



31 December 2025

Committee Chair: Alderman J Smyth

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor L O'Hagan

Committee Members: Aldermen – L Boyle, P Bradley and L Clarke

Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, R Foster, J Gilmour,
N Kelly, AM Logue, A McAuley, E McLaughlin,
V McWilliam, M Stewart and S Ward

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Monday 5 January 2026 at 6.30 pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Baker".

Richard Baker, GM MSc
Chief Executive, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

PLEASE NOTE: Refreshments will be available in the Café from 5.20

For any queries please contact Member Services:
Tel: 028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 Estimates Update Presentation

3.2 Environmental Health – Health and Wellbeing Section Presentation

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 Horticultural Grant Aid Programme

4.2 Mary Peters Trust

4.3 Review of Entertainments Licensing Policy

4.4 Annual Contributions – Sustainable Northern Ireland

4.5 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Data Sharing Agreement

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 Provision of Replacement Play Park Equipment

5.2 Winter Woollies Update

5.3 International Men's Day

5.4 Waste Management Performance Annual Update 2024-25

6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

7 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

7.1 Development of Pitch 5 at V36, Valley Leisure Centre

7.2 arc21 Joint Committee Papers

**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON
MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2026**

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 FI/FIN/11 ESTIMATES UPDATE PRESENTATION

1. Purpose

An update on the 2026/27 Estimates for the Estates and Recreation and Environment Services and Sustainability Directorates will be presented at the meeting.

A summary of the financial position of the Directorates for the 2025/26 financial year and the current financial estimates for 2026/27 is **enclosed.**

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the presentation be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

3.2 EH/PHWB/017 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – HEALTH AND WELLBEING SECTION PRESENTATION

1. Purpose

This report provides Members with an overview of the activities and achievements of Environmental Health - Health and Wellbeing Team.

2. Background

Members will receive a presentation from the Environmental Health – Health and Wellbeing Team outlining the activities and achievements delivered (**enclosed**). The presentation will highlight key projects, outcomes and performance information, providing Members with an overview of the team's contribution to supporting residents' health and wellbeing.

The presentation will reflect the team's work in supporting residents across a range of areas, including Age-Friendly initiatives, Energy Efficiency, Home Accident Prevention and Nutrition, and will highlight key projects and achievements.

A summary of the team's programmes, initiatives and interventions is **to follow**.

3. Summary

This report introduces a presentation to Members highlighting the Environmental Health – Health and Wellbeing Team's key projects, achievements, and contribution to supporting residents' health and wellbeing.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report and presentation be noted.

Prepared by: James O'Kane, Environmental Health Manager (Health and Wellbeing)

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 PK/GEN/223 HORTICULTURAL GRANT AID PROGRAMME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the recommendations set within the 3rd Call of the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme.

2. Background

Members are reminded that the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme provides fully funded grants of up to £1,500 to support local community groups in delivering horticultural projects on land that is accessible to the general public within the Borough. Eligible applicants include constituted community groups, and schools, based within the Borough.

Successful applications are expected to demonstrate clear outcomes in relation to increasing community participation in planting and related horticultural activities and/or supporting the purchase of horticultural materials and features that contribute to the enhancement of public spaces.

3. Grant Programme – Third Call

A total of two applications were submitted during the third call for the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme. Each application has been comprehensively assessed and scored in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria.

Following detailed review and consideration, one application has been recommended for funding under the programme. The remaining application was not eligible as they had received funding in the first call of the grant programme.

The application is determined to have met the eligibility requirements and demonstrated strong alignment with the objectives of the scheme. A summary table outlining the application including key details and corresponding recommendations has been **enclosed** for Members' information and consideration as part of the decision-making process.

4. Financial Position

The approved budget for the 2025/26 Horticultural Grant Aid Programme is £30,000. In May 2025, Council awarded a total of £16,440 and in November a total of £7,210 in grant funding, resulting in a remaining balance of £6,350.

Based on the assessment outcomes, and subject to Members' approval of the one recommended application, a further £1,419 will be allocated during this round of funding. This allocation will leave a remaining budget of £4,931 for the 2025/26 financial year. A full review of the 2025-26 Horticultural Grant

Aid Programme will be completed with any new recommendations brought back to a future Committee meeting.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that approval be granted for the allocation of funding under the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme – Call 3, totalling £1,419 for the period 6 November to 30 November 2025.

