



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD
AT MOSSLEY MILL ON MONDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Councillor Foster
- Members Present** : Aldermen – F Agnew, T Burns, L Clarke, M Girvan,
J McGrath and J Smyth
Councillors – A Bennington, J Gilmour, N Kelly, A Logue,
T McGrann and V McWilliam
- Non Committee Members** : Councillors – P Dunlop, L Irwin, J Montgomery, N Ramsay
B Webb and R Wilson
- Officers Present** : Director of Operations - G Girvan
Head of Leisure - M McDowell
Head of Environmental Health - C Todd
Head of Parks - I McMullan
Head of Waste Management – M Laverty
ICT System Support Officer – C Bell
Member Services Officer - S Boyd

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the February Operations Committee meeting. He highlighted how important the Borough's Parks had been throughout the restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic and congratulated the Parks team on the way all the facilities have been maintained throughout this challenging period. He also thanked the team for the implementation of the new one way system at Hazlebank Park. The Chairperson reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

In order to protect public health during the current COVID-19 emergency it was not possible to allow the public or the press to physically attend the meeting. The public and the press can access those parts of the meeting which they are entitled to attend via live stream (a link to which is on the Council website). The meeting minutes and audio recording would be published on the Council's website.

1 APOLOGIES

Councillors – J Archibald-Brown and R Swann

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 L/LEI/002/VOL2 MARY PETERS TRUST – REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE 2021/22

Correspondence had been received from the Mary Peters Trust requesting financial support for its sporting awards to upcoming athletes (circulated).

Members were reminded that the Trust provides encouragement and financial support to young sports men and women from across Northern Ireland. Specifically within the Borough the range of sporting disciplines supported in 2021/22 includes: gymnastics, golf, athletics, boxing and canoeing.

The Trust had indicated that its fundraising had been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic this year and it was seeking continued support from Councils to help maintain its capital base to ensure that the level and value of awards continues to grow.

Council support for the last 4 financial years had been £2,000 per annum. A list of those athletes from the Borough who had received support was set out in the letter.

Proposed by Alderman Girvan
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed

that a contribution of £2,000 be made to support the work of the Mary Peters Trust within the Borough for 2021/2022.

ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Head of Leisure

3.2 L/LEI/002/VOL2 SPORTS CLUB HARDSHIP FUND

Members were reminded that at November Council approval was granted for a Sports Hardship Fund. The fund was open to sports clubs and organisations for applications up to a maximum of £1,000 to assist with the additional costs of compliance with COVID-19 requirements. A total budget of £50,000 was approved.

Applications were invited in December 2020 to ensure that awards to successful clubs could be processed quickly providing much needed support to clubs. A total of 21 applications were received with 17 of these applications meeting the criteria. The value of the successful applications is £16,194. These applicants had been notified and grants were being processed. Officers had provided feedback to unsuccessful applicants and offered assistance should approval be given for the fund to reopen.

It was anticipated (subject to restrictions) that local sport activities will recommence in spring and that the demand then for financial assistance to meet COVID-19 requirements will be significant. Officers proposed that the Fund consisting of the remaining £33,806, be reopened in line with the relaxation of restrictions relating to sport.

Following a request from a Member the Director undertook to ensure that the list of applicants for funding would be circulated by the Head of Leisure.

Proposed by Alderman McGrath
Seconded by Alderman Burns and agreed

that the Sport Hardship Fund reopens in line with the relaxation of restrictions relating to sport utilising the remaining budget of £33,806.

ACTION BY: Deaglan O'Hagan, Commercial & Programming Manager

3.3 PK/GEN/183 PROVISION OF BICYCLE STANDS

Members were reminded that Council is currently exploring funding for a number of projects in the context of blue/green infrastructure. The installation of bicycle stands in the Borough's towns and villages as well as at other key locations, such as parks, paths and cycle routes and local shopping areas, has been explored and a survey of potential locations completed.

Further detailed consideration of proposed locations would be needed, particularly where land not owned by Council is being proposed.

Potential locations

Proposed Installations (Town Centres and shopping areas) subject to detailed assessment	Comments
*Rathcoole - Main Shopping area	<i>*These points are close to the Newtownabbey Way or the proposed walking/cycle path from Hightown to Gideon's Green/ or Lough Neagh Cycle Way</i>
Crumlin tbc	
*Whiteabbey Village	
*Merville Garden Village	
Monkstown Village Centre	
*Glengormley Antrim Road/ O'Neill Road, junction	
*Glengormley, Lilian Bland Community Park	
*Glengormley, Sandyknowes Park	
Doagh tbc	
Ballyclare, Sixmile Leisure Centre	
Ballyclare, Mill Road	
*Toome tbc	
*Randalstown tbc	
Antrim, Market Square	
Carnmoney village and/or Shops at Beverley	
Proposed Installations (Parks and walking/cycling routes)	
*Hazelbank Park, car park	
Antrim, Lough Shore Park & Antrim Forum and Antrim Castle Gardens	Comments
Gideons Green	<i> These points are close to the Newtownabbey Way or the proposed</i>
*Glas na Braden Glen,	
Ballyclare, Entrance to Sixmile Park	
*Rathcoole, Leisure Park	
Wallace Park, Templepatrick	

