



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE CHAMBER, MOSSLEY MILL  
ON 9 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 6.57 PM**

- In the Chair** : Councillor S Wilson
- Committee Members  
(In person)** : Alderman - J McGrath  
Councillors - M Brady, P Dunlop, J Gilmour, H Magill,  
A O'Lone and M Stewart
- Committee Members  
(Remote)** : Alderman S Ross  
Councillors - T McGrann and V McWilliam
- Non-Committee  
Members** : Alderman L Clarke  
Councillors - M Cooper, S Ward and B Webb
- In Attendance  
(In Person/Remote)** : Area Manager, Community Advice, Antrim and  
Newtownabbey - L Adamson
- Officers Present** : Director of Community and Culture - U Fay  
Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events - S Goldrick  
Head of Marketing, Communications and PR -  
J McIntyre  
ICT Project Officer - C Bell  
Member Services Officer - S Fisher
- Officers Present  
(Remotely)** : Director of Finance and Governance - S Cole

**CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

The Chairperson welcomed Members to the February meeting of the Community Development Committee and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

## 1 APOLOGIES

Councillors - S Cosgrove, R Lynch and M Ní Chonghaile

## 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 4.11- Councillor P Dunlop

Item 4.13 - Councillors P Dunlop, H Magill and M Stewart

## 3 PRESENTATION

### 3.1 CP/GEN/045 COMMUNITY ADVICE ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to provide Members with an update on the work carried out across the Borough by Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey.**

#### 2. Introduction/Background

The Chair welcomed Lorraine Adamson to the meeting who gave a presentation on their client engagement, the current trends and experiences of those clients and the impact of wraparound advice provision. She then answered questions from Members and the Chair then thanked her for her presentation following which she left the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop

Seconded by Councillor Brady and agreed that

**the presentation be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

*Alderman McGrath left the Chamber at Item 4.1.*

## 4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 4.1 CP/PCSP/143 CONSULTATION ON SPEED LIMIT REVIEW 2026

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' instructions in relation to the Department for Infrastructure's (DfI) public consultation on the Speed Limit Review.**

#### 2. Background

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) was undertaking a consultation to seek views on speed limits drawing on research and practice from across UK, Europe and the Republic of Ireland.

The review aimed to identify opportunities to improve road safety outcomes and support delivery of the Road Safety Strategy to 2030.

### 3. Key Issues

Members were advised that correspondence, a copy of which was circulated, had been received from DfI advising of a consultation on speed limits and sought views on proposals to improve road safety, supporting delivery of the Road Safety Strategy to 2030.

The DfI wished to hear from a wide range of interested persons and organisations. The consultation documents and associated survey were available online via the Department's website.

The consultation period opened on 14 January 2026 and would close on 22 April 2026. Responses received outside of that timeframe would not be considered by the Department.

Members were advised that they may wish to respond on a corporate, individual or party-political basis. Members were also advised that the Policing Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) was making a response to the consultation.

### 4. Summary

Following an evidence-based review aimed at improving road safety and supporting the Road Safety Strategy to 2030 the DfI had launched a public consultation on Speed Limits. Input was welcomed from all interested parties. The consultation closed on 22 April 2026. Full details and documentation could be accessed via the Department's website.

Members were advised that they may wish to respond on a corporate, individual or party-political basis.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour  
Seconded by Councillor Stewart and agreed that

**Members respond on an individual or party-political basis.**

*ACTION BY: Amy Lynch, Community Programmes Manager*

## 4.2 CP/CP/113 BARNARDO'S - THE THRIVE PROJECT

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to provide Members with the THRiVE 2025/2026 Q3 Performance Report.**

## 2. Introduction

The THRiVE Project was a collaboration of local parents, schools, community and voluntary organisations and statutory agencies working together to help children and young people in Macedon and Threemilewater DEAs to achieve their full potential and have the best start in life.

## 3. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded it was agreed at the March 2025 Community Development Committee, to provide £25,000 financial assistance for the 2025/26 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Education Authority on behalf of the THRiVE Project with a quarterly performance report brought to future meetings of the Committee.

Members were also reminded that the provision of an additional £3,000 financial assistance for the 2025/26 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Education Authority on behalf of the THRiVE Project and the 2025/26 Quarter 1 Performance Report, based upon performance measures in the Service Level Agreement, were approved at the September 2025 Community Development Committee.

## 4. Financial Position

A budget of £28,000 was included in the 2025/26 Community Development budgets.

## 5. Governance

It was approved at the June 2025 Community Development Committee that the Head of Community Development replace the Elected Members nominated to serve on the THRiVE Project Board from both the Macedon DEA and the Threemilewater DEAs with immediate effect.

Officers continued to work with the THRiVE Project and Community Planning partners to manage the performance of the Project. Quarterly performance reports would continue to be reported to the Community Development Committee.

Members were reminded that a presentation on the THRiVE Project was made to the October 2024 Community Development Committee.

## 6. Summary

The Quarter 3 Report was circulated for Members' information and was based upon performance measures in the Service Level Agreement. Officers had been advised that Quarter 3 targets had been met.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Councillor Brady and agreed that

**the THRiVE Project Quarter 3 2025-26 performance report be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Will McDowell, DEA Engagement Coordinator*

#### **4.3 CP/PP/006 PEACEPLUS PARTNERSHIP MINUTES**

##### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to provide Members with the minutes from the PEACEPLUS Partnership Annual General Meeting and Full Partnership Meeting held on 20 January 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

##### **2. Introduction/Background**

Members were reminded that the PEACEPLUS Partnership operated as a Working Group of Council.

As such, the minutes of the following PEACEPLUS Partnership meetings,

- Annual General Meeting minutes 20 January 2026
- Full Partnership Meeting minutes 20 January 2026

were circulated for Members' consideration.

##### **3. Previous Decision of Council**

Members were reminded that the minutes of the PEACEPLUS Full Partnership Meeting on 14 October 2025 were approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting at the November 2025 Council meeting.

Members were reminded that the draft PEACEPLUS Co-designed Local Community Action Plan, and the outcome of the Section 75 Equality Screening and Rural Proofing carried out for the Plan were approved at the March 2024 Community Development Committee.

##### **4. Governance**

The PEACEPLUS Partnership oversaw the design and implementation of a co-designed process used to inform the development of an over-arching PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan.

