



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD
AT ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE
ON MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 6.30 PM**

In the Chair	:	Councillor V Mc William
Committee Members (In person)	:	Aldermen – P Bradley, L Clarke, J McGrath and J Smyth Councillors – J Burbank, R Foster, J Gilmour and E McLaughlin
Committee Members (Remote)	:	Councillors - AM Logue, H Magill, A McAuley and M Stewart
Non Committee Members (In Person)		Councillor - B Webb
Non Committee Members (Remote)	:	Councillor - R Lynch
Also in Attendance (In Person)		Ms Sharon Clements – Department for the Economy Dr Rob Raine – Geological Survey of Northern Ireland
Officers (Present)		Director of Sustainability – M Laverty Director of Parks & Leisure Operations - M McDowell Head of Parks Operations - P Mawhinney Head of Leisure Operations – D O'Hagan Head of Property Services– D Blair ICT Systems Support Officer – C Bell Member Services Officer – E Skillen
Officers (Remote)	:	Borough Lawyer and Head of Legal Services – P Casey

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the November Operations Committee meeting and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

The Chairperson congratulated the following Community groups on their recent wins at the Northern Ireland Amenity Council Best Kept Awards which took place at the Guild Hall Derry/Londonderry during October 2024. Congratulating Merville Garden Village on winning the 'Best Kept Large Housing Area'; Ballynure in achieving runner up for 'Small Village'; Antrim for achieving runner up for 'Large Town'; Randalstown on winning 'Small Town' and crowned 'Best of the Best' in Northern Ireland. She further commended Tidy Randalstown in achieving a gold medal at the Britain in Bloom Awards which took place in Manchester during October 2024 and commended Ruairi McCormick from Randalstown who was awarded 'Community Champion'.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillor M Ní Chonghaile.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 PK/GEN/218 GEO ENERGY NI

1. Purpose

The Chairperson welcomed Ms Sharon Clements, Department for the Economy and Dr Rob Raine, Geological Survey of Northern Ireland to the meeting.

They provided a presentation outlining the benefits of Geothermal Energy and the survey work being completed in the Antrim Area.

Members' thanked them for their presentation and Members' questions were addressed.

The Chairperson thanked Ms Clements and Dr Raine for their presentation and they left the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

the presentation be noted.

NO ACTION

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 EH/EHS/LR/00, EL/053 ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE - FIRST BALLYEASTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for an Occasional Entertainments Licence for 1st Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church Hall, 1 Lower Ballyboley Road, Ballyeaston.

2. Introduction

An application had been received for the grant of an Entertainments Licence (occasional licence) for the following area.

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s) and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Mr Robert Hill	1 Lower Ballyboley Road, Ballyeaston, Ballyclare	Singing, Music, Dancing or Entertainment of a like kind Number of persons No greater than 290	EL053	New Application

In line with the Council Protocol for the hearing of Entertainments Licence applications, approved in December 2016, the application was considered at the Operations Committee meeting.

The Committee could decide the following:

- a) Grant the licence;
- b) Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- c) Refuse the licence;
- d) Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

If the Committee make a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote would be taken.

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the grant of an Entertainments Licence for the above named premises. Members were asked to note that these premises previously held an Entertainments Licence up to March 2023 and the Licence was not renewed as the premises were no longer hosting live

entertainment. The applicant had advised that they now wish to hold live entertainment in the premises again.

The operating hours for the premises are detailed below;

Monday to Saturday 12:00 to 00:00

Following a review of the Entertainment Licence policy, Committee approval was now required in advance of granting the licence on an annual basis.

4. Summary

Mr Hill had submitted an application for an occasional Entertainments Licence for 1st Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church Hall, 1 Lower Ballyboley Road, Ballyeaston.

Officers had reviewed the application and were content to recommend approval. As per the Council protocol for reviewing Entertainments Licence applications, a decision by Members was required regarding the approval of the licence.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

an Entertainments Licence (Occasional Licence) be granted to the applicant, Mr. Hill for 1st Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church Hall, Ballyboley Road, Ballyeaston with the following conditions;

- (a) that all relevant licensing requirements are met.**
- (b) that statutory consultees have no objections to approval.**

ACTION BY: Kelly Squance, Environmental Health Officer

4.2 EH/EHS/LR/001, EL/125 ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE - TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report was to seek Members' approval for an Occasional Entertainments Licence for Templepatrick Presbyterian Church Hall, 750 Antrim Road, Templepatrick, BT39 0AP

2. Introduction

An application had been received for the grant of an Entertainments Licence (occasional licence) for the following area.