* Toome, Linear Park	walking/cycle path from Hightown to Gideon's Green/ or Lough Neagh Cycle Way
*V36 & *Valley Park Entrance	
*Global Point	
* Train Stations: Mossley West, Antrim and Whiteabbey	
*Threemilewater car park and Viewing Point	
*Newtownabbey Way, Monkstown	
*Whiteabbey Village	

Additional proposals from Members can be added and considered for suitability. The total cost of the proposals as set out are estimated to cost £18,000, although, without having the final number and location agreed this estimate could change. An application to the Department for Communities, which is co-ordinating Revitalise Grant Funding to Councils, includes the installation of bicycle stands which has been approved at the January meeting of Council. A report on progress will be brought to Committee for information.

The table provides the logic for the choice of location. Maps showing the proposed locations were circulated. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening form was also circulated.

Following questions from Members the Director explained that the list of proposed locations had been developed for the purpose of the funding application and that each location still needed to be assessed for suitability, ownership, planning, insurance and other relevant issues. She went on to highlight that, update reports would be brought to Committee for information including the design of the stands and the suggested inclusion of vandal free pumps.

The proposed cycle hire strand of the funding application to be progressed.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed

that approval is given for:

- i. **the installation of bicycle stands as set out above to include additional sites at Ballynure and Crumlin Glen at an estimated cost of £18,000,**
- ii. **the screening form.**

ACTION BY: Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks

3.4 WM/WM/37/VOL2 REVIEW OF WASTE COLLECTION POLICY

The Waste Collection Policy, circulated, had been in place since February 2015 and was reviewed on a regular basis and updated if required. The Policy provides a framework for the collection of waste in the Borough and is required to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the service. No changes were recommended to the Policy, agreed by Council in June 2020, restricting the number of bulky items collected per household to 3 items per collection. This arrangement had been very effective in helping maintain

the service during this period of very high demand. The EQIA screening document had been reviewed and did not require amendment.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed

that the Waste Collection Policy 2021 be approved.

ACTION BY: Michael Laverty, Head of Waste Management

4 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

4.1 EH/PHWB/003 AFFORDABLE WARMTH SCHEME UPDATE

The Affordable Warmth Scheme is funded by the Department for Communities and aims to support the most vulnerable in the community in terms of heating and energy efficiency.

Members were reminded that an update on discussions that were ongoing between Councils and the Department for Communities relating to changes to the funding model for the scheme was reported to Committee in June 2020.

This issue, along with the number of referrals to be made each month, were part of ongoing discussions and a further meeting between the Councils and the Department was scheduled for early February 2020.

Correspondence received by Council and SOLACE regarding the outstanding issues was circulated along with a Service Level Agreement (circulated) for the remainder of current financial year:

Members were advised that despite the outstanding issues still to be resolved, the Affordable Warmth Scheme was being delivered throughout the Borough and at no financial risk to the Council due to the model used to deliver it, which differs from other Councils. The Service Level Agreement had been signed and returned to the Department.

Following a question from a Member the Head of Environmental Health clarified for Members that the referral list was provided by the Department for Communities (DfC) and he agreed to seek clarity from DfC on the criteria applied for scheme referrals.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed

that the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

4.2 L/LEI/AF/001 ANTRIM FORUM CATERING FRANCHISE

Members were advised that correspondence had been received from the current Antrim Forum catering franchisee, Café Cinnamon, indicating that they would not be continuing the franchise when the centre re-opens following the easing of current restrictions. Café Cinnamon had operated the franchise for the last five years. A new 12 month contract was due to commence on 1 May 2020 however, due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions this contract could not start. Café Cinnamon was also the franchisee at the Valley Leisure Centre which they intend to continue to operate until end of the contract in May 2022, subject to restrictions.

Officers intended to delay advertising for a new franchisee until at least mid-2021 to allow for full service to return to the leisure centres which will make the opportunity more attractive.

Members commended the service which had been provided by Sinnamon during their tenure as catering franchisee at the Antrim Forum as well as the excellent service provided at the Valley Leisure Centre.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Alderman Burns and agreed

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.3 WM/WM/37/VOL2 LOCAL AUTHORITY RECYCLING CARBON INDEX REPORT

The Local Authority Recycling Carbon Index Report had been produced annually since 2013 by Eunomia, UK based environmental consultancy firm. It evaluates the environmental performance of waste collection and recycling services, in terms of carbon savings, for councils. The report produced is a high level overview, and compares all Local Authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with Scotland producing a separate report. A full copy of the published report was circulated.

The Index is designed to be supplementary to recycling and waste tonnage information, and focuses on whether local authorities are delivering the greatest carbon benefits through the collection and treatment processes for their recycling services.

The tonnages of waste collected, the method of collection, eg source-segregated and co-mingled collections, and the treatment process are all converted into a carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent "savings" on a per person basis and these findings are reported in the index to allow for comparison between Local Authorities.