Members were reminded that it was agreed at the February 2022 Community Planning Committee that the Membership of the PEACEPLUS Partnership was as follows:

- 12 Elected Members nominated by D'Hondt and representative of each DEA;
- 4 Statutory Partners from Education Authority, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Police Service of Northern Ireland and Northern Health and Social Care Trust to be nominated by the Statutory Partners;

- 7 Social Partners with one from each DEA appointed by public advertisement and selection process.

The PEACEPLUS Partnership, was governed by a constitution and a Partnership Agreement.

## 5. Summary

The PEACEPLUS Partnership operated as a Working Group of Council. The draft minutes from the AGM and Full Partnership meeting held on 20 January 2026 were provided for Members' approval.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop  
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and agreed that

**the minutes of the PEACEPLUS Annual General Meeting and Full Partnership Meeting held on 20 January 2026, as detailed, be approved as true and accurate reflections of the meetings.**

*ACTION BY: June Foster, PEACE Programme, Executive Officer*

## 4.4 **COMD/CD/009 REVIEW OF CHRISTMAS SWITCH ON EVENTS 2025**

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to update Members in relation to the establishment of the Christmas Switch On Events – Task and Finish Working Group and to provide the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

### 2. Background

Since November 2018, the Community Development Section of the Council had been delivering Christmas Lights Switch On Events in each District Electoral Area across the Borough.

The programme at each event encompassed a range of family entertainment to include: Christmas Fun Rides, Meet Santa, Street Entertainment, Festive Food Stalls, Arts and Crafts and a short programme of Christmas Readings, Carols and Music which was followed by the Mayor accompanied by the Schools Competition Winner and Santa switching on the Christmas Tree Lights.

Local School Choirs, Traditional Music Groups, Dance Academies and other local artists participated in the programme the theme for which changed on an annual basis.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded it was agreed at the September 2025 Council meeting that the delivery of 7 Christmas Light Switch On Events be maintained for 2025 with a review to be undertaken by a working group

early in 2026 to reassess the approach for the future. It was also agreed that the live streaming of each event be discontinued.

Members were also reminded that it was subsequently agreed at the October 2025 Community Development Committee that an Elected Member Working Group would be established with one representative per political party.

#### 4. 2025 Switch Ons

The programme for 2025 followed a keeping children safe online theme of "Santa Goes Digital."

All 7 events were delivered over the period Thursday 20 November – Saturday 29 November 2025 as detailed in the table below

<b>DEA</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>
<b>Airport</b> Crumlin Leisure Centre	Thursday 20 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
<b>Dunsilly</b> Randalstown - John Street Car Park	Friday 21 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
<b>Antrim</b> Railway Street Car Park	Saturday 22 November 2025, 4.30pm - 6.00pm
<b>Threemilewater</b> Jordanstown Road/Devenish Drive	Wednesday 26 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
<b>Glengormley Urban</b> Lilian Bland Park	Thursday 27 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
<b>Macedon</b> V36, Valley Leisure Centre	Friday 28 November 2025, 6.00pm - 7.30pm
<b>Ballyclare</b> The Square Car Park	Saturday 29 November 2025, 4.30pm - 6.00pm

All events were advertised and promoted through an electronic and direct marketing campaign to encourage residents' participation.

Detailed analysis of the costs and attendances at the events was circulated for Members' information.

#### 5. Elected Member Working Group

It was proposed to establish a cross party Elected Member Working Group to commence meeting in January 2026 to reassess the approach to these events for 2026 and beyond. Group Leaders were asked to nominate one member per political party with the following Members nominated:

DUP – Councillor Matthew Brady  
 Sinn Fein – Councillor Anne Marie Logue  
 Alliance – Councillor Billy Webb  
 UUP – Councillor Stewart Wilson

Given requests from other Members, and the local interest, the meeting invitation was extended to all Elected Members given the wide range of opinions on this programme.

The first meeting of the Christmas Switch On Events – Task and Finish Working Group was held on Wednesday 21 January 2026 and the minutes of this meeting were circulated for Members' information.

#### 6. Financial Implication

Members were advised that provision to deliver the 2026 Christmas Festivity Programme on the same basis as 2025, had been included in the 2026/27 Community Development budgets.

#### 7. Summary

Seven Christmas Lights Switch On events, one in each DEA across the Borough, took place from Thursday 20 to Saturday 29 November 2025. The programme theme "Santa Goes Digital" supported keeping children safe online.

A Christmas Switch-On Events – Task and Finish working Group was established in early 2026 to reassess the approach for future programmes and the minutes of the meeting were circulated as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop  
Seconded by Councillor Brady and agreed that

**that the minutes of the Christmas Switch On Events – Task and Finish Working Group meeting of 21 January 2026 be approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

*ACTION BY: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community and Culture*

### **4.5 CP/CD/004 PARKHALL COMMUNITY CENTRE – STEEPLE DEFENDERS FLUTE BAND ALCOHOL REQUEST**

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for a Flute Band to apply for an alcohol licence to sell and consume alcohol in Parkhall Community Centre at a fundraising event on Saturday 11 April 2026.**

#### 2. Introduction/Background

Members were advised that Steeple Defenders Flute Band had made a request to hire Parkhall Community Centre on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2026 1pm-8pm. This would be for their annual fundraising and celebration event.

The band had requested permission to apply for a licence to sell alcohol at its event. The consumption and sale of alcohol was permitted with agreement by Council if the relevant licence is obtained by the event organiser.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

The Steeple Defenders Flute Band was granted permission at the March 2025 Community Development Committee to apply for an alcohol licence to sell alcohol in Parkhall Community Centre for an event on Saturday 12 April 2025.

Members were advised a number of previous similar requests to the Council seeking permission to serve and sell alcohol at functions in community facilities had been approved.

Members were reminded that additional charges were introduced to the 2025/26 Community Facilities Schedule of Charges including 'out of hours' bookings fees. These were reviewed following testing of this approach to address unintended issues of affordability for some booking requests and new charges were approved at the June 2025 Community Development Committee.

### 2. Financial Position/Implications

There were no financial implications for the Council from approval of this request.

### 3. Summary

A request had been received from Steeple Defenders Flute Band to apply for an alcohol licence to sell and consume alcohol in Parkhall Community Centre on Saturday 11 April 2026.