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal

Mr David McMullan	750 Antrim Road, Templepatrick, BT39 0AP	Singing, Music, Dancing or Entertainment of a like kind Theatrical performance Number of persons No greater than 420	EL125	New Application
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In line with the Council Protocol for the hearing of Entertainments Licence applications, approved in December 2016, the application must be considered at the Operations Committee meeting.

The Committee could decide the following:

- a) Grant the licence;
- b) Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- c) Refuse the licence;
- d) Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

If the Committee make a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote would be taken.

3. Main Report

An application had been received for the Grant of an Entertainments Licence for the above named premises. Members were asked to note that these premises previously held an Entertainments Licence up to February 2024 and the Licence was not renewed as the premises were no longer hosting live entertainment. The applicant had advised that they wish to hold live entertainment in the premises again.

The operating hours for the event were as detailed below;

Monday to Saturday 10:00am – 11.00pm

Following a review of the Entertainment Licence policy, Council approval was now required in advance of granting the licence on an annual basis.

4. Summary

Mr McMullan had submitted an application for an occasional entertainments licence for Templepatrick Presbyterian Church Hall, 750 Antrim Road, Templepatrick, BT39 0AP.

Officers had reviewed the application and were content to recommend approval. As per Council protocol for reviewing entertainments license

applications, a decision by Members was required regarding the approval of the licence.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke
 Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

an Entertainments Licence (Occasional Licence) be granted to the applicant, Mr McMullan, Templepatrick Presbyterian Church Hall, 750 Antrim Road, Templepatrick, BT39 0AP with the following conditions;

- (a) That all relevant licensing requirements are met.**
- (b) That statutory consultees have no objections to approval.**

ACTION BY: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

4.3 WM/037/VOL2 REFUSE AND RECYCLING PUBLIC HOLIDAY COLLECTIONS 2025/26

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval on the proposed alternative refuse and kerbside recycling collection days for Public Holidays in 2025.

2. Background

As in previous years, Council work with our Contractors to agree alternative collection dates for refuse and kerbside recycling across the Borough.

3. Key Issues

The arrangements for refuse and kerbside recycling collections for Public Holidays up to and including August 2025 were set out below for consideration. The proposed alternative collection days for 2025 were:

Public Holiday	Legacy Antrim Households	Legacy Newtownabbey Households
St. Patrick's Day Monday 17 March 2025	No change 17 March 2025 (Monday)	No change 17 March 2025 (Monday)
Good Friday Friday 18 April 2025	No collection required	No change Friday 18 April 2025
Easter Monday Monday 21 April 2025	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to the following day, through to Friday to catch up. 22 April 2025 (Tuesday)	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to the following day, through to Saturday to catch up. 22 April 2025 (Tuesday)
Easter Tuesday Tuesday 22 April 2025	As above (Wednesday 23 April)	As above (Wednesday 23 April)

May Day Monday 5 May 2025	No change 5 May 2025 (Monday)	No change 5 May 2025 (Monday)
Spring Bank Holiday Monday 26 May 2025	No change 26 May 2025 (Monday)	No change 26 May 2025 (Monday)
Saturday 12 July 2025	No collection required Monday 14 July 2025 collection as normal	No collection required Monday 14 July 2025 collection as normal
Sunday 13 July 2025	No collection required Tuesday 15 July 2025 collection as normal	No collection required Tuesday 15 July 2025 collection as normal
Summer Bank Holiday Monday 25 August 2025	No change 25 August 2025 (Monday)	No change 25 August 2025 (Monday)

**At present, Legacy Antrim collections were Monday-Thursday, legacy Newtownabbey collections were Monday-Friday.*

No alternative collection arrangements were included for December 2025 as the waste harmonisation project may have implications for this. A further report would be brought to Members when these had been agreed.

In order to simplify the communication message from Council to the public regarding alternative collection dates, all affected bin collections, in both legacy Antrim and Newtownabbey, would be moved to the next available collection day until catch up was achieved on a free day e.g. Friday or Saturday.

For information, the previously agreed arrangements for the 2024 Christmas holiday period were detailed in the table below.

Public Holiday	Legacy Antrim Households	Legacy Newtownabbey Households
APPROVED November 2023		
Christmas Day Wednesday 25 December 2024	No Service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to later in the week, through to Friday to catch up. 27 December 2024 (Friday)	No Service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to later in the week. 27 December 2024 (Friday)
Boxing Day	As above	As above

Thursday 26 December 2024	(Saturday)	(Saturday)
Friday 27 December 2024	No collection required	As above (Monday)
Monday 30 December 2024	No change 30 December 2024 (Monday)	As above (Tuesday)
Tuesday 31 December 2024	No change 31 December 2024 (Tuesday)	As above (Thursday)
New Year's Day Wednesday 01 January 2025	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to the following day, through to Friday 3 January 2025 to catch up. 2 January 2025 (Thursday)	No service. Collections rescheduled for this day and each successive day of this week to the following day, through to Saturday 11 January 2025 to catch up 3 January 2025 (Friday)

Residents in the Borough would be advised of these alternate arrangements via the usual means of the Borough Life, bin stickers and leaflets, social media, and via Council's website.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
 Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

the collection arrangements for refuse and recycling bin collections for Public Holidays up to and including August 2025, as set out above, be approved.

