

Members will find attached a schedule of meetings for 2023.

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

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council approves the attached timetable.

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FROM 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2023**

Please note that all Meetings will commence at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated.

JANUARY 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Wednesday 4 January	Environment Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 5 January	Regeneration and Development Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Tuesday 10 January	Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 11 January	Community and Wellbeing Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 19 January	Special Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 26 January	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor (Date changed to accommodate Holocaust event in the Chamber)
FEBRUARY 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 7 February	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 8 February	Environment Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 9 February	Special Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 9 February	Regeneration and Development Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Tuesday 14 February	Special Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
Tuesday 14 February	Corporate Services Committee	Town Hall, Bangor
Wednesday 15 February	Community and Wellbeing Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 22 February	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
MARCH 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 7 March	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 8 March	Environment Committee	Church Street, N'Ards

Thursday 9 March	Regeneration and Development Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Tuesday 14 March	Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 15 March	Community and Wellbeing Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Monday 20 March	Audit Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 29 March	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
APRIL 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 4 April	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
MAY 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Wednesday 24 May	Annual Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
Wednesday 31 May	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
JUNE 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 13 June	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 14 June	Environment Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 15 June	Regeneration and Development Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Tuesday 20 June	Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 21 June	Community and Wellbeing Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 28 June	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
JULY 2023		
Tuesday 4 July	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 26 July	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
AUGUST 2023		
Tuesday 1 August	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 30 August	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
SEPTEMBER 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 5 September	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 6 September	Environment Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 7 September	Regeneration and Development Committee	Church Street, N'Ards

Tuesday 12 September	Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 13 September	Community and Wellbeing Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 27 September	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
OCTOBER 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 3 October	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 4 October	Environment Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 5 October	Regeneration and Development Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Tuesday 10 October	Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 11 October	Community and Wellbeing Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 25 October	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
NOVEMBER 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 7 November	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 8 November	Environment Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 9 November	Regeneration and Development Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Tuesday 14 November	Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 15 November	Community and Wellbeing Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 29 November	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor
DECEMBER 2023		
Date	Meeting	Venue
Tuesday 5 December	Planning Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 6 December	Environment Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Thursday 7 December	Regeneration and Development Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Tuesday 12 December	Corporate Services Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 13 December	Community and Wellbeing Committee	Church Street, N'Ards
Wednesday 20 December	Council Meeting	Town Hall, Bangor

Unclassified

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ITEM 12**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	17 November 2022
File Reference	[CX file number (if there is one)]
Legislation	[Relevant legislation (leave blank if none)]
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Nomination to Northern Ireland Museums Council
Attachments	Appendix 1 - NIMC Board Recruitment Booklet

Background

Northern Ireland Museums Council (NIMC) is an arm's length body that is sponsored by the Department for Communities and is responsible for developing the local museum sector.

Nominations to the board of NIMC occurs on a cyclical basis between the eligible authorities. They are now seeking a nominated representative of Ards and North Down Borough Council to join. The candidate information booklet can be found in Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council nominates a Member to the Northern Ireland Museums Council Board.

Unclassified

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ITEM 13**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Environment
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Regulatory Services
Date of Report	08 November 2022
File Reference	LR 100 / 90101
Legislation	The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Grant of Entertainment Licence
Attachments	None

An application has been received for the grant of entertainment licence as follows:

- 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.

Unclassified

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The above application has been publicly advertised and no objections have been received.

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

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council grants the application.

Unclassified

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ITEM 14**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Community and Wellbeing
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Parks & Cemeteries
Date of Report	11 November 2022
File Reference	PCA57
Legislation	N/A
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Cemetery Pricing
Attachments	Appendix Cemetery Pricing 2023-24

Ards and North Down Borough Council is 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 is operating at an annual deficit of approximately £600,000 excluding utilities, capital costs and general maintenance.

The following report outlines the applicable charges relating to the Cemeteries Service across the Borough. In line with the budget setting process, it is proposed to apply a 10.00% increase to the cemetery charges for 2023/24, rounded to the nearest £1 for each charge. This is above the 5% already submitted by the service for the estimates process, a 5% is also submitted for information. Members are reminded that the current rate of inflation is 11.1%.

Unclassified

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

In addition, Officers would suggest that members consider 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 sets 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 can see with an income uplift of 10% the cemetery department will 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 has been brought to Council for decision.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council approves a 10.00% 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.

Appendix Cemetery Pricing 2023-24

	2022/23	2023/24	
Grave Plots	Present Costs	10% increase	5% increase
Residents within council area	£281	£309.00	£296.00
Applicants residing outside council area	£2,102	£2,312.00	£2,208.00
Grave Plots – Cremated remains only			
Residents within council area	£141	£155.00	£149.00
Applicants residing outside council area	£1,051	£1,156.00	£1,104.00
Interments – each opening (Saturday, Public and Bank Holidays Burials – 30% increase)			
Resident	£212	£233.00	£223.00
Non-resident	£915	£1,006.00	£961.00
Public Ground	£73	£80.00	£77.00
Removal of cement covering	£64	£70.00	£68.00
Testing of graves for remaining depth	£112	£123.00	£118.00
Stillborn infants/Children under the age of 18 years of age	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee
Interment of body parts, resident	£73	£80.00	£77.00
Interment of body parts, non-resident	£145	£160.00	£153.00
Exhumation fee	£3,221	£3,543.00	£3,383.00
Cremated Remains			
Residents within a grave plot or memorial tree	£73	£80.00	£77.00
Non-residents within a grave plot or memorial tree	£145	£159.00	£153.00