The Director for Community and Culture advised that she would ask Environmental Services to make contact with the Group regarding support in kind.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop  
Seconded by Councillor Brady and agreed that

**the request from Steeple Defenders Flute Band to apply for an alcohol licence to sell and consumer alcohol in Parkhall Community Centre on Saturday 11 April 2026 be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Paul Townsend, Community Facilities Coordinator*

## 4.6 CP/CP/237 WOMEN'S SUB COMMITTEE

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the draft minutes of the Women's Sub Committee meeting held on 27 January 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

2. Introduction/Background

Members were reminded that a motion to establish a stand alone 'Women's Sub Committee' made up of female representatives of the Council to discuss and promote women's issues, build the skills and confidence of local women and to encourage women to become more involved in local politics was approved at the August 2023 Council meeting.

3. Previous Council Decision

The Terms of Reference for the Women's Sub Committee were approved at the November 2023 Community Planning Committee and provided the framework for the meetings. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved at the December 2025 Community Development Committee meeting.

4. Working Group Meeting

Members were advised that the Women's Sub Committee met on 27 January 2026; the minutes of the meeting were circulated.

5. Financial Position

There were no financial implications to the Council.

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

Members were aware that a comprehensive review of all Council working groups was being undertaken and Section 75 Equality Screening and Rural Proofing would be carried out as part of this review.

7. Governance

The specific role of the Women's Sub Committee was set out in the Terms of Reference which were approved at the November 2023 Community Planning Committee.

8. Summary

The Women's Sub Committee was made up of female representatives of the Council to discuss and promote women's issues, build the skills and confidence of local women and to encourage women to become more involved in local politics.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

**the draft minutes of the Women's Sub Committee Meeting held on 27 January 2026 be approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

*ACTION BY: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community Development*

#### **4.7 CP/GR/193 SOMME VISIT 2026**

##### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to update Members in relation to the establishment of a Task and Finish Working Group to develop arrangements for the annual visit to the Somme in 2026 and to provide the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

##### **2. Introduction/Background**

Members were reminded that a delegation from the Council once again participated in a visit to the Somme Region from 30 June-2 July 2025, to mark the 1 July anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

The visit to France included educational visits to key sites where local regiments fought, and individuals from the Borough lost their lives.

The Elected Members in attendance were The Mayor Cllr Kirkpatrick, The Deputy Mayor Cllr Gilmour, Alderman Smyth, Cllr Cushinan, Cllr McWilliam, Cllr Ward and Cllr Webb. The visit was facilitated by experienced historian and former Elected Member Fraser Agnew, supported by two officers.

##### **3. Previous Decisions of Council**

Members were reminded that it was agreed at Community Planning Committee in September 2023 that the Somme Visit be delivered annually as part of the Council's Good Relations Programme.

It had also been agreed that the Council delegation to the Somme visit in future years would operate as follows:

The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and one Elected Member from each of the Political Parties and one Independent Elected Member would attend the Somme accompanied by appropriate Officers.

Any other Elected Member who wished to attend could do so at their own expense.

A proposed itinerary for the Somme visit in 2025 and 2026 was reported to the October 2024 Community Development Committee with arrangements for 2025 approved.

In response to Members' feedback a meeting with Members was held in November 2025 to consider the arrangements for 2026. It was then agreed

at Community Development Committee in December 2025 to establish a Task and Finish Working Group to develop arrangements for the 2026 visit to the Somme.

#### 4. Somme Visit 2026

2026 would mark the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Battle of the Somme so the visit in summer of 2026 had added significance.

Following a review of the 2025 visit, it was proposed to establish an Elected Member task and finish working group with those who plan to attend in 2026 with a focus on agreeing the proposed itinerary and other practical arrangements. It was also proposed that any Member with interest and/or experience of this annual visit could attend the task and finish working group. The first meeting of the Task and Finish Working Group was held on Thursday 15 January 2026 and the minutes of this meeting were circulated for Members' consideration.

#### 5. Financial Position/Implication

An allocation of up to £15,000 was included in the Community Development budget estimates for 2026/27.

#### 6. Summary

A Task and Finish Working Group was established in early 2026 to plan the itinerary and arrangements for the 2026 visit to the Somme.

The Director of Community and Culture advised that the minutes would be amended to reflect attendance and that Members had been issued with a calendar invite for the revised date for the next meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop  
Seconded by Councillor Brady and agreed that

**the minutes of the Task and Finish Working Group held on 15 January 2026 be approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

*ACTION BY: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community and Culture*

### **4.8 COMD/GR/009 GOOD RELATIONS GRANT AID PROGRAMME 2025-2026**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval in relation to the Good Relations Grants Funding Programme award being recommended.**

## 2. Background

The Good Relations Grant Programme provided financial assistance to groups within the Borough of up to £2,000 towards activities, events and programmes that align with the aims of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan.

The Good Relations Grant Programme opened for applications on 1 April 2025 and closed on 31 December 2025.

All Good Relations Grants were assessed against eligibility criteria and a scored assessment process. Applicants were required to score a minimum of 60% for an application to be recommended for approval.

## 3. Previous Decisions by Council

The Good Relations Grant Programme was approved at May 2025 Community Development Committee as part of the Council's revised Good Relations Action Plan 2025-26.

## 4. Key Issues

An application received in late 2025 had been assessed by officers and achieved the required score to be successful.

The project details were circulated for Members' information.

All proposed awards were subject to a signed disclosure from the group confirming that all appropriate supporting documentation was in place and could be provided on request or the offer of funding would be withdrawn.

## 5. Financial Position/Implication

Members were reminded that the total budget for the 2025/26 Good Relations Grant Programme within the 2025/26 Community Development budget was £5,000.

## 6. Summary

It was proposed that the Good Relations funding award for £1,000 to the successful applicant as outlined, be approved.

The 2025/26 Good Relations Grants were now closed.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour  
Seconded by Councillor Stewart and agreed that

**the Good Relations Grant application as outlined for £1,000 be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Amy Gribbon, Good Relations Officer*

#### 4.9 AC/EV/025 BALLYCLARE MAY FAIR

##### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 14 January 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

##### 2. Background

Members were reminded that the role of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group was to promote, develop and organise the annual Ballyclare May Fair. The specific role of the May Fair Working Group was set out as follows:

- To advise the Council on the programme for the May Fair
- To organise delivery of the May Fair
- To promote participation in the May Fair by the Ballyclare community and wider Borough community
- To explore opportunities for sponsorship and additional funding for the May Fair
- To provide advocacy for the May Fair and achieve collaboration of a range of stakeholders into the design and delivery of the May Fair
- To contribute expertise, skills and knowledge from a range of sectors to the benefit and continuous improvement of this annual event so that Ballyclare DEA achieved maximum benefit from its delivery.