ACTION BY: Rebecca Clulow, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer.

4.4 PK/CEM/CR/006 CREMATION SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN 150TH ANNIVERSARY TREE PLANTING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the planting of a tree at Council's crematorium to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Cremation Society of Great Britain.

2. Introduction/Background

Founded in 1874, the Cremation Society was a registered charity and a pioneer of cremation in Great Britain, establishing the first public crematorium. Over the years, it had supported cremation facilities nationwide and advocated for

legislative progress. To mark its 150th anniversary, the Society was organising commemorative tree plantings at select crematoria, including Antrim and Newtownabbey Crematorium, the most recent facility in Northern Ireland, and had requested permission to plant a tree with a commemorative plaque.

3. Key Considerations

The Society proposed a native tree, beneficial to wildlife that could thrive for 150 years. The Crematorium Manager recommended an Irish Yew, well-suited to the soil and environmental conditions.

4. Financial Position/Implication

The Cremation Society would fund the tree and plaque, but had requested that the Crematorium manage the ground preparation, planting, and landscaping. These costs would be covered within the existing horticultural budget.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
 Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

approval be granted for a tree to be planted at Council's crematorium to celebrate the 150th anniversary of The Cremation Society of Great Britain.

ACTION BY: Jim Parker, Crematorium Manager

4.5 **WM/WM/037/VOL2 TEMPORARY FESTIVE RECYCLING CENTRE ARRANGEMENTS**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the arrangements for temporary Recycling Centres over the Christmas period.

2. Background

Members would be aware that residents using O'Neill Road, Bruslee and Crumlin Recycling Centres had been provided with additional waste disposal capacity over the festive period with bin lorries in previous years. This was for the disposal of residual household waste as was usually located at the Valley, Sixmile and Crumlin Leisure Centres.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Last year's usage of the additional waste disposal locations had been analysed and information provided in the table below.

Waste Tonnes 2023

Date	Satellite Site	Tonnage	HRC Site	Tonnage
27/12/2023	Valley LC	6.36	O'Neill Road HRC	25.58
28/12/2023 – 30/12/2023	Valley LC	8.26	O'Neill Road HRC	61.64

27/12/2023	Crumlin LC	0.5	Crumlin HRC	8.96
27/12/2023	Sixmile LC	1.0	Bruslee HRC	13.32

Based on this information, the following revised arrangements were proposed to provide extra waste disposal capacity during the days after Christmas when site usage was at its highest:

- a) that similar to Christmas 2023, an additional temporary waste recycling facility was put in place at the Valley Leisure Centre carpark in order to reduce traffic congestion at O'Neill Road and wider area on Friday 27, Saturday 28 and Monday 30 December from 9am - 4pm;

4. Key Issues

There were extremely high levels of usage at the O'Neill Road Recycling Centre during the festive period and as a result, the additional capacity would be maintained for three days.

It was not felt that the additional resources for Bruslee and Crumlin Recycling Centres would be required as demonstrated by last year's usage, although Officers would monitor the sites and would deploy containers if required. Newpark and Craigmore Recycling Centres were expected to be able to manage the additional usage.

5. Financial Implications

The proposed additional services could be delivered using existing Council staff although one extra collection vehicle would be required for the operation, at a cost of £1,000, subject to availability.

While all waste collected at the additional sites would be transferred to a materials recycling facility, where as much waste as possible would be removed for recycling or recovery, Council did achieve better recycling rates when the waste was collected at the Recycling Centres and therefore use of the additional sites would be kept to a minimum.

Proposed by Councillor Logue
 Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

the arrangements for Temporary Recycling Centres as set out above be approved.

ACTION BY: Darren Purdy, Head of Waste Operations

4.6 **WM/WG/002 WINTER OPERATIONS AND MOU WITH THE DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the Winter Operations Plan 2024/25 and to seek approval for the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Infrastructure.

2. Background

Winter Operations Plan

From November to April, Council maintain a Winter Operations Plan to assist staff in delivering Council services as safely and efficiently as possible during the winter months. The Plan also included provision for gritting services at all Council facilities and designated areas like town centres and car parks, the delivery of the waste collection services during adverse weather, and snow clearance operations.

