



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD
AT MOSSLEY MILL ON MONDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Mayor (Councillor L Kirkpatrick)
- Members Present** : Aldermen – L Boyle, T Campbell, L Clarke,
J McGrath, M Magill, P Michael, S Ross and J Smyth
- : Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, A Bennington,
J Burbank, M Cooper, S Cosgrove, H Cushinan,
P Dunlop, J Gilmour, M Goodman, N Kelly, R Kinnear,
AM Logue, R Lynch, B Mallon, A McAuley, T McGrann,
E McLaughlin, V McWilliam, M Ní Chonghaile,
L O’Hagan, A O’Lone, M Stewart, S Ward, B Webb
- Members Present
(Remotely)** : Aldermen – P Bradley and M Cosgrove,
- : Councillors - M Brady, S Flanagan, R Foster, H Magill
and S Wilson
- Officers Present** : Chief Executive - R Baker
Director of Community and Culture – U Fay
Director of Environment Services and Sustainability–
M Laverty
Director of Director of Estates and Recreation–
M McDowell
Director of Finance – J Balmer
Deputy Director of Governance – L Johnston
Borough Lawyer Borough Lawyer, Legal, Land
Governance and Policy – P Casey
ICT Systems Support Officer – C Bell
ICT Business Support Officer (Interim) – D Graham
Member Services Manager – A Duffy

1 BIBLE READING, PRAYER AND WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all present to the meeting and advised Members of the audio recording procedures.

The meeting opened with a Bible reading and prayer by Reverend John Gilkinson.

Alderman Boyle and Councillors Burbank, Cushinan, Goodman, Kelly, Kinnear, Logue, McAuley, McGrann, O'Hagan and O'Lone joined the meeting at this point.

MAYOR'S REMARKS

The Mayor took to the Chair and welcomed all present to the meeting. She noted that this would be the final Full Council Meeting for the Director of Estates and Recreation, Matt McDowell and extended her best wishes for his future endeavours adding that he would be greatly missed.

2 APOLOGIES

None

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4 MINUTES OF THE ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor McGrann and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Meeting of Monday 26 January 2026 be taken as read and signed as correct.

5 MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Operations Committee Meeting of Monday 2 February 2026 be approved and adopted.

6 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor Magill
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy and Governance Committee Meeting of Tuesday 3 February 2026 be approved and adopted.

7 MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor Wilson
Seconded by Councillor Brady and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Community Development Committee Meeting of Monday 9 February 2026 approved and adopted.

8 MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Moved by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Special Council Meeting of Monday 9 February 2026 be taken as read and signed as correct.

9(a) MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING, PART 1

Moved by Councillor Kinnear
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee Meeting of Monday 16 February 2026 Part 1 be taken as read and signed as correct.

9(b) MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING, PART 2

Moved by Councillor Kinnear
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee Meeting of Monday 16 February 2026 Part 2 be approved and adopted.

10 ITEMS FOR DECISION

10.1 PK/GEN/032 REQUEST TO USE V36 EVENT SPACE – CIRCUS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members that approval be granted for a circus event at V36.

2. Background

A request had been received from Tom Duffy's Circus to hold a circus event at V36 Event Space with access to the site requested from 16 March to 29 March 2026. This included set up and recovery.
The Circus Owners had confirmed that there would be no animals included.

3. Previous Decision of Council

As in previous years, a bond of £1,000 per site would be payable by the circus owners in lieu of any damage to the site, in addition to normal booking charges. Legal Services would obtain agreement from the circus owners confirming they would be liable for any additional costs over and above the bond.

The Director of Estates and Recreation responded to a Member's query in relation to the bond agreement. He confirmed Council had not historically been required to enforce the bond and advised that a standard annual agreement would be implemented going forward.

The Chief Executive responded to a Member's concern regarding the Circus advertising the event prior to Council approval and confirmed that he would write to the Circus in relation to the matter.

Moved by Councillor Cooper
Seconded by Aderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that permission be granted, subject to a legal agreement regarding any additional costs, to Tom Duffy's Circus to hold a circus event at V36 Event Space, between 16 March and 29 March 2026.

ACTION BY: Glenda James, Parks and Leisure Administration Manager

Alderman Boyle left the Chamber during Item 10.2.

10.2 PBS/BC/003 VOL 2 STREET NAMING SUBMISSION – NIBLOCK ROAD, ANTRIM

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members a new street name for a development at Niblock Road, Antrim.

2. Introduction/Background

A development naming application was received from Darren O'Neill on behalf of Lagan Homes Antrim Ltd. The development consists of approximately 500 dwellings, these being a mixture of detached, semi-detached, townhouses and apartments. The development names and developer's rationale had been submitted as outlined below, with the developer's application, location map and site plan were circulated.