The Working Group met monthly from September to June each year and reported to the Community Development Committee. Membership consisted of all Ballyclare DEA Elected Members, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and up to five non-elected voluntary members who were actively involved in the local community.

##### 3. Previous Decision of the Council

The revised Working Group Terms of Reference were approved at the December 2023 Community Planning Committee. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved at the December 2025 Community Development Committee meeting.

##### 4. Working Group Meeting

Members were advised that the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group met on 14 January 2026 in Ballyclare Town Hall. The minutes of the meeting were circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Stewart

Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

**the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 14 January 2026 be approved as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.**

ACTION BY: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA to Director of Community and Culture

#### 4.10 AC/EV/003 CRAFT NI PROPOSAL FOR GARDEN SHOW IRELAND 2026

##### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval to appoint Craft NI to deliver the artisan craft elements of Garden Show Ireland 2026, which was scheduled to take place from 12-14 June 2026 at Antrim Castle Gardens.**

##### 2. Introduction/Background

Garden Show Ireland was one of Northern Ireland's leading garden festivals, and had been held in Antrim Castle Gardens each year since 2014 with the exception of 2020 and 2021 when Covid prevented the event from taking place. In 2025, despite extremely poor weather, Garden Show Ireland attracted more than 10,000 visitors.

The event was a three-day celebration of flowers, food and fun for the whole family, incorporating talks and demonstrations given by horticulturists including the Show Ambassador David Domoney, show gardens and displays, music and entertainment, food-to-go, and traders selling plants, horticultural equipment and furniture, and artisan crafts, food and drinks.

For the past three years, Craft NI had been appointed to manage the artisan craft stalls at the event. Craft NI was the sector-led body for the promotion and development of the design-led contemporary craft industry in Northern Ireland. Craft NI supported and promoted the craft industry as an integral, entrepreneurial, and vibrant part of the region's economic and cultural infrastructure. Its key partners included regional government and agencies, local government, cultural organisations, universities and colleges, private businesses, and industry. In 2025, Craft NI sourced and managed 18 artisan craft traders for Garden Show Ireland.

##### 3. Previous Decision of Council

The appointment of Craft NI to manage artisan craft traders at Garden Show Ireland 2025 was approved at the February 2025 Community Development Committee.

##### 4. Key Issues

Following discussions with officers, Craft NI had confirmed its interest in once again sourcing and managing 18 high-quality craft makers for Garden Show Ireland 2026. These craft makers would sell their products to the public and provide live craft demonstrations.

Under the terms of the proposal:

- Craft NI would charge each craft maker £250 to participate.

- 50% of the fee would be retained by Craft NI as a management fee.
- 50% of the fee would be paid to the Council (this amounted to £2,250 in 2025).
- Craft NI had committed to ensuring that local craft makers based within the Borough were encouraged and supported to participate, with a target of 40% of traders coming from within the Borough.

#### 5. Financial Position/Implication

If approved, it was anticipated that the gross income from Craft NI would be approximately £2,250. This anticipated income was included in the draft budget for Garden Show Ireland 2026 and was reflected in the draft 2026/27 budget estimates.

#### 6. Summary

The artisan craft element of Garden Show Ireland had been managed successfully by Craft NI since 2023, and this generated £2,250 of income for the event in 2025. Craft NI had provisionally agreed to source and manage 18 artisan craft traders for the 2026 event on the same terms as 2025. The continued partnership with Craft NI would ensure that Garden Show Ireland 2026 benefited from a high-quality craft sector presence, contributing to the event's overall success. Craft NI's expertise in the sector, along with their ability to attract and manage skilled craft makers, made them a valuable partner for this event.

Proposed by Councillor O'Lone  
 Seconded by Councillor Stewart and agreed that

**the proposal to appoint Craft NI to deliver the artisan craft element of Garden Show Ireland 2026 be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Chris Lynn, Culture and Events Co-Ordinator*

### 4.11 **AC/GEN/085 COMMUNITY FESTIVAL FUND GRANT AID**

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for 12 Community Festival Fund grants for 2026 to 2028.**

#### 2. Background

As part of the Council's Community Development Grant Aid Programme, community and voluntary organisations could apply for Community Festival grant funding to support the delivery of community events.

A community festival was defined as a series of events with a common theme, delivered within a defined time period. It was developed from within a community and should celebrate and positively promote what the

community represents. Community festivals were about participation, involvement, inclusion and the creation of a sense of identity, and were important in contributing to the social well-being of a community. The fund was available to properly constituted community, voluntary and charitable groups based in the Borough.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded that a presentation on the Community Development Grant Aid Programme was made to the Community Development Committee in February 2025, and the proposed changes to the Grant Aid programme approved. A key change to Community Festival Funding was that Groups could now seek funding for either one or two years, with 80% of the annual budget being given to multi-year applications. Calls were made annually for single year applications, while multi-year applications opened at the end of every two-year cycle.

### 4. 2026 - 2028 Community Festival Fund Proposals

A call for Community Festival Fund grant applications for 2026-27 and 2027-28 opened on 1 October 2025 and closed on 5 December 2025. A total of 15 two-year funding applications for 2026-28 were received, with 12 applications, totalling £79,760 achieved the required pass threshold, details of which were circulated. No applications were received for single year grants.

### 5. Financial Position

A budget of £107,870 was included in the draft 2026/27 Culture budget for Community Festival grant funding. In addition, a contribution of £27,700 was anticipated from the Department for Communities' (DfC) Community Festival Programme but was to be confirmed. If this contribution was realised the total budget available for the Community Festival Fund category of the Community Development Grant Aid programme in 2026/27 would be £135,570.

The 12 grant applications recommended for approval total £39,880 for 2026/2027. In addition, funding commitments totalling £8,750 were already in place for 2026/27 from previously approved multi-year funding agreements. If the 12 applications were approved, the total funding commitment for 2026/27 would be £48,630 with a remaining budget of £86,940 for 2026/27 which included the DfC contribution.