3. Key Issues

The Winter Operations Plan was reviewed on an annual basis in order to improve the delivery of the service. A copy of the updated Plan was circulated for Members' information and includes Appendix 2 that outlined the areas which would be gritted and when this would occur.

Following the decision last month, the gritting of the designated areas in the towns and villages would be carried out by a specialist contractor following a procurement exercise.

The Plan outlined the notification procedure for gritting operations, which would commence if the designated officer or specialist contractor believed there was a strong possibility of ice occurring based on Met Office warnings and media weather reports.

The procedure takes into account micro climatic differences across the Borough, for example, areas may be gritted in Glengormley due to sub-zero temperatures but there may be no requirement to do so in Crumlin as the temperature could be above freezing.

The Plan aims to have Council facilities gritted before staff arrive at work, and the main town centres to be serviced before shops and businesses open at 9am, although Members should be aware that gritting operations cannot take place during periods of heavy rain or snow and were dependent on available resources.

The Plan also addressed the possible impact of adverse weather on the waste collection services. In the event of severe weather, road conditions would be assessed and operations revised to reflect the increased risks to staff and public safety.

Community Winter Resilience Kits

The Council also had three Community Winter Resilience Kits, including salt spreader, salt, grit box, snow shovels, ice grippers, gloves, and hi-vis vests for each DEA. The contact details of the community groups or individuals would

be kept on a database in case resources need to be shared across the Borough if ice coverage was patchy. Community groups or individuals receiving the Kits would also be supplied with health and safety guidance notes.

Community Grit Piles

It was proposed to maintain the community grit piles this winter and a list of the locations were included in the Plan. Grit would be supplied in the event of prolonged periods of adverse weather.

Memorandum of Understanding Clearing Busy Town Centre Footways and Pedestrian Areas of Snow and Ice

Since the formation of the Council, an Agreement had been in place with Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads for clearing busy town centre footways and pedestrian areas of snow and ice during periods of heavy snowfall or prolonged adverse weather.

This Agreement, in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding, was renewed every three years. The Department had recently requested that Council considered a further three year commitment. The MoU was circulated for Members' information.

The MoU provided an agreed framework to formalise the level of service to be provided and defined each organisation's duties and obligations in delivering the service. Points in the MoU to note were:

- DfI Roads provided Council with the salt/grit mix free of charge;
- Council would receive an annual Service Fee of £2,358;
- DfI Roads extended the indemnity offered to Council and its agents.

4. Financial Implications

The implementation of the Council Winter Operation Plan did have a financial impact with the provision of spreading equipment and grit/salt, and the staffing resources. In addition, there would be costs due to the use of the specialist contractor to deliver the requirements of the Plan in the towns and villages. The final cost was dependent on the severity of the winter but it was envisaged to be in the region of £30,000-£40,000. As stated above, there would be a small financial receipt, £2,358, from DfI if Council approved the terms of the MOU.

A Member's query was addressed in respect of Ballyrobert Village and Straid Village being added to the gritting schedule.

Proposed by Councillor Magill
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

(a) the Winter Operations Plan be noted; and

- (b) **the renewal of the partnering arrangements with Department for Infrastructure Roads be approved for the removal of snow and ice as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding for the next three years.**
- (c) **a report be brought back to Committee in respect of the cost of adding Ballyrobert Village and Straid Village to the gritting schedule.**

ACTION BY: Gillian McGrath, PA to the Director of Sustainability

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 EH/PHWB/005 KEEP WARM AND WELL EVENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to advise Members of the seven Keep Warm and Well events held throughout the Borough by Environmental Health, which offered residents advice on staying safe and warm during winter.

2. Introduction

Winter could be a difficult time for many residents due to rising energy costs, increased health risks, and physical injuries from slips and falls. To support residents during this season, the Environmental Health section host free Keep Warm and Well events. These events allowed residents to consult directly with experts who offered one-on-one support on issues like benefit advice, energy efficiency, home security, accident prevention, and age-friendly information.

3. Key Issues

In partnership with Community Advice, the Antrim and Newtownabbey Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and our Leisure Team, seven events were held across the Borough. Attendees received personalised advice, free health checks, and had the chance to review the PCSP action plan.

A total of 255 residents attended, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 100% of participants finding the event beneficial and 98% expressing high satisfaction with the staff's helpfulness.

One attendee shared the following comment:

"Each stand was very informative, and it was useful to learn about the services the Council offers, such as home safety and age-friendly information."