Memorial Trees – Clandeboye, Redburn & Movilla			
Tree and granite plaque, resident	£244	£268.00	£257.00
Tree and granite plaque, non-resident	£489	£538.00	£514.00
Additional memorial plaque	£110	£121.00	£116.00
Memorials			
Approval fee, residents and non-residents	£73	£80.00	£77.00
Memorial plaque	£73	£80.00	£77.00
Additional inscription fee residents and non-residents	£17	£19.00	£18.00
Additional Fee for memorials with block foundations, residents and non-residents	£89	£98.00	£94.00
Miscellaneous			
Fee for duplicate grant of right of burial	£73	£80.00	£77.00
Registration fee for transfer/assignment resident	£73	£80.00	£77.00
Registration fee for transfer/assignment non-resident	£1,822	£2,000.00	£1,915.00
Search of Register of Burials or Rights of Burials	£46	£50.00	£49.00
Fee for late burial	£85	£90.00	£90.00
Burial cancellation fee – before grave opening	£30	£33.00	£32.00
Change of details fee	£30	£33.00	£32.00

Unclassified

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ITEM 15**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Director of Regeneration, Development and Planning
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Economic Development
Date of Report	03 November 2022
File Reference	RDP47
Legislation	
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject	Delegated Authority for Regeneration and Development Committee 5 January 2023 to approve LMP tenders
Attachments	

LMP Context

Members will recall 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 3-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 has seen a reduction from what was originally offered.

Therefore, the indicative offer of funding by DfC is split as follows:

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

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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 is 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 have been preparing the tenders relating to the projects agreed in the LMP action plan, so that they are ready to be issued as soon as the letter of offer is received. However it now leaves little time to proceed with the tenders and deliver the projects before the end of the financial year.

It is 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 is 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 is therefore requested that Council grants 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)

RECOMMENDATION

It is 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.

Unclassified

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ITEM 16**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	N/A
Date of Report	25 October 2022
File Reference	
Legislation	Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Continuation of Bangor Aurora Joint Management Committee
Attachments	None

Background

Places on working groups are filled through nomination at the Council's Annual Meeting and are thus held by individual Members rather than Parties. When a position becomes vacant, it reverts back to Council to nominate a Member to fill the place rather than Party Nominating Officers.

A vacancy has arisen, following the resignation of Councillor Gilmour from the Bangor Aurora Joint Management Committee. Since this vacancy has arisen, Officers have 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 functions as the link between clubs and the Council, with meetings of the Committee becoming infrequent. Sporting bodies have been functioning well within the centre and any previous issues have since been addressed. This is coupled with the decision to insource the operation of the former North Down BC facilities including Bangor Aurora.

Unclassified

275

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council disbands the Bangor Aurora Joint Management Committee.

Unclassified

276

ITEM 16.1**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	[Council or name of Committee report is to]
Date of Meeting	12 April 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	31 March 2022
File Reference	[CX file number (if there is one)]
Legislation	[Relevant legislation (leave blank if none)]
Section 75 Compliant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please add comment below:
Subject	Choice Housing Annual Report 2021/22 update
Attachments	

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.

Unclassified

277

There are currently four elements which are 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 have ring-fenced a significant amount of money for this programme, it is ultimately limited and is therefore targeted at the most vulnerable.

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

This assessment is designed to ensure that support goes to those tenants who are in severe financial difficulties and are working with the Financial Inclusion Team who can 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 have been assisting tenants to get best value from their energy consumption for many years.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council notes this report.

SEALING DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED: - (On the proposal of **,
seconded by **)

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) Transfers:
Clandeboye Cemetery 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
Movilla Cemetery Section 58 Grave 40 Price to
Price

Transfer/Assignments

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

ITEM 19**Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Report Classification	Unclassified
Council/Committee	Council
Date of Meeting	30 November 2022
Responsible Director	Chief Executive
Responsible Head of Service	
Date of Report	16 November 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 – NOVEMBER 2022

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
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.
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 January 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 January 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							
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	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	EQIA closed 30 August 2022. Report expected once outcome known. On draft CSC agenda - December 2022.
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	Councillors Walker & Egan	23 June 2021	Environment Committee – October 2021 (deferred from September Committee)	Agreed	TBC	

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	Conference of Ideas, and 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	Officers considering further report to future Committee - TBC
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	Councillor Douglas & Alderman Wilson	Council November 2021	Regeneration & Development December 2021	Agreed	Report update at Feb R&D Committee	Urban Team currently working up a scheme and then consultation with DfI Roads to take place

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	brings back a report to 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 meeting - 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 at Oct Council, letter to be issued - TBC
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 and further report to be brought back- TBC.