### 6. Summary

Following a call for applications in October 2025 15 applications were received for two-year Community Festival grant funding for 2026-28 and assessed by a panel of officers. The required threshold for funding was achieved by 12 applicants seeking a total of £39,880 in 2026/27. When added to the previously approved multi-year commitment of £8,750, the total commitment for Community Festival funding in 2026/27 was £48,630, with a remaining budget of £86,940.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour  
Seconded by Councillor Stewart and agreed that

**(a) the 12 successful Community Festival applications for funding totalling £39,880 for 26/27 and 27/28 be approved; and**

**(b) a second call for applications be opened on 2 March 2026 and closed on 30 April 2026.**

*ACTION BY: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events*

#### **4.12 COMD/MCPR/002 MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS AND PR PERFORMANCE REPORT**

##### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to provide Members with detailed performance data relating to the Marketing, Communications and PR service delivery, and to seek approval to bring this information in a quarterly report to the Committee going forward.**

##### **2. Introduction**

The Council's Marketing, Communications and PR Section of the Community and Culture Directorate managed external communications, marketing, public relations, graphic design services, and the Council's websites.

##### **3. Previous Decision of Council**

Members were reminded that a Media Protocol was approved by the Community Development Committee in October 2025 with a Communications Strategy subsequently approved by the Committee in January 2026.

##### **4. Performance Measurement**

The Communications Strategy committed to the continuous evaluation of the Council's communications to assess impact and inform the development of service delivery within an evolving communications landscape.

As stated within Section 14 of the Communications Strategy, success would be measured through:

- Evaluation of all major campaigns to establish the return on investment
- Monitoring and measuring social media presence
- Monitoring and measuring of media coverage, using advertising or similar metric to estimate the value of such media coverage
- Maintaining a higher-than-average social media follower growth and engagement rate across the corporate accounts

- Increasing the number of visitors to all of our web platforms
- Measuring satisfaction with Council services including websites and resident's magazine through an annual survey
- Measuring corporate brand awareness as part of this annual survey
- Tracking of the number of design projects completed annually by the in-house design team

A report on the first five measures for the period April to December 2025 was circulated for Members' information. It was proposed that this report be brought to the Committee on a quarterly basis, with metrics that were captured through the annual survey included within one of the quarterly reports. Members were advised that the performance data contained within this report, as a minimum, was collected and analysed monthly to inform the ongoing development of strategy plans, and communications approaches on an ongoing and agile basis.

### **Social Media**

Within the Online Nation report published in December 2025 by Ofcom it was identified that UK adults spent an average of four and a half hours online a day – up by 10 minutes from the previous year and that 95% of the UK 16+ population had access to the internet at home.

Based upon 2025 data social media usage in Northern Ireland was widespread with over 80% of the population active on social media platforms and 99% of adults in Northern Ireland using services run by Meta such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

Council operated a number of social media channels and targets and tailored communications to specific audiences across these platforms.

The circulated report provided detailed analysis of Social Media performance for the period April 2025 to December 2025 for the Council's main corporate channels. Highlights were summarised below:

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Number of Followers	68,590	Across all Corporate Council platforms
Number of Posts	2,777	Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok, LinkedIn
Impressions	17,776,355	Opportunities to View
Audience Growth Rate	7.6%	Average Government Rate: 0.08%
Engagement Rate	4.8%	Average Government Rate: 1.6%

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Key Campaign Report - Enchanted Winter Garden	4.6M reach	Meta, TikTok, Google

Members were advised that the Marketing Communications and PR Team also managed 15 additional social media accounts such as dedicated Enchanted Winter Garden Facebook and Instagram accounts and across all channels there were 132,906 followers in total.

Social media continued to be a highly effective means of communication and the digital nature of this form of communications provided real time data about the performance of each post as presented in the report enclosure.

### **Media Relations**

Media relationship management was the strategic practice of building and maintaining relationships with journalists, bloggers, and influencers to secure positive, unpaid media coverage across a range of channels including television, radio, print, and online media. The Communications team engaged in media relations both proactively and reactively.

This was a key part of the Council's public relations (PR) function, which focused specifically on the media as a channel to reach broader audiences through trusted sources.

The circulated report provided detailed analysis of Media performance for the period April 2025 to December 2025 with highlights summarised below:

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Number/value</b>	<b>Breakdown / Notes</b>
Total Press Releases Issued	138	Average 17+ per month
Total Mentions	4.5K	Online: 2.5K · Print: 1.9K · Radio: 147 · TV: 31
Total Reach	1.1 billion	
Total Advertising Value	£24,453,256.36	
Sentiment	Predominantly neutral-positive	62% Positive · 27% Neutral · 11% Negative

Media reach and value measures had been provided by a professional media analysis company, which applied robust methodologies to assess coverage across all channels and time periods. This determined both potential reach and estimated value, based on the cost of equivalent paid advertising.

## 5. Finance and Governance

In the main the delivery of the social media and media functions were resourced within the Communications Team. Revenue budgets were utilised for specific campaigns to amplify both social media and media coverage through paid advertisement and to ensure messaging was reaching the target audience.

Given the value of the metrics presented and the critical role effective communication played in relation to the profile of the Council and engagement with residents it was proposed to bring this Communications Report to the Committee quarterly covering the performance metrics outlined in the Communications Strategy at the following intervals:

- March – Report on the previous October to December
- June – Report on the previous January to March period
- September – Report on the previous April to June period
- December – Report on the previous July to September period

The performance measures that were collected on an annual basis would be included within the report to the June Committee.

## 6. Summary

Effective communication was fundamental to building trust, engagement, and civic pride across the Borough. The Communications Strategy included robust performance measures that were monitored on an ongoing basis to shape and inform the Council's approach to communications in an ever-changing landscape. A performance report which covered the period April 2025 to December 2025 outlined key results in relation to social media and media activity. Going forward, quarterly performance reports would be presented to the Committee in line with the proposed schedule, with annual performance measures included in a report to the June Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Brady

Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

**the update on Marketing, Communications and PR performance be noted and a quarterly report to the Committee as per the proposed schedule be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture*

### 4.13 **CP/GEN/052 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT AID RECOMMENDATIONS 2026/2027 AND 2027/2028**

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval in relation to proposed financial awards under the Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities Grant Aid Programme for 2026/2027 and 2026/2028.**

## 2. Background

The Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities Grant Aid Programme provided financial assistance to groups within the Borough towards the costs of running their Community Facilities and delivering their Programmes and Activities over a maximum 2-year period.