In addition to promoting the events through Council's website, they were advertised in local newspapers and on social media. Residents could also access energy-saving advice via Council's website, including an Energy Saving Booklet and videos offering tips on reducing energy costs during the winter months:

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/residents-community-information/cost-of-living/energy-efficiency/>

4. Summary

During September seven Keep Warm and Well events were held with 255 people attending. The events focused on advice and support to help through the winter months, with 100% of the attendees finding the events beneficial.

In response to a Member's query the Director of Sustainability informed Members that he would seek clarification on the current status with electric blanket testing and report back to them.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Alderman McGrath and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.2 **EH/EHS/CP/004 TEST PURCHASE**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to inform Members about the results of test purchasing activities conducted concerning the sale of age-restricted products like cigarettes and tobacco.

2. Background

Members were reminded that Councils in Northern Ireland had a statutory duty to enforce the legislation relating to the sale of certain age-restricted products such as cigarettes and tobacco products. Under the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, it was illegal to sell cigarettes or tobacco to anyone under 18. Since 1 February 2022, it was also an offence to sell nicotine inhaling products (e-cigarettes and e-liquids) to anyone under 18 as set out in the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2016.

The Public Health Agency fund the employment of Tobacco Control Officers (TCOs) who work on behalf of District Councils in Northern Ireland to promote compliance with tobacco control legislation and to provide advice on compliance.

TCOs must conduct at least 70 visits annually to retailers, including test purchases, to ensure compliance with age-restricted sale legislation. In April 2024, advisory letters were sent to 141 retailers, and TCOs conducted 177 advisory visits from January to April 2024. A previous test exercise was conducted in April 2024 and was reported to Members in June 2024.

3. Key Issues

In August 2024, a further test purchase exercise was conducted by TCO's on fourteen retailers, accompanied by a young person aged under 18 years, who attempted to purchase either tobacco products or nicotine inhaling products.

Eight premises complied fully, while four sold a nicotine inhaling product (vapes) and two sold tobacco products (cigarettes) to a person under the age of 18.

The six retailers that failed were informed and agreed to provide additional staff training on age-restricted sales. Each retailer received a written warning. One staff member who asked for Identification but still sold a vape to a person under 18, was served a fixed penalty fine of £250, reduced to £187.50 if paid within 14 days. The fine has been paid at the reduced rate.

4. Summary

This was the second phase of planned test purchase exercises for 2024/2025, to be conducted on 70 retailers. On this occasion, six written warnings were issued to the owners of the retail shops and one fixed penalty issued to a person who sold a vape to a person under the age of 18.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.3 **L/LEI/SD/018 HEALTH INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN – UPDATE**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide a Quarter 2 update on Council's Health Intervention Action Plan for 2024-25.

2. Introduction/Background

Members were advised that Council approved the Health Intervention Action Plan (2022-27) in November 2022, a copy was circulated for Members' reference. The plan was designed to increase regular and sustainable participation in exercise across all age groups, with the wider aim of tackling wider health issues in vulnerable and inactive groups.

3. Results in Quarter 2 - 2024/25

Officers develop and coordinate delivery of a range Council led programmes, as well as working in collaboration with relevant partner organisations, to facilitate the effective delivery of the Action Plan. During Quarter 2, a total of 5,391 participated in these programmes, 7% below the quarterly target but 5% ahead of the cumulative target, with a detailed breakdown as follows:

Programmes	24/25 Annual Target	Q2 Target	Q2 Actual	YTD Total
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Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS)	200	50	37 completers	62 completers
Move More Cancer Rehabilitation and Rehabilitation Programme	150	38	49	59
Age Friendly (Live Long, Fall's Prevention, Walking Netball, Aqua Fit and Nordic Walking)	20,000	5,000	4,772	10,160
Exercise for Mental Health Programme	900	225	453	817
Pulmonary Maintenance Programme	800	200	105	273
Cardiac Rehabilitation and Maintenance Programmes	600	150	135	445
Programmes for People with a Disability	400	100	161	208
Veterans (New)	60	15	8	8

4. Funding

Breakdown of external funding confirmed for 2024-25 to assist in the delivery of programmes:

Programme	Funded by	Total
Physical Activity Referral Schemes (PARS)	PHA	£31,461
Walking Football Programme	NHSCT	£1,890
Falls Prevention Steady and Strong Programme – due Q3	NHSCT	£1,850
Move More (Cancer Rehabilitation Programme)	Macmillan	£5,000
Total		£40,201

5. New Developments

Officers had engaged with Veteran Groups in the Antrim and Newtownabbey areas. In October 2024, a group of 8 Army Veterans were now on a

programme in Antrim Forum, with another group in Newtownabbey scheduled to start in November 2024.