- 1 – Castlebrook – Castle – relating to Antrim Castle. Brook – relating to Dunsilly Burn and Steeple Burn close by
- 2 – Castlemanor – Castle – relating to Antrim Castle. Manor - relates to remains of old manor house found on site
- 3 – Springmeadow – Spring – relates to neighbouring Springfarm development. Meadow – area of land on the outskirts of Antrim

Should the Council not wish to select one of the above names; the matter would be referred back to the developer via the Building Control section for further consideration.

It was requested that Building Control add suffixes to this development name as required.

Moved by Councillor O'Hagan
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and

RESOLVED - that the matter be deferred back to the developer via the Building Control section for further consideration to ensure that the archaeological significance of the site be fully taken into consideration in the proposed name.

ACTION BY: Liam McFadden, Principal Building Control Surveyor

10.3 PBS/BC/003 VOL 2 STREET NAMING SUBMISSION – JUBILEE ROAD, BALLYCLARE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members a new street name for a development at Jubilee Road, Ballyclare.

2. Introduction/Background

A development naming application was received from Patrick Morwood on behalf of Beechview Developments regarding the naming of a residential development at Jubilee Road, Ballyclare. The development consists of 78 dwellings, these being a mixture of detached, semi – detached and townhouses. The development names and developer's rationale had been submitted as outlined below, with the developer's application, location map and site plan circulated.

1 – Robson Park – RB Robson was the master at Coggrey Mill National School in 1882 and was instrumental in increasing the number of pupils attending the school and also in building a new school.

2 – Robson Hall – Based on above rationale

3 – Cloughlin Demesne – Cloughlin Lane is well known both locally and historically within the town

Should the Council not wish to select one of the above names; the matter would be referred back to the developer via the Building Control section for further consideration.

Moved by Councillor Archibald-Brown
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and

RESOLVED - that the Council approves a name Robson Park for the above development.

ACTION BY: Liam McFadden, Principal Building Control Surveyor

Alderman Boyle returned to the Chamber.

Councillors McLaughlin and Ní Chonghaile joined the meeting at Item 10.4.

10.4 AC/GEN/116 UK TOWN OF CULTURE 2028 – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the submission of an expression of interest to the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition for Antrim Town.

2. Introduction/Background

In January 2026 the UK Government launched the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition.

The UK Town of Culture is a brand-new Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) competition. For the first time DCMS was inviting towns across the UK to enter the competition to showcase original storytelling, and empowering accessible culture. The competition was targeted at all towns whether small, medium or large.

There was £3million on offer to the winning town and £250,000 for two finalists.

There were three categories of town within the competition:

- Small Town under 20,000 people
- Medium Town 20,000 to 75,000 people
- Large Town over 75,000 people

3. Expression of Interest to UK Town of Culture

It was proposed to submit a bid for Antrim Town to the Medium Town category of the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition. Expressions of interest must be submitted by 31 March 2026. The population of Antrim Town was 25,606 according to the 2021 census.

Antrim Town was being proposed for a number of reasons:

- The history of the town dates back to Monastic times with a monastery founded in Antrim in AD495 and the Round Tower in Steeple Park remains one of the few intact heritage structures of this time.
- Antrim is the largest of the five Borough towns and the County Town of Antrim.
- The history of Ulster can be told through Antrim from the earliest Monastic Settlement to the 1798 rebellion and both World Wars.

- Antrim has an existing infrastructure of cultural facilities in the form of Antrim Castle Gardens, The Old Courthouse Theatre, Pogues Entry, The Gateway Visitor Centre Lough Neagh and Steeple Park.

4. Finance

There were no costs associated with the submission of an Expression of Interest to the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition.

5. Governance

Shortlisted places would be announced in Spring 2026 and successful applicants would have until Autumn 2026 to develop a full application. Finalists and winners would be announced in early 2027.

An update on the outcome of the Expression of Interest would be reported to a future meeting of the Community Development Committee.

6. Summary

In January 2026 the DCMS of the UK Government announced the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition.

It was proposed to submit an Expression of Interest to the competition for Antrim Town in the medium town category by the deadline of 31 March 2026.

Moved by Councillor Dunlop
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and

RESOLVED - that submission of an Expression of Interest to the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition for Antrim Town in the medium town category be approved.

ACTION BY: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

The Mayor expressed her sincere condolences to Alderman Bradley, Alderman Ross and their family on the sad passing of her Father.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded at 6.58pm.

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.