Programmes funded must have Community Development as a primary objective and must develop a strong, healthy and vibrant community, encourage maximum participation and improve the lives of people living within the Borough.

To support applications to this programme, Officers delivered two grant workshops and offered one-to-one support to all interested groups upon request.

## 3. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded that a presentation on the Community Development Grant Aid Programme was given to the Community Development Committee in February 2025, where the proposed changes to the programme were approved.

A key change to the Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities Grant Aid Programme was that groups could now seek funding for either one year or two years, with 80% of the annual budget profiled for two-year applications. Calls were made annually for single year applications, while multi-year applications would open at the end of every two-year cycle.

## 4. Call for Applications 2026/2027 and 2026/2028

A call for Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities grant applications for 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 opened on 1 October 2025 and closed on 5 December 2025.

A total of 81 two-year funding applications were received for 2026/2028 with 73 applications totalling £451,462.66 for year one and £451,696 for year two achieving the required pass threshold. In addition, 11 applications for one year funding in 2026/2027 were received with 9 applications totalling £35,370 meeting the required pass threshold.

In total 92 applications were received for both multi-year and single year funding, with 82 applications totalling £486,832.66 in 2026/2027 achieving the required pass threshold. Of these 73 applications were approved for multi-year funding with £451,696 approved for 2027/2028 (details of which are were circulated for Members' information).

## 5. Financial Implication

A budget of £628,000 was included in the draft 2026/2027 Community Development budget for Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities

funding. A contribution totalling £50,428, similar to the amount awarded in 2025/2026, was anticipated from the Department for Communities (DfC) under its Community Support Programme for 2026/2027 but was to be confirmed.

The total amount of financial assistance in 2026/2027 requested by the 82 applications that met the required pass threshold was £486,832.66. In addition, previous funding commitments totalling £47,920 were committed for 2026/2027 to support year 3 funding awards previously approved. If the 82 applicants were approved, the total funding commitment for 2026/2027 would be £534,752.66 and for 2027/2028 would be £451,696. With a remaining budget of £93,247.34 for 2026/27 and £176,304 for 2027/2028.

It was therefore recommended that all successful applications be approved for funding and a second call for applications be opened. Members were reminded that funding was subject to satisfactory annual monitoring and evaluation. As in previous years, Officers would arrange to meet with any unsuccessful groups to provide feedback on their applications and to signpost to other relevant funders.

## 6. Summary

A total of 92 applications for the Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities Grant Aid programme were received and assessed by a panel of Officers with 82 applications totalling £486,832.66 achieving the required pass threshold for funding in 2026/2027.

Of the 82 successful applications, 73 have been awarded funding of £451,696 for 2027/2028.

In the 2026/2027 budget estimates there is an allocation of £628,000 for Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities Grants designated under this grant call.

It was proposed that all successful applications be approved for funding in 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 where applicable.

It was agreed by the Director of Community and Culture that Members would be notified of the date for the second call and provided with the relevant details.

Proposed by Councillor Brady

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**(a) the 82 successful Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities applications requesting financial assistance totalling £486,832.66 for 2026/2027 be approved;**

**(b) the 73 successful Community Facilities, Programmes and Activities applications requesting financial assistance totalling £451,696 for 2027/2028 be approved;**

**(c) a second call for applications be opened.**

*ACTION BY: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator*

*Councillor Magill left the Chamber during Item 4.14*

**4.14 CP/GR/171 THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE ASYLUM FUNDING 2025/2026**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval regarding the offer of Asylum Funding from The Executive Office for 2025/2026.**

**2. Introduction/Background**

Members were reminded that The Executive Office (TEO), on behalf of the Home Office, introduced the Full Dispersal and Refugee Integration funded programmes in 2023 to support asylum seekers and refugees to integrate within communities across Northern Ireland.

The purpose of this funding was to support the development of local capacity and infrastructure to meet the needs of asylum seekers and to promote integration within the Council area. The funding offer followed the submission of the Council's Action Plan to TEO, outlining proposed actions to support asylum seekers residing within the Borough.

Since the introduction of the programme, the Council's Good Relations team had delivered a range of initiatives supporting individuals seeking asylum and those with refugee status who had been placed within the Borough, in line with the objectives of the TEO funding framework.

**3. Previous Decision of Council**

Members were reminded that a Memorandum of Understanding issued by The Executive Office for Asylum Full Dispersal funding, totalling £88,478, was approved by the Community Planning Committee in April 2023.

Members were also reminded that a funding allocation of £50,000 was approved at the September 2024 Community Development Committee to support the continued delivery of the Asylum and Refugee Integration Programme.

**4. Asylum and Refugee Integration Funding 2025/26**

Members were advised that TEO had invited Councils once again to submit funding proposals to provide support for the integration of refugees within their Council areas.

TEO had confirmed an allocation of £68,693 for 2025–26 for the Council, comprising a £15,000 baseline for Council coordinated Community Hubs

and £53,693 prorated funding based on the proportion of supported asylum seekers in the Borough (Home Office statistics, September 2025).

The funding was aimed at supporting the delivery of Integration and Support Hubs, aligned to TEO's Hub Framework, enabling asylum seekers, refugees, minority ethnic groups and other newcomers to access essential services and integrate into local communities.

A draft proposal had been submitted to TEO in line with their January 2026 submission deadline and a copy was circulated for Members' approval.

#### 5. Financial Position/Implication

Members were advised that the Council had received an offer of £68,693 from TEO to support the delivery of the Asylum and Refugee Integration Programme during the 2025/26 financial year. Councils could use end of year flexibility to continue delivery into the next financial year.

There was no additional cost to the Council for the delivery of this Programme.

#### 6. Summary

The Council had received an offer for funding of £68,693 from TEO for the costs associated with the Asylum Funding Programme for 2025/26.

A draft proposal had been developed and submitted to reflect the offer of funding from TEO.

Councils could use end of year flexibility to continue delivery into the next financial year.

Proposed by Councillor O'Lone

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**The Executive Office Funding Letter of Offer of £68,693 for the delivery of the 2025/26 Asylum Funding be accepted and the proposal approved.**

*ACTION BY: Amy Gribbon, Good Relations Officer*

*Councillor Magill returned to the Chamber during Item 4.15.*

### **4.15 CP/CP/243 ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS – SHARED ISLAND EVENT**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for attendance at the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) and Association for Irish Local Government (AILG) Ending Violence Against Women & Girls Event in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Co. Cavan on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 March 2026.**

## 2. Introduction and Background

NILGA had been working with the Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the Programme for Government priority of Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG).