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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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 (to be ratified at June Council)	Report to Nov C&WC	To be ratified by 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 (to be ratified at June Council)	TBC	Officers considering report to be brought back to future Committee - TBC
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 Committee - TBC

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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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		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		Further report/policy 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			Officers considering report to be brought back to future Committee
21.06.2022	Engagement with relevant community stakeholders to ascertain community need	Councillors Kendall, McRandal	Council - June 2022	Community and Wellbeing Committee – September 2022 –			Officers considering report to be

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	and desires in respect of the Queen's Leisure Complex	and McClean		deferred to October 2022			brought back to future 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 signs make reference to</p>	Alderman Irvine & Keery	Council – July 2022	Environment Committee - September 2022	Amdt agreed.		Sept 2022 - Recommendation to Council that item is referred to Corporate Services Committee and Report to be brought to a future meeting - TBC

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	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 discussions with DfI Roads</p>	Alderman McIlveen & Councillor Cathcart	Council – July 2022	Community and Wellbeing Committee – September 2022 Deferred to October 2022		TBC	Officers met with DfI Roads and considering report to future committee - tbc

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	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			Site meeting arranged and further report to future committee - tbc
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 Majesty's Treasury to	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 request a special fund	Letters sent from CEx to SoS and Minister.	Response referred to C&WC to be heard at December 2022 meeting	

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	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.			<p>for Councils in relation to the Cost-of-Living crisis in order to-</p> <p>a. provide for the direct provision of localised responses; and</p> <p>b. assist local community and voluntary organisations</p> <p>Any such support would be additional to that provided by the Westminster Government and at Northern Ireland level.</p>			

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 Dfl - awaiting response
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	Referred to CWC	Meeting arranged to discuss with proposer & report to future C&W committee
3.08.2022	We ask this council to consider the urgent provision of sea rescue equipment to Cove Bay	Cllrs Chambers and Brooks	Council August 2022	Environment Committee – September 2022	Agreed	Report being brought to EC Nov - 2022	Ratified at Council - September 2022

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	beach, known locally as the third beach, in Groomspont. A review into other locations around the Borough, should also be considered.						
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, support families, and play a	Alderman Wilson and Councillor Douglas	Council August 2022	Corporate Committee – September 2022 – deferred to October 2022	Agreed		Agreed to refer to Environment Committee – further details tbc

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	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.						
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	To be ratified at November Council.
19.09.22	Establishment of an Animal Abuse Register for the Borough and write to the DAERA Minister to ask for the introduction of Lucy's Law and Reggie's Law for Northern Ireland.	Councillor T Smith and Councillor Cooper Amendment received from Councillor Woods	September 2022	Environment Committee October 2022	Agreed	Reported to October 2022 EC Committee	Further report to be brought back - tbc

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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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	To be ratified at October 2022 Council – future report to be brought back tbc
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. 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	Councillor McRandal and Alderman Wilson and Councillor Irwin	October 2022	Corporate Services Committee – November 2022			To be ratified.

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	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			Proposer requested to defer the NoM - TBC
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	Councillor MacArthur and Councillor Gilmour	October 2022	Corporate Services Committee – November 2022			To be ratified

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	Down Borough Council area, and tasks them to allow for this in the forthcoming rate setting process.						
17.10.22	<p>This 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;</p> <p>Highlights which of these measures being taken by 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</p>	Alderman McIlveen and Alderman Armstrong-Cotter	October 2022	N/A	Heard and Agreed at Council October 2022		

TO BE POPULATED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES							
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	<p>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>						
18.10.22	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 25th anniversary.	Councillor Moore and Alderman McDowell	October 2022	Community & Wellbeing Committee – November 2022		To be heard and agreed at meeting - December 2022	



Press Release - Publication of the Advance Care Planning policy document for adults in NI

'Have the conversation' – Swann

Health Minister Robin Swann has encouraged adults in Northern Ireland to have a conversations about what matters to them for their future.

The Health Minister was speaking following the publication of '*For Now and For the Future – An Advance Care Planning Policy for Adults in Northern Ireland.*'

Advance Care Planning is an umbrella term covering personal, legal, clinical, and financial planning. It enables a person to think about what matters to them now and for the future, and to make choices that reflect this.

Welcoming the publication, Minister Swann said **"Advance Care Planning is about people having the opportunity to have conversations with those important to them, and those who provide care, support or treatment.**

"Clarifying your wishes, feelings, beliefs and values, can inform future care, providing peace of mind and reducing the potential for confusion or conflict. However, it can also support an enhanced quality of life now as people at any stage of life have the opportunity to talk about what matters to them. I would encourage everyone not only to read the policy document, but to act upon it.

"The publication of the Advance Care Planning policy and supporting resources is the first step on a road that I hope will lead to more people having the opportunity to reflect on and talk about what matters to them, what they would prioritise in the future should they become unable to make decisions for themselves, and to then make timely, realistic and practical plans for the future."

The policy was launched by the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Sir Michael McBride, at an event held at Belfast Exposed, one of 15 organisations that received Advance Care Planning Seed Grant funding to support creative projects in the community which encourage people to start conversations about their future wishes now.

Sir Michael said: **"Throughout the development of this policy and wide-ranging engagement process, it has been clear that people recognise the importance and benefits of Advance Care Planning. The ambition of the policy is that Advance Care Planning becomes normalised, that all adults have regular**

opportunities to express their wishes, feelings, beliefs and values and that these are reflected in the care, support or treatment they receive. This policy document will not only help people and those important to them, but also those providing care, support or treatment.”

The policy has been developed through extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. This included interested members of the public, those who work in Health and Social Care and statutory organisations, as well as input from the community and voluntary sector and academia.

The Department of Health Advance Care Planning Lead, Corrina Grimes said: **“People have been at the heart of the development of the Advance Care Planning policy. A co-production approach has been central to this with extensive conversations, discussions and input from a significant number of sectors, organisations and people, from earliest design through to public consultation.**

“I want to acknowledge and thank all those who have been involved in this engagement – the policy is the richer for the valuable insights of the many organisations and individuals who have contributed to it.

“During these conversations we often heard about positive lived experiences when people had planned ahead, and of the reassurance and comfort this provided to the person and those important to them, knowing that their care, treatment and other wishes were known. Sadly, there were also instances where people had not planned ahead or had these conversations, which often resulted in distress in times of already immense emotions.”