The higher the resultant value, the better the Council's Carbon Index Score. Results are grouped based on ranking into the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Top 10%: High Flyers o 10% - 30%: Good Performers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 30%-70%: Mid Performers o Bottom 30%: Low Performers
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For the second year running, the Council was the top performing local authority in Northern Ireland, with the Index placing Antrim and Newtownabbey in the “high flyers” category of the top 10% of local authorities in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Council improved its performance from the previous year, saving 102kgs of CO2 per person compared to 98kgs CO2 last year. This is 24% higher than the Northern Ireland average of 82kgs CO2 per person. This improvement had been achieved by recycling more materials through the wheelie box service, which has environmental advantages to the collection of comingled materials.

Members commended the Officers who had worked on initiatives which had resulted in the continuing performance improvement and recognised the important role that residents play in recycling.

Proposed by Councillor Logue
 Seconded by Alderman McGrath and agreed

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.4 PK/BIO/040 NORTHERN HEALTHY LIFESTYLES PARTNERSHIP FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS BIODIVERSITY AND GROW YOUR OWN VEGETABLES KITS

Council was notified of the opportunity to apply for funding to the Northern Healthy Lifestyles Partnership to support school gardening projects. The aim of the funding was to enable schools to be involved in activities such as conservation, gardening, growing fruit and vegetables and connecting with nature. Details of the funding was set out below:-

	Project	Number of schools invited to participate	Total funding awarded
1	'School Biodiversity Kits' (supply of 2 x bird boxes, 2 x bat boxes and a mini-insect home)	All primary schools including special schools	£4,940
2	'Grow your own Vegetables Kit' (set up, sow, care for and harvest a 1m ² vegetable garden)	All primary and post primary schools including special schools	£5,510
	Total funding		£10,450

Funding would be used to provide kits to schools allowing them to use them as suits their needs and available space. As schools were currently impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic some may not be in a position to take up the

offer of the kits in April, however, the funder had agreed that the kits can be purchased and held in stock until the respective schools were ready to use them.

All schools would be contacted and any Member with connections to a school in the Borough was asked to raise at Board of Governors or other school meetings.

Members commended Officers for their work in achieving funding for the project, and the Public Health Agency who had provided funding.

Following a question from a Member the Director undertook to clarify if day nurseries were eligible to participate.

Proposed by Alderman Burns

Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed

that the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Ruth Wilson, Biodiversity Officer/Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

4.5 PK/GEN/151 DfC-ACCESS AND INCLUSION FUND 2020/2021: FUNDING FOR NEW PATHS

An approach was made to Council through the Chief Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) in relation to potential funding being available through the Department for Communities at a few days' notice. This funding package was offered to local Councils through the Department's Access and Inclusion Programme 2020/21 for projects up to £30,000. With short notice to respond, two projects were submitted speculatively and confirmation had been received that both projects had been successful.

Valley Park- West linkage trail £30,000

Members were reminded that the potential for a cycle/pedestrian route between Hightown- Glengormley – Valley Park – Glas-na-Braden to Gideon's Green had been identified as green infrastructure project. The most challenging part of the proposed route – Hightown to O'Neill Road – had been the subject of various meetings with the Department for Infrastructure currently and in the meantime Officers had already identified improvements to the Glas-na-Braden section through a funding application being progressed by the Economic Development Team.

This application develops another part of the proposed route – a new path linking the existing path near the top entrance to the Valley Park at O'Neill Road to the top of the shale pitch. This path was identified as a need in the February 2019 Operations Committee with a view to improving and increasing disability access while also completing another important section of the Hightown to Gideon's Green route. This funding allocation would enable a 2.5 m wide link to be developed at this stage and this could be added to/widened as and when funding becomes available.

Map 1: Route of Valley Park- West linkage trail in blue (2.5m wide)



Jordanstown Loughshore Park, Accessibility Trail - £30,000

The need for a path was identified as being essential through the Park from the car park at the bandstand side along the sea shore following recent heavy usage of the grass area. This new path both provides a quality accessible path and minimises erosion along the grass bank by providing a number of access points to the beach along the length of the path.

Map 2: Jordanstown Loughshore Park, Accessibility Trail , in red



In order to ensure that, if successful, the projects needed to be delivered, substantially by 31 March, both projects were included in a speculative tendering process. In the event that the pandemic should disrupt any aspect of the supply chain for this project the Department would be kept informed.

Proposed by Alderman McGrath
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed

that the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks

6. AOB

Following a question from a Member, the Director of Operations provided clarity on the difficulties experienced by all Northern Ireland Councils in relation to refuse collections due to the impact on staffing levels as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and agreed to consider if a presentation to Committee would be appropriate.

ACTION BY: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed that

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

5. ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

5.1 IN CONFIDENCE WM/ARC21/4/VOL7 arc21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS

The papers for the arc21 Joint Committee Meeting were circulated for:

- January 2021

Members were reminded that these documents are confidential and may be legally privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure so therefore Members should not disclose this information to any third party and the information must be kept secure.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

that the papers be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Alderman Burns 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 Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and co-operation, and the meeting concluded at 7.21 pm.

MAYOR