NILGA were seeking to develop the leadership role of Elected Members in EVAWG and wanted to bring Members with experience of tackling this issue together to discuss challenges and opportunities with their counterparts in Association for Irish Local Government (AILG).

Following a successful application to the Shared Island Civic Society Fund, NILGA & AILG were hosting a cross-border event on developing their leadership and influence in relation to EVAWG.

## 3. Correspondence from NILGA

Correspondence (circulated) had been received from NILGA requesting that two Elected Members were nominated to attend the EVAWG event.

The event was taking place on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 March 2026 in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Co. Cavan.

It was proposed that two Members of the Women's Sub Committee be nominated to attend the Event.

## 4. Financial Position/Implication

Members were advised that overnight accommodation was available at a cost of €130pp. There was no cost for attendance at the event.

Provision existed within the 2025/26 Community Development budgets to cover the costs of two Members attending this event.

## 5. Summary

The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) and Association for Irish Local Government (AILG) were hosting a cross-border event on developing their leadership and influence in relation to EVAWG.

It was proposed that two Members of the Women's Sub Committee be nominated to attend the EVAWG event in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Co. Cavan on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 March 2026.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop

Seconded by Councillor Brady and agreed that

**two Members from the Women's Sub Committee and appropriate Officers be nominated to attend the EVAWG cross border event on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 March 2026, in Cavan.**

*ACTION BY: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development*

## **5 ITEMS FOR NOTING**

### **5.1 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – Period 9 April 2025 to December 2025**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the financial performance of the Community and Culture Directorate for Period 9 April 2025 to December 2025.**

#### **2. Introduction/Background**

As agreed, quarterly budget reports would be presented to the relevant Committee. All financial reports would be available to all Members.

#### **3. Summary**

As at period 9:

The Community and Culture Directorate had a favourable variance of £252k, or 4.6%, against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

A report on the financial performance, employee costs, highest areas of expenditure and income, and the financial performance by Head of Service was circulated for Members' information.

The overall financial position of the Council would be presented to the Policy & Governance Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Stewart

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**that the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

### **5.2 COMD/GR/001 SEACHTAIN NA GAELIGE (IRISH LANGUAGE WEEK) 2026**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to update Members about plans for Seachtain na Gaeilge (Irish Language Week) 2026.**

#### **2. Introduction/Background**

Seachtain na Gaeilge was an annual international festival coordinated by Conradh na Gaeilge, celebrating the Irish language and culture. The festival promoted awareness of the Irish language through a diverse programme of cultural, educational and community-based activities delivered by statutory,

voluntary and community organisations, and took place annually from 1 -17 March.

The Council plans to take part in the 2026 event were included in the Good Relations Cultural Awareness Programme alongside similar plans to deliver events showcasing the Ulster Scots Language during the Ulster Scots Leid Week.

In previous years, the Council had participated in Seachtain na Gaeilge by offering a range of cultural and language-based activities, such as story and rhyme workshops, Irish language taster sessions, conversation circles incorporating traditional music, arts-based cultural celebration activities, and sessions exploring Irish place names and commonly used words.

It was anticipated a broader programme would be developed for this year's festival, to incorporate increased language learning opportunities and engagement with children and young people.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

The Council's Good Relations Programme 2025/26 Action Plan, included a commitment to participate in the 2026 Seachtain na Gaeilge, and had been approved at the May 2025 Community Development Committee.

### 4. Seachtain na Gaeilge (Irish Language Week) 2026

It was proposed that the Council's Good Relations Team would deliver a programme of activities across the Borough, which included:

- Children's storytelling and rhyme workshops, in partnership with schools and Libraries NI
- School-based events designed to bring children and young people together through music, culture, art, and shared celebration
- Irish language taster sessions and short courses for participants of all ages
- Schools' engagement initiatives, including the development of resources to enable pupils in Irish-medium education across the Borough to take an active role in promoting and celebrating language awareness.
- Officers would engage with community groups, schools, and relevant partners to finalise programme content.

### 5. Financial Position/Implication

A budget of up to £5,000 was available for Seachtain na Gaeilge 2026 having been allocated in the approved Good Relations Action Plan.

Officers had explored other potential funding sources for the programme through Foras na Gaeilge, Conradh na Gaeilge and Ciste Spreagtha; however, the Council was not eligible to apply for these schemes.

## 6. Summary

The 2026 Seachtain na Gaeilge would take place from 1–17 March. As in previous years, the Good Relations Team would work with a range of stakeholders to develop and deliver a programme of activities that celebrated and promoted the Irish language, as approved in the Council's 2025-26 Good Relations Action Plan.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour  
Seconded by Councillor O'Lone and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

*Alderman McGrath returned to the Chamber during Item 6.*

## **6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

- 6.1 The Director of Community and Culture responded to questions from a Member relating to Rathcoole Community Centre. She advised that it was anticipated that a report to update on progress would be brought to the March Community Development Committee.

*ACTION BY: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture*

### **PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'**

Proposed by Councillor Brady  
Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

**the following Committee business be taken In Confidence and the livestream and audio recording would cease.**

## **7 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE**

### **7.1 IN CONFIDENCE CP/CD/343 COMMUNITY FACILITIES – TENANCY RENEWALS**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for a tenancy agreement renewal at Stiles Community Centre.**

#### **2. Introduction/Background**

There were 8 Community Facilities managed by the Community Development Section as follows:

- Greystone Community Centre
- Muckamore Community Centre
- Parkhall Community Centre

- Rathenraw Community Centre
- Stiles Community Centre
- Neillsbrook Community Centre
- Dunanney Centre
- Lilian Bland Pavillion

Community facilities were available for hire by individuals, groups and organisations for a diverse range of activities such childcare, birthday parties, meetings, sport and social activities.

Members were reminded that there were a number of rentable offices in the Community facility buildings.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

The Schedule of Charges for hiring Community facilities and tenancy agreements was approved at the January 2025 Community Development Committee. An average inflationary increase to the schedule of charges was approved and a rental rate of £[redacted] per square metre per annum was applied to all Community Facility Tenancy agreements from 1 April 2025. It was approved at the June 2025 Policy and Governance Committee that an annual inflationary uplift, based on appropriate indices, should be automatically applied. Inflationary increases would be based on the change in Consumer Price Index (CPI) from the previous calendar year.