To help support implementation of the policy, an e-learning programme has also been created to provide information on Advance Care Planning for members of the public, the voluntary and community sector, and all health and social care staff. The e-learning module can be accessed via the Department of Health website at the Advance Care Planning page [What is Advance Care Planning? | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/advance-care-planning)

Notes for Editors

1. More information is available on the Department's website: [What is Advance Care Planning? | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/advance-care-planning)

Children's Social Care Services Northern Ireland **An Independent Review**

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

Our October newsletter opens with a statement from Professor Ray Jones, the Lead Reviewer for the Independent Review of Northern Ireland's Children's Social Care Service in Northern Ireland, at this halfway stage of sixteen-month period of the Review.

Half Way Reflections from Ray Jones



It is now already half-way through the sixteen months (February 2022 - June 2023) Independent Review of Northern Ireland's Children's Social Care Service and it may be timely to do a little reflecting and stock taking.

First, a BIG thank you to everyone involved in and with children's social care services in different ways for the time, experiences, advice, and wisdom you have shared with me – children and young people, parents and family carers, foster carers, adopters, practitioners, managers and leaders across statutory children's services and within the community and voluntary sector right across the region, trade unions (NIPSA and Unison) and the British Association of Social Workers, social work students and educators and researchers, policy makers and other colleagues in the Department of Health (DoH) , and those in schools, the judiciary, and other agencies who work with and alongside children's social care services. I am truly grateful.

And thank you to the Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) for facilitating my engagement with children and young people, to Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) for helping with my meetings with parents and carers and with community and voluntary sector (C&VS) organisations, to the Fostering Network for making links for me with foster carers

and independent fostering agencies, and to the Review's advisory panel and secretariat for helping shape the Review and for keeping the Review on track and on the road.

So what has it been like? Well, not always straightforward!

The Review was launched during what were still the limitations of Covid lockdowns with meetings having to be postponed or re-routed on-line as infections were still quite rampant (and as I sit here typing today with Covid for the second time this is clearly not behind us!). And I have had the joy of many hours at Bristol and Belfast International airports with fingers crossed, not always successfully, that EasyJet will fly me.

CHANGES SINCE THE REVIEW STARTED

But the most significant unexpected events during the eight months so far of the Review have been the political and leadership changes impacting on children's social care.

Just after the Review started the Northern Ireland Assembly was dissolved and there has been no functioning Executive since, although I have much appreciated the continuing commitment and interest of the Minister of Health.

There has been a change of Permanent Secretary in the Department of Health (and I am grateful that the new Permanent Secretary has demonstrated considerable commitment to the Review), and recently there has been the change of Deputy Permanent Secretary and Chief Social Worker.

There has also been the organisational change with the migration of what was the Health and Social Care Board into the Department of Health (DoH) with the creation of the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SSPG), which also has had significant internal changes over recent months.

And within the five Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs) since February one Director of Children's Services (DCS) was and is an interim appointment and three have resigned. The majority of DCSs are now interim appointments.

Amid all these changes it has been especially important and beneficial in anchoring the Review, without any compromise or challenge at all to my independence as the Lead Reviewer, to have had the engagement with the Director of Family and Children's Policy in the DOH who is widely respected for her experience and expertise.

THE REVIEW'S PLANNED PHASES

The Review is now into phase three of its programme. Phase one (February-April) included meeting the regional infrastructure organisations for children's social care, getting out and about across the region into each Trust and meeting leaders, managers and practitioners (I have probably met more than 600 social workers), spending evenings in children's homes, and visiting regional children's residential facilities.

Phase two (May-July) included meeting lots of children and young people and parents and other family members, foster carers, meeting with C&Vs and visiting their services, and engaging with schools, the police, public health workers, judges, and others working with and alongside children's social care.

Phase three (August and continuing) includes drilling down into practice, and through a series of workshops – each attended by about 90 people - checking I am spotting the most significant issues and whether my direction of thinking is sensible. Workshops have or are being held on disabled children and their families; looked after children; family support; the social care workforce; and the organisation and delivery of children's social care.

Phases four and five in the new year will include beginning to shape the Review report and filling in the gaps in my understanding and thinking and then preparing the final report by June 2023.

To assist the Review briefing papers are being prepared on the changes in statutory children's social care in Northern Ireland since 2000; an overview of family support services; comparative trends and patterns in children's social services from across each of the UK administrations and the Republic of Ireland; comparative analysis of children's social care budgets and expenditure; and children's social care workforce comparisons.

THE SERIOUS CRISIS IN CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

But I have been heard to say I see little point in just preparing another review report (although of course I will!). There are many other reviews currently underway but there is a history of many past reports not delivering what they intended and lying on the shelf waiting to be read by the next reviewer.

In this context it particularly concerns me that there is a continuing political vacuum with urgent issues which need to be addressed and needing the decisions of a functioning Executive, which are drifting and without actions, especially regarding increasing poverty, the government funding of public (and therefore also C&VS) services, and the impact of the ending of European Community grants for C&VSs.

A major concern should be that there is a serious crisis in children's social care services. This is not just my view. It is what I am told in meetings and in individual conversations with young people and families. It is what I am told by practitioners and managers. It is what I am told by those working with and alongside the services

It is a significant serious crisis which is endemic and it is systemic. It is endemic in that it is long standing. It is systemic in that it is right across the region and every HSCT. It is not about the failings of individuals. It is structural. But it is fixable.