Officers aimed to work towards the development of two new specialised programmes in 2024/25: Drug & Alcohol Addiction and Active Pregnancy.

Proposed by Alderman McGrath
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.4 L/GEN/070 NET PROMOTER SCORE – QUARTER 2 2024/25 RESULTS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide a quarter 2 update on the Net Promoter Score for Council's Leisure Centres.

2. Introduction

To collect customer feedback and assess satisfaction, the Council's Leisure Section used digital software to calculate a Net Promoter Score (NPS). This score was derived from randomly sampling customers who visit the leisure centres and asking them to rate the facilities on a scale of 1 to 10.

Additionally, a follow-up question asked for the reasons behind their rating, providing valuable insights for management to consider and address.

3. Quarter 2 Results

Key results for the quarter 2, 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024:

- Total survey requests: 3,659
- Total responses: 767
- Response rate: 21%
- NPS: 66
- "Staff," "Facilities," and "Courtesy" consistently remain the top three areas mentioned by customers;
- "Staff" and "Courtesy" receive the most positive feedback scores;
- Ballyearl remains the highest scoring Centre with a score of 76

Performance was monitored daily, monthly, and quarterly, with the current 12 month rolling score being currently 63, against an annual target of 65 however, the current rolling three month score was at 68 showing an improved trend.

The NPS performance was significantly higher than the UK leisure industry average of 34.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

Councillor McLaughlin left the Chamber during Item 5.5.

5.5 FI/FIN/004 BUDGET REPORT – QUARTER 2 APRIL 2024 TO SEPTEMBER 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide financial performance information at period 6 (April 2024 – September 2024) for Parks & Leisure and Sustainability.

2. Background

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

3. Summary

Budget reports for Parks and Leisure and Sustainability for Quarter 2 April 2024 to September 2024 were circulated for Members' information.

At present the Parks and Leisure budget had a favourable position of £531,850 (9.7%). This favourable position was largely due to:

- Leisure income favourable by £223,000;
- Crematorium income favourable by £95,000

The Sustainability budget was in an adverse position of £934,634 (8.3%), this was due to:

- Collected waste arising above predicted levels;
- Lack of budgetary provision for green waste collected at the Recycling Centres;
- Higher than predicted repairs and maintenance costs at the Recycling Centres and Environmental Services Depot;
- Delay in the award of the Interim Residual Waste Treatment Contract.

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

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

7 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

In response to Members' queries, the Chair declined to address any items under Any Other Relevant Business, as no prior notice was given before the meeting.

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Logue
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

that the following Committee business be taken In Confidence and the livestream and audio recording would cease at this point.

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 **IN CONFIDENCE** PK/REG/013, PK/GEN/197 CEMETERY BURIAL CAPACITY UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the burial capacity within Council's cemeteries.

2. Background

Members would recall that quarterly updates on burial capacity within Council-owned cemeteries were provided to the Operations Committee. In January 2024, the estimated burial capacity was projected at 12 years. This calculation included a three-year average of plots sold annually, incorporating data from Carnmoney Cemetery. However, as Carnmoney Cemetery reached full capacity over three years ago, it had now been excluded from these calculations to ensure accuracy.

3. Current Position

The capacity as of 30th September 2024, for Council's Cemeteries and Gardens of Remembrance was detailed as follows:

Cemetery	No. of plots remaining	Current Average no. of plots sold PER YEAR (based on 3yr average)	Estimated remaining burial capacity (years)
Carnmoney	0	0	0
Ballyclare	549	100	5.4
Rashee	357	10	35
Sixmile	2089	80	26
Crumlin	407	15	27
TOTAL	3402	205	17

Garden of Remembrance Plots (for burial of ashes only)	No. of plots remaining	Average no. of plots sold (based on 3 year average)	Estimated remaining burial capacity (years)
Carnmoney	58	55	1
Ballyclare	122	2	61
Mallusk	15	0	15

4. Key Issues

Members were advised that certain sections of Crumlin and Rashee cemeteries had reported issues that would reduce their available capacity from previous estimates. Officers had initiated a mapping review across all Council cemeteries (excluding Carnmoney) to obtain a more accurate capacity assessment.

Due to the significant challenge of limited burial capacity in urban Newtownabbey, Officers had re-examined earlier feasibility studies for establishing new cemetery ground in the area. [REDACTED] Officers were now updating the data on this option and would proceed to develop an Outline Business Case for Members' review.