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 3.4% in the 12 months to December 2025.

### 4. Financial Position/Implication

One tenancy agreement was due for renewal and the organisation in the table below had requested that this was renewed as follows:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Rooms Requested for Rental Renewal</b>	<b>Tenancy Start Date and Term</b>	<b>Rental Income £[redacted] sqm (p/a) increasing to £[redacted] sqm (p/a) from 1 April 2026</b>
Home Start	Small Annex Room	1st March 2026 for 1 year	£[redacted]

A template tenancy agreement was circulated for Members' information.

### 4. Summary

There were a number of rentable offices in the Community Facility Buildings which were leased to various organisations under tenancy agreements. All tenancy agreements included rental costs, service charges and utilities.

Renewal of this tenancy agreement in the Stiles Community Centre, would achieve annual rental income of £[REDACTED] per annum.

Proposed by Councillor Brady  
Seconded by Councillor Stewart and agreed that

**the renewal of the tenancy agreement with Home Start, including keyholder option for Stiles Community Centre from 1st March 2026 for 1 year at an annual cost of £[REDACTED] be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Paul Townsend, Community Facilities Coordinator*

## **7.2 IN CONFIDENCE ACTE/ED/TOU/064 CRANFIELD JETTY DEVELOPMENT**

### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the outline Business Case for the Cranfield Jetty Capital Project to include the preferred option and to seek Members' approval for the project to progress to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme.**

### **2. Introduction/Background**

Cranfield, located on the Northern shore of Lough Neagh, was a picturesque hamlet containing the ruins of a 13<sup>th</sup> century church and graveyard, and a holy well said to have been blessed by St Olcan who himself had been baptised by St Patrick. The Church and Holy Well were maintained by the Department for Communities' Historic Environment Division, while the car park, toilet block and wider site was the responsibility of the Council.

For many years a small slipway and jetty allowed public access to Lough Neagh from the site, but these were closed in 2019 and the jetty subsequently demolished following a structural survey that identified significant deterioration and serious health and safety concerns.

The site of the slipway and jetty was leased from the Shaftesbury Estate on a rolling basis with an annual fee of £[REDACTED], and any development works would require formal landlord consent alongside statutory planning approvals. Officers would engage with the Shaftesbury Estate about any Council decision regarding the slipway and jetty.

### **3. Previous Decisions of Council**

At the Council meeting in January 2021, the replacement of the jetty and slipway was approved at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED].

At the Council meeting in September 2021, it was agreed that a business case for the reinstatement of the jetty be developed.

At the Community Planning Committee in December 2022, it was approved to replace the concrete slipway, refurbish part of the jetty and install a

floating pontoon a little further out from the shoreline linked to the refurbished jetty with a galvanised walkway.

At the Community Planning Committee in February 2024, it was agreed to continue with the approved approach but with a shorter jetty and/or pontoon to enable smaller boats to moor. The cost of this option including fees and contingency was estimated at £[REDACTED].

At the May 2024 Policy and Governance Committee, Members were advised that, based upon inflationary increases to costs, the constraints of affordability and the requirement for prioritisation, a review of the Capital Programme and Capital Project Management Process had commenced for Members' future consideration. As a result of this, the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) were commissioned to review a range of capital project business cases which included the Outline Business Case for Cranfield Jetty.

At the Council meeting in January 2026 an update on the Council's Capital programme was noted.

#### 4. Outline Business Case for Cranfield Jetty

Having completed a review of the options for the development of Cranfield Jetty, SIB had completed an updated Outline Business Case for this project which was circulated for Members' information.

The Outline Business Case considered the evidence of need and the options for the development of Cranfield Jetty and the associated capital and recurring revenue costs.

Cranfield's rural setting with no accessible amenities, road infrastructure access constraints as well as recurring blue/green algae naturally capped both the intensity and seasonality of use. In addition, full marina facilities existed in close proximity at both Ballyronan and Antrim Loughshore Park well serviced by a range of amenities for overnight mooring and slightly further away Kinnego Marina, at Oxford Island provided similar high-quality facilities for access to Lough Neagh with all three facilities supported by caravan parks.

The enclosed Business Case identified the preferred option for Cranfield Jetty Capital Project as complete removal of the existing jetty, refurbishment and extension of existing slipway to 8m x 20m at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED] and an annual revenue consequence of £[REDACTED].

This option provided a safe, durable, and sustainable solution that directly addressed current health-and-safety risks, restored community access to Lough Neagh at Cranfield, and delivered social and well-being benefits within available resources.

#### 5. Financial Position/Implication

The estimated capital cost of the preferred option was £[REDACTED] which would incur annual loan costs of £[REDACTED] over the estimated 15 years life span of the project. In addition, annual revenue maintenance costs of £[REDACTED] had been estimated.

## 6. Governance

Approval of the Stage 1 Outline Business Case for the Cranfield Jetty would progress the project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme which would involve appointment of an Integrated Consultancy Team (ICT) and preparation of a full business case including planning and procurement. The full Business Case would be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee seeking the investment decision allowing the appointment of the winning tenderer, contract management and construction.

## 7. Summary

Following completion of the Outline Business Case for Cranfield Jetty the preferred option for the project was removal of the existing jetty and refurbishment and extension of the existing slipway to 8m x 20m at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED]. The annual revenue consequence was £[REDACTED].

Approval was sought from Members to progress the project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme, to commence and complete the final business case (including detailed design, planning and procurement). The approval included authorisation for the appointment of an ICT and other associated costs at an estimated £[REDACTED].

In response to questions from Members, the Director of Community and Culture provided clarification on the financial status and confirmed that there would be elements of Our Historic Borough delivered in the Cranfield area. She also advised that consultation had not been carried out yet as the project was only at Stage 1 of the process. She also responded to a Member's query re: jet ski use.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour  
Seconded by Stewart and agreed that

**(a) the Cranfield Jetty preferred option of removal of the existing jetty and refurbishment and extension of the existing slipway to 8m x 20m at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED] be approved; and**

**(b) progress of the Cranfield Jetty project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme be approved including completion of a final business case (including detailed design, planning and procurement)**

*ACTION BY: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events*

**PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'**

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop

Seconded by Councillor Brady and agreed that

**the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.**

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further Committee business, the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 8.04pm.

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**MAYOR**

***Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation, and legal advice.***