It is characterised by thousands of children and families who have crossed a threshold of being recognised as needing the involvement of children's social services but who have not been allocated to anyone to work with and to assist them from within the HSCTs' children's social care services.

This should be no surprise when there are workforce vacancies of 30-40% across children's social care teams. Even some of those children and families who may have an allocated worker may see little activity because of the workload pressures or they may see no continuity of worker because of the churn within the workforce.

Within the HSCTs there are understandable and inevitable major concerns about the pressures and waiting times within hospital and health services. It should not be a surprise that despite considerable board and top leadership commitment children's social care may

not be the biggest of the issues taking time and attention and needing to be tackled. Directors of Children's Services are then distracted from and squeezed in their focus and grip on children's social care amid bigger corporate agendas and service responsibilities.

There also sometimes seems to be a tension between the DoH wanting to achieve consistency of services and standards across the region and the HSCTs and DCSs wanting to take action within their areas without needing to reference or seek permission from the Department of Health.

SO WHAT TO DO?

Action is already being taken to increase the skills mix within frontline children's social care teams both to support social workers and, importantly, to provide more help for children and families. And DCSs have been given the necessary space to take actions without having to seek the approval of the DoH in, for example, setting aside some of the procedural recording and reporting requirements to free up more time for direct work with children and families and to reduce the backlog of work.

The Minister of Health recently announced an embargo from June next year on the employment of agency social workers, with opportunities before then for agency workers to gain permanent posts, and this should help reduce the changes and churn in social workers experienced by families.

ONE CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

But there is a bigger issue. It is now my clear view – and which having checked with many others I am not alone – that the endemic and systemic serious crisis in children's social care in Northern Ireland requires structural change. Rather than children's social care being a minor and may be marginal part of what are very busy and pressured Health and Social Care Trusts, there should be one children's social care body for Northern Ireland (one DOH Arms Length Body - ALB- within Northern Ireland's arrangements), albeit with local delivery of services through geographical divisions based on the HSCTs areas.

I have shared and explained this view and recommendation with the Minister of Health and Permanent Secretary but without an operational Executive it is not a decision which can be taken at this time. What has been initiated is an option appraisal, which includes the option of a new ALB, within the Department of Health to inform hopefully a decision to be taken in the New Year (and before the completion of this Review).

A region-wide children's social care ALB also offers the scope to push forward with increased focus and energy with partners on developing more multi-professional children and families frontline services and teams rather than professional silo working.

A region-wide children's social care ALB would also help progress to be made regarding regional children's services, such as implementing the outstanding review recommendations regarding Northern Ireland's Secure Care Centre (Lakewood) and Juvenile Justice Centre (Woodlands). I have met with the Ministers of Health and Justice and shared thoughts on how to move forward more quickly on implementing the recommendations of the Regional Facilities Review, including the recommendation to establish a single Secure Care and Justice Centre in place of the current separate arrangements.

MORE TO DO

There are many other concerns which will be addressed through the Independent Review of Children's Social Services – how to get more practical help to families; how to value more and to utilise the expertise based on experience of young people and parents for the benefit of each other; how to give more security and certainty to the provision and funding of CVS services; how to stabilise the care of children; how to not only educate and train and recruit but also how to retain more social workers in children's services, but also within a wider skills mix; how to re-balance an overwhelming focus on the safety of children and child protection to a children's and families service; how to make it less likely that young people who are disabled or care experienced will feel and be stranded from services as they move into adulthood ... and other themes and issues.

I am aware this Review will have (rightly) raised expectations. I am also aware that there are no magic and quick solutions to every issue which needs to be addressed. But I do think there are some quicker fixes for some issues and that a solid and secure region-wide organisational platform and foundation can and should be put in place to allow progress on sorting the issues not amenable to quick fixes. This may need political will and action and I hope this is in place and decisions have been taken before this Review's final report is published next June.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Jones", with a horizontal line underneath the name.

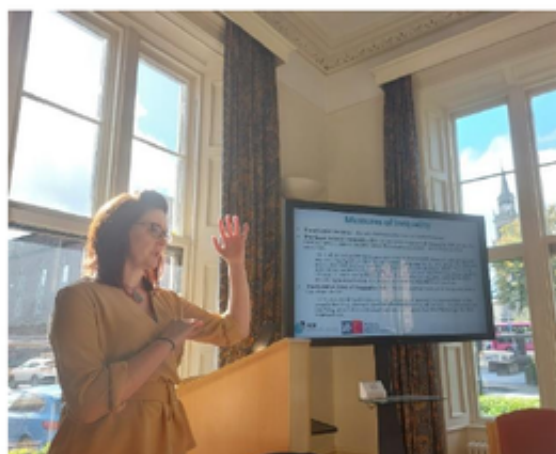
ENGAGEMENTS

Professor Jones, Lead Reviewer, continued his programme of meetings and visits over the month of October. The programme has included follow up meetings with Trust Chief Executives and Director's of Children's Services to discuss the progress of the Review to date. Professor Jones visited Hydebank Prison to meet with male prisoners to hear about their experiences of children's social care. He also visited Lakewood Secure Care and Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre to meet with young people and staff to observe services on the ground and to hear about their experiences. Meetings took place with the Minister of Health, Robin Swann and the Minister of Justice, Naomi Long along with Department of Health Permanent Secretary, Peter May to discuss his Interim Review Paper.