In response to Members' queries, the Director of Parks and Leisure confirmed that a feasibility study on new cemetery provision in Newtownabbey had previously been completed. This study will be reviewed and will serve as the foundation for an Outline Business Case, which will be presented to a future Operations Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
 Seconded by Alderman Bradley and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.2 **IN CONFIDENCE** WM/arc21/4/VOL11 ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the most recent arc21 Joint Committee meetings.

2. Introduction

The arc21 Joint Committee meet on a monthly basis and each month the papers were reviewed by the Operations Committee.

3. Previous Decisions of Council

All previous papers had been noted.

4. Main Report

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

- 31 October 2024

Members were reminded that these documents were 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.

5. Summary

The main issues from the October 2024 meeting were:



Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.3 **IN CONFIDENCE** PK/GEN/035/VOL4 GRASS CUTTING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval to add Department for Infrastructure (DfI) locations to the Council's grass-cutting schedule and to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for these sites.

2. Introduction/Background

Previous Operations Committee reports discussed grass-cutting responsibilities across the Borough, noting DfI's reduction in cutting due to budget cuts and

biodiversity policies, limiting cuts to sight lines with only a 1.1m swathe cut twice yearly in other areas. The Council had previously compensated by increasing grass cutting on non-Council-owned land, including a yearly payment of £80,000 to Dfl for urban cuts and an estimated £60,000 annually to maintain 52 additional locations. In September, the Council agreed to discontinue the urban grass-cutting arrangement with Dfl and review the Dfl-owned locations maintained by Council.

3. Proposed Criteria

The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group met in October to review Dfl locations maintained by the Council, with Officers proposing criteria to reduce the list from 52 to 34 locations:

- No additional non-Council land would be added.
- Locations must be significant, featuring Council flowerbeds, sculptures, or tree planting.
- A 10m area on either side of town and village signage where traffic regulations allow.
- Each location must have an MOU with Dfl.

A list of the current 52 locations, proposed 34 locations, and maps with designated areas for cutting were circulated for Members' information.

4. Financial Implications

In 2024/25, the Council paid £80,000 to Dfl for urban grass cutting and an estimated £60,000 to maintain 52 additional Dfl-owned locations. With the end of the urban grass-cutting arrangements and reduced maintenance on non-Council land in 2025/26, an estimated savings of over £100,000 was anticipated.

5. Next Steps

If approved, Officers would establish an MOU with Dfl for each location, with new arrangements effective from March 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Logue

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and proposed that

the list of Dfl-owned locations for inclusion in the Council's grass-cutting schedule and the establishment of a MOU for these sites be approved.

ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

6.4 **IN CONFIDENCE** L/LEI/VLC/010, FI/GEN/028, L/LEI/CLC/002 VALLEY LEISURE CENTRE & CRUMLIN LEISURE CENTRE – REPLACEMENT OF FITNESS EQUIPMENT

1. Purpose

This purpose of this report was to seek approval for the Business Case and the

use of the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) framework to replace fitness equipment at Valley Leisure Centre and Crumlin Leisure Centre at a cost of £[REDACTED].

2. Introduction/Background

The fitness equipment at Valley Leisure Centre was last replaced in 2017, while Crumlin Leisure Centre's equipment was originally installed in 2016. Although both Centres had maintained the equipment under manufacturers' service contracts, it was now nearing the end of its useful life. Without replacement, the centres risk increased maintenance and repair costs, and parts for older equipment may soon become obsolete.

3. Proposed Project

As detailed in the Business Case (circulated) several options were evaluated, with the preferred choice being the replacement of cardiovascular equipment at Valley Leisure Centre and the full replacement of all equipment at Crumlin Leisure Centre. The cost for this option, including delivery and installation, was £[REDACTED]. This replacement was anticipated to enhance membership and customer satisfaction at both centres.

4. Financial Implications

The equipment replacement would be funded through the 2024/25 Estate Lifecycle Costs. Members were reminded that a provisional budget of £[REDACTED] was previously allocated for minor renewal and refurbishment projects. Although initially scheduled for a later financial year, the fitness equipment replacement had been advanced due to delays in other scheduled projects, such as car park resurfacing, allowing this replacement to proceed within the current financial year.

It was proposed that the equipment be procured through the ESPO framework, a collaborative UK procurement service that facilitates efficient and cost-effective purchasing for public sector organisations.

If the business case and use of the framework was approved, it would serve as the investment decision, enabling the purchase of the equipment.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Parks and Leisure confirmed that the proposed purchasing framework would offer the Council good value for money.

Addressing another Member's question, the Director explained that the Sixmile Leisure Centre underwent a full refurbishment of its fitness suite in 2019.

Additionally, a feasibility study had been completed to assess options for refurbishing the changing facilities and fitness studio space.