Health Minister Robin Swann met with Professor Ray Jones, lead reviewer and Justice Minister Naomi Long. Also pictured are members of the Review Secretariat Hugh O'Reilly, Shannon Keegan and Michael McArdle.

Professor Jones also met with the Deputy Secretary of Social Services Policy Group, Peter Toogood and Strategy Director for Social Work and Social Care Workforce, Jackie McIlroy. Discussions have also taken place with the chair of the Independent Review of Education, Keir Bloomer and the Advisory Panel to hear about the similarities in the two Reviews. Professor Jones met with the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice, Jacqui Durkin, engaged with representatives from NI Public Service Alliance (NISPA) and with the Commissioner of Northern Ireland Commissioners for Children and Young people, Koulla Yiasouma. Meetings were held with Queen's University Belfast, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work academics to hear about their ongoing research on how social deprivation impacts children's social care.



Professor Jones also met with a range of community and voluntary children's social care stakeholders, facilitated by Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI). In addition, he has had a series of online meetings with Adoption NI and the Independent Fostering Providers Forum. Professor Jones also visited TUSLA at their headquarters in Dublin to hear how children's social care services are delivered in the Republic of Ireland.

WORKSHOP 2 – CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Our second workshop took place in Hazelwood Integrated College on 13 October 2022 with a key focus on children and young people with care experience and their families. 90 people participated, including young people, adoptive parents and foster carers, practitioners, policymakers, service managers, representatives from the community and voluntary sector as well as representatives from statutory agencies. The workshop provided a platform for delegates to share their thoughts, views and experiences on the current issues facing children and young people with care experience and most importantly how services could be improved. Engaging discussions took place from both an individual and group perspective through roundtable discussions.



Round table discussions underway with adoptive parents/carers and foster carers at the workshop for care experienced children and young people.

Thank you to the speakers for your thought-provoking presentations that highlighted the key issues impacting care experienced children and young people. Your input is highly valued and will help Professor Jones shape the Review to improve Children's Social Care Services.



Rhianna Brown spoke about the key issues within Children's Social Care from a care experienced young person's perspective.



Hugh Marcus spoke about his experiences from a foster carer perspective.



Dave Linton presenting the key issues from the perspective of an adoptive parent.



Eimear Rafferty, onsite school social worker highlighted the perspectives of care experienced young people.

WORD OF THANKS TO HAZELWOOD INTEGRATED COLLEGE

Many thanks to Hazelwood Integrated College for hosting the second workshop for the Independent Review for your engagement and contributions on the day; it is much appreciated. A special word of thanks to Patricia and to the catering staff for all their care and commitment in making the event run seamlessly.

We were so pleased and proud to have “attended the best school in the UK” and also to have Head Girl, Adel co-chair the workshop. Thank you to the School Social Worker Eimear for her well-delivered presentation. The messages you gave were very powerful and helped to inform the workshop and the Review.



UPCOMING WORKSHOP

Our third Review Workshop will be held on 15th November 2022 in the Junction, Dungannon. This workshop will focus on Family Support Services. Invitations for this workshop will be issued shortly. We look forward to hearing more engaging discussions to help inform the Independent Review.

CONTACTING THE REVIEW

If you wish to get in touch with the Review, you can contact the Review Secretariat team through the Review's website, accessed [here](#). The website provides information about the Review, details on how to contact us, key documents and latest news. The Review website will serve as a platform to connect with you and to seek your views.

The Review has its own twitter account [@cscsreviewNI](#) where you can follow us and view our twitter feed for more updates on the work of the Review.

From: DE School Attendance <attendance@education-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 28 October 2022 14:27

To: DE School Attendance <attendance@education-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Outcome of consultation on the Department of Education Consultation on Period Products (Free Provision) Regulations

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon

The Department for Education has published the outcome of its Consultation on Period Products (Free Provision) Regulations which you can access [here](#). Can we also convey our thanks to everyone who responded.

Regards

Victoria

Victoria Ashe
Tackling Educational Disadvantage Team
Department of Education
Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
BANGOR
BT19 7PR

From: DAERA EPR Team <EPRTeam@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 31 October 2022 14:05

Subject: Introduction of Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) Systems and Operator Approval

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for replying to the consultation on the Introduction of Reforms to the Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) and Packaging Waste Export Recycling Note (PERN) Systems and Operator Approval.

A summary of 2022 Consultation responses and Government response can be found at the below link.

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/packaging-waste-introduction-reforms-packaging-waste-recycling-note-prn-and-packaging-waste-export>

Regards,

EPR Team



ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

ISSUE 19: NOVEMBER 2022

IN THIS EDITION:

- **Energy One Stop Shop Consultation Launched**
- **Minister Launches Energy Information Resources to Help Consumers this Winter**



ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

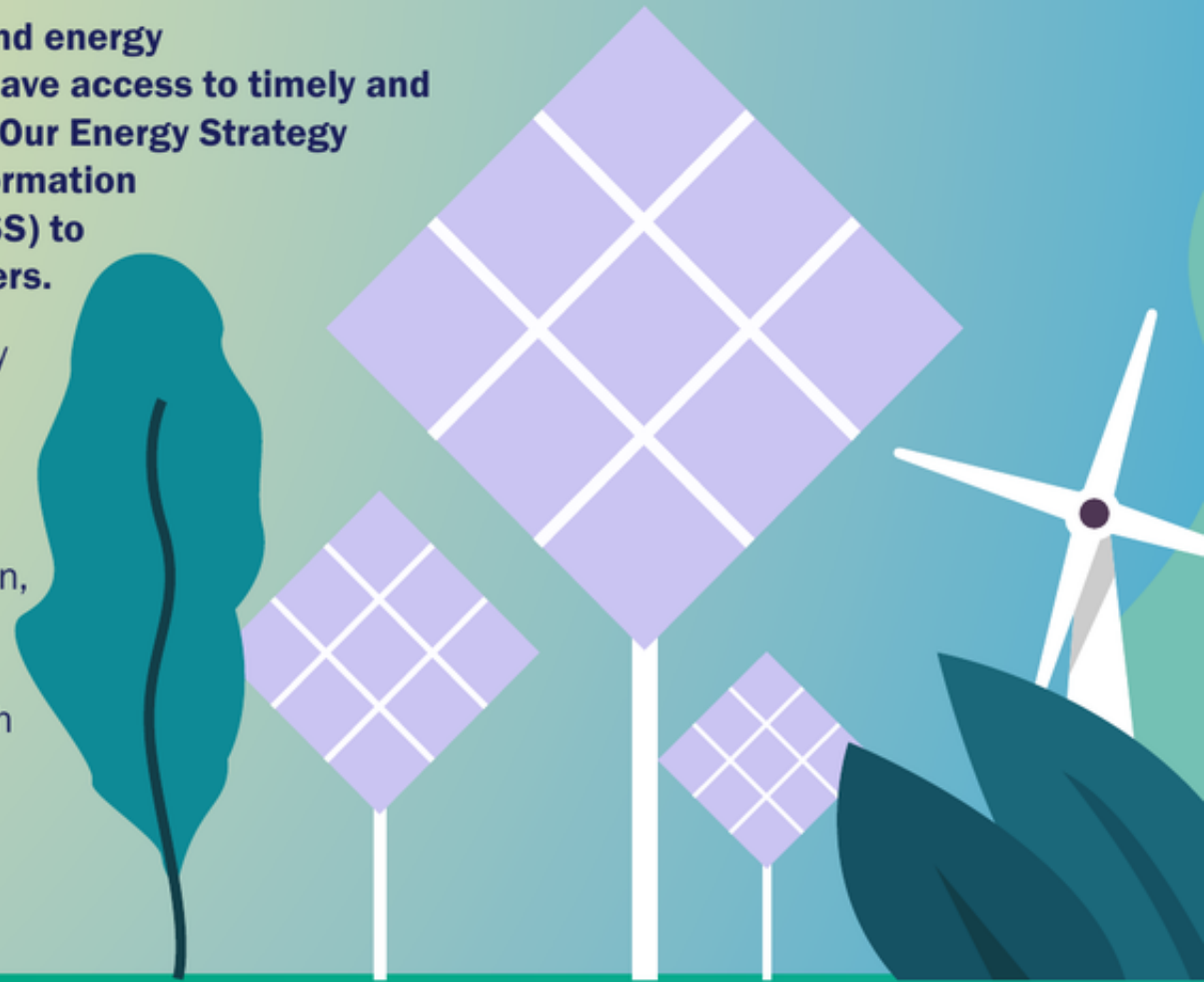
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WELCOME TO THE ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

As we travel along the Path to Net Zero Energy – and energy decarbonisation – it is important that consumers have access to timely and reliable information to help make energy choices. Our Energy Strategy recognises the importance of providing energy information and commits us to developing a One Stop Shop (OSS) to deliver trusted information and support to consumers.

As we move towards the winter period and our energy use naturally increases, there is a pressing need for immediate information and advice on how to reduce our energy use.

This edition highlights the One Stop Shop consultation, which launched on 27th October and the energy animations, which were recently launched as part of our winter energy information campaign, along with the Consumer Council and the Utility Regulator.



ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

ENERGY ONE STOP SHOP CONSULTATION LAUNCHED

The Department for the Economy (DfE) has launched a consultation for an Energy One Stop Shop.

The one stop shop aims to be a single point of contact where consumers, communities and businesses can receive information, advice and support about energy issues.

The need for a One Stop Shop

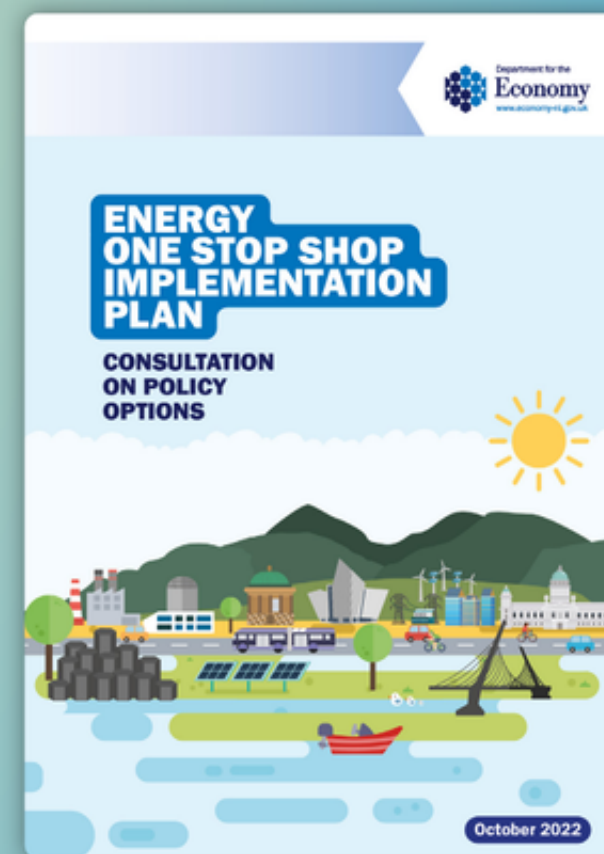
Many domestic and business energy consumers would like to know more about energy efficiency, renewable energy and low or zero carbon technologies, but are unsure of where to begin. A one stop shop providing information, advice and support can help people and businesses along the net zero journey by:

- Providing a trusted source of appropriate, tailored information and support;
- Simplifying the process for consumers to get access to new technology; and

- Adopting a holistic approach to engagement and service delivery through forging links with building owners, District Councils and installers.