Proposed by Councillor Logue

Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

(a) The Business Case for replacing fitness equipment at Valley Leisure Centre and Crumlin Leisure Centre be approved; and

- (b) **The procurement of replacement fitness equipment for both centres proceed through the ESPO framework at a cost of £[REDACTED].**

ACTION BY: Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager

Councillor McLaughlin returned to the Chamber after Item 6.4

6.5 IN CONFIDENCE PK/GEN/216 BALLYEARL LEISURE CENTRE - DRIVING RANGE DRAINAGE WORKS

1. Purpose

Having identified the preferred option for the project of drainage works at Ballyearl Driving Range at an estimated Gross Capital Expenditure of £[REDACTED] including professional fees, the purpose of this report was to seek approval to progress the project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme.

2. Introduction/Background

The Ballyearl Leisure Centre driving range had faced persistent drainage issues for several years, resulting in standing water that negatively impacts user experience and surface quality. The poor ground conditions had led to challenges such as high volume of submerged golf balls, limited vehicle access for ball collection (necessitating manual collection and incurring overtime costs), and ongoing grounds maintenance difficulties. To address these concerns, a specialist drainage consultant conducted a drainage condition survey, the findings of which had been circulated for Members' review.

3. Key Issues

The consultant's report identified several factors contributing to the ineffective drainage network:

1. Insufficient coverage and capacity of the current drainage system to manage surface rainfall.
2. Poor network performance, worsened by blockages due to inadequate specifications, construction methods, or downstream obstructions.
3. Inefficient design and spacing of field drains that don't accommodate topographical conditions, hindering maintenance.
4. A high water table that exacerbates these issues, with the existing network unable to effectively manage it.

4. Proposed Option

After evaluating several options detailed within the business case (circulated) ranging from minor repairs to a full redesign, the preferred option was a comprehensive drainage upgrade for the driving range at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED]. This solution included the addition of field drainage and a new header line across the range, expected to reduce peak surface water run-off and improve drainage flow to the watercourse.

5. Financial Implications

The project would be funded through the 2024/25 Estate Lifecycle Costs. Members were reminded that a provisional budget of £[REDACTED] was previously allocated for minor renewal and refurbishment projects as part of the Council's Capital Programme.

6. Next Steps

If the Outline Business Case was approved, a detailed project specification would be prepared for tender. The tender outcome would be presented to Members for an investment decision at Stage 3 of the Council's Capital Programme.

In response to a Member's query, the Director of Parks and Leisure noted that some operational disruptions at the driving range would be unavoidable while the works are underway.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

approval be granted to advance the project of drainage works at Ballyearl Leisure Centre at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED] (inclusive of professional fees), to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme. This stage includes the development and completion of the Final Business Case including detailed design, planning, and procurement.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

6.6 **IN CONFIDENCE** PK/GEN/032 GROUND REPAIR COSTS AT JORDANSTOWN LOUGHSHORE PARK FROM DUFFY'S CIRCUS USAGE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide an update of the costs associated with ground repairs at Jordanstown Loughshore Park following Duffy's Circus recent booking.

2. Introduction/Background

Duffy's Circus recently held an event at Jordanstown Loughshore Park, maintaining its long tradition of using the venue. The circus typically sets up in the grass amphitheatre near the car park, which had become its regular site when using the park.

While the event received approval from the Council in July, some Members raised concerns about potential damage to the grounds from the circus tent and related infrastructure. It was agreed that a follow-up report would be prepared to outline the costs of any necessary repairs to the area.

3. Key Issues

In line with a previous Council decision, all applications to hold a circus on Council-owned land required individual approval. For this event, the organisers confirmed that no animals would be used, ensuring compliance with current Council policy.

However, due to inclement weather during the summer months, hosting the circus on the grass area adjacent to the car park caused significant damage. Photos of the affected site were circulated for Members' reference. The use of heavy equipment, vehicles, and increased foot traffic compacted the turf, resulting in the need for extensive repairs. As a result, the park's aesthetic appeal had been impacted, and full recovery would take several weeks. During this time, parts of the park would remain unusable until the grass had fully regrown.

4. Financial Implication

As with previous events, the approved booking fee and a surety payment of £1,000, payable in lieu of any potential damage to the site, were applicable. £561 had been withheld from this payment as detailed below:

Items	Calculation	Cost
Staff Costs	8 hours x 4 staff at scale 3	£376
Materials	Grass seed £105 & Soil (2 tonnes at £40)	£185
	Total cost of repair	£561

In response to Members' queries Officers agreed to investigate the possible relocation of future events to the V36 Park and would report back to a future Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Alderman Bradley and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour 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 7.40 pm.

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.