With energy prices at an all-time high, many people are keen to get information on energy efficiency and new energy technology as soon as possible.

To address this, the DfE consultation proposes launching a pilot One Stop Shop service in 2023, subject to the consultation feedback and indeed funding, which will initially offer core services including information and advice and will phase in additional services as specific energy decarbonisation policies and support schemes are developed.



ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

ENERGY ONE STOP SHOP CONSULTATION LAUNCHED *(continued)*

The service will eventually be available to all domestic consumers and non-domestic consumers, including SME businesses and community energy groups. It will have special regard to the needs of vulnerable consumers.

This approach is being developed with significant collaboration and engagement across government, industry and energy consumers.

To find out more...

The consultation launched on **27th October 2022** and closes on **Friday 20th January 2023**.

It is available to view on the [Departmental website](#).

It is also available to view the online public consultation portal via [Citizen Space](#).



ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

MINISTER LAUNCHES ENERGY INFORMATION RESOURCES TO HELP CONSUMERS THIS WINTER

Economy Minister Gordon Lyons has launched a series of consumer information videos to provide energy information and advice for households this winter.

The animations outline practical actions householders can take to help alleviate the impact of energy price rises. They are part of an energy information campaign involving the Department for the Economy, the Consumer Council (CCNI) and the Utility Regulator.



Minister launches energy information resources to help consumers this winter.

ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

MINISTER LAUNCHES ENERGY INFORMATION RESOURCES TO HELP CONSUMERS THIS WINTER *(continued)*

Speaking at the launch of the animations at the Consumer Council Offices, Minister Lyons said:

“Households are currently facing unprecedented energy costs, coupled with rising food and fuel bills as inflation hits record levels. Rising energy costs will impact household budgets this winter when our energy use naturally increases.

“Households will receive the £400 energy payment from the UK Government to help with price rises but there are also measures people can take to help control their energy use. This series of consumer information videos are aimed at providing helpful advice during this difficult time.”

The four consumer information videos cover the following subjects:

1. Why are energy prices rising?
2. How can households prepare for winter?
3. How is Northern Ireland different to Great Britain?
4. How will the Path to Net Zero Energy Strategy help?

Consumer Council Chief Executive, Noyona Chundur highlighted the work the organisation is doing to empower and protect consumers:

“The videos released today are an important reminder that there are small things we can do at home to make the money we spend on energy go further. In addition, the Consumer Council continues to work hard to help consumers. Through our front-line services, we provide support, advice, and complaint handling services. Through our outreach work, we meet and work with consumers across Northern Ireland ensuring they have the information they need to make informed decisions about their energy use.

“We are pleased that our online price comparison tools which help consumers compare electricity and gas prices, see average oil, petrol and diesel prices, have been used over 361,000 times over the past two years. We will continue to work with energy companies to encourage continuous improvement in their customer service standards and support for consumers in vulnerable situations.”

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Please choose your energy type



Start

ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

MINISTER LAUNCHES ENERGY INFORMATION RESOURCES TO HELP CONSUMERS THIS WINTER *(continued)*

As well as four animations, the energy information campaign will include a series of Energy Consumer Toolkits providing advice and guidance on electricity, natural gas and heating oil, as well as advice on energy efficiency and making your home warmer this winter.

Utility Regulator Chief Executive, John French said:

“Due to the unprecedented rises in international wholesale energy costs, consumers in Northern Ireland need all the help they can get this winter. The consumer information videos provide consumers with practical help on how they can reduce their energy bill.

“We are also working with energy suppliers to ensure they are doing all they can to support their customers this winter. For those consumers who are worried about their energy cost; we would always encourage them to contact their energy supplier. All energy suppliers must take account of an individual’s circumstances and discuss the support options available to them.”

The consumer information videos can be found at: [Energy information campaign | Consumer Council](#) alongside practical resources to help households save on their energy bills this winter.

**Compare electricity and gas prices at
www.consumer council.org.uk**



Dear Stakeholder,

In autumn of 2019, the Department of Finance undertook a full and comprehensive review of business rates in Northern Ireland. An eight-week public consultation process began on 18 September 2019 and continued to 11 November 2019.

The resultant report was scheduled for publication in Spring 2020, as noted in the Terms of Reference, but was paused due to the outbreak of the pandemic, and the decision from the Executive to respond with Covid-19 support delivered through the rating system. It was apparent to the Department and the Minister that the pandemic fundamentally changed the context in which the review had originally been undertaken.

Given the amount of work that stakeholders put into the process, as well as the residual value the process has in informing Departmental policy thinking in the medium to long term, the Department has now published the factual report originally prepared back in 2020.

All consultation documentation including the Terms of Reference and the recently published report are on the Department's website.

[Business Rates Public Consultation | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Kind regards,

Sharon Magee

Director of Rating Policy Division