Prepared by: Nadine Campbell, Parks Development Manager

Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Estates and Recreation

4.2 L/LEI/002/VOL3 MARY PETERS TRUST

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the Mary Peters Trust request for funding to support young athletes within the Borough.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded that the Mary Peters Trust provides financial support to young athletes from across Northern Ireland. Within the Borough the range of sporting disciplines supported in 2025/26 includes Golf, Motor Sports, Disability Sport, and Horse Riding. Correspondence has been received from the Mary Peters Trust, requesting financial support for its funding to local athletes. This correspondence is **enclosed** for Members' reference.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Council support from 2018 to 2024 was £2,000 per annum, increasing to £2,500 in 2024/25 and 2025/2026.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members approve a contribution of £2,500 funding to the Mary Peters Trust to continue with funding athletes from the Borough.

Prepared by: Kevin Madden, Sport and Physical Activity Manager

Agreed by: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations

Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Estates and Recreation

4.3 EH/EHS/LR/001 REVIEW OF ENTERTAINMENT LICENSING POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update members on the review of the Entertainments Licensing Policy.

2. Background

Members are reminded that Environmental Health is responsible for inspecting and licensing places of entertainment in the Borough, ensuring compliance with safety standards and effective management of fire, crowd control, and other risks.

A draft Entertainments Licensing Policy was agreed by the Operations Committee on 6 February 2023. At the same time, new Conditions and Management Rules for Places of Indoor and Outdoor Entertainment were approved and implemented.

3. Key Issues

A review of the current Entertainments Licensing policy has been carried out, to ensure that both the application process for customers and the administrative burden for both businesses and the Council remain effective.

The existing policy continues to reflect current processes and procedures for licence applications, carrying out inspections of premises, hearing by Operations Committee and the issuing of licences.

All elements of the existing document remain valid, with only the following minor amendments suggested.

Section 10.1 – Premises Profile and Risk Scoring

- Inspections will be guided by a risk-based approach, allowing officers discretion to determine frequency and type of inspection based on premises risk and compliance history.

Section 11.1 – Inspections

- Officers will aim to complete inspections within 21 days of receiving a valid application, while recognising that this is a target rather than a strict deadline.

The “Conditions and Management Rules for Places of Indoor and Outdoor Entertainment” guidance document agreed by Council in February 2023 has also been reviewed and remains valid, continuing to reflect current approach. No updates or amendments are required at this time.

A copy of the updated policy is **(enclosed)**, with the above minor amendments highlighted in yellow.

4. Previous Decision of Council

In February 2023, Council approved the draft Entertainments Licensing Policy, including revised Conditions and Management Rules.

5. Equality and Rural Screening Requirements

A revised Section 75 Equality Screening and Rural Needs Assessment have been carried out (**enclosed**) as part of this policy review. The assessments confirm that the minor amendments to the Entertainments Licensing Policy do not have any adverse impact on equality groups or rural communities.

6. Summary

The review of the Entertainments Licensing Policy and associated guidance has identified only minor amendments. The policy continues to provide a framework for regulating live entertainment in the Borough.

7. **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the reviewed Entertainments Licensing Policy be approved.

Prepared by: Mark Sloan, Deputy Head of Environmental Health

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

4.4 WM/S/002 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS – SUSTAINABLE NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to retain the current level of funding to Sustainable Northern Ireland (SNI) for 2026-27.

2. Background

SNI works with a range of stakeholders, including local councils, with the aim of promoting a sustainable low carbon future. Correspondence has been received from SNI (**enclosed**) and it is proposed to contribute financial support of £6,000 for the incoming financial year, as we did last year.

Members are reminded that Council has provided support to SNI for a number of years and the membership gives access to quarterly networking forums, best practice case studies/decision making tools, training and consultation responses. SNI provides valuable access to information which is useful to the Sustainability Working Group.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approves the continuation of the current level of funding of £6,000 to Sustainable Northern Ireland for 2026/2027.

Prepared by: Claire Evans, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer

Agreed by: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

4.5 EH/EHS/019 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DAERA) DATA SHARING AGREEMENT

1. Purpose

A Data-Sharing Agreement (DSA) between DAERA and local Councils enables the secure and lawful exchange of information for investigating and enforcing the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011 and the Dogs (NI) Order 1983, in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

2. Introduction

Members are reminded that Councils have statutory responsibility for enforcing animal welfare and dog control legislation. Effective enforcement often requires sharing personal and sensitive data with enforcement partners.

DAERA's Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group (VSAHG) and Northern Ireland Councils are committed to collaborating on investigations, particularly regarding illegal puppy breeding and trafficking. This includes routine checks at ferry terminals and follow-up activity to identify unlicensed breeders. Such illegal activity often involves dogs in poor health and unacceptable welfare conditions.

The proposed DSA formalises lawful, proportionate data-sharing arrangements between DAERA and all 11 Councils, supporting targeted investigation and enforcement. The draft agreement has been reviewed by Council Legal and Governance teams and is deemed legally robust and data protection compliant.

3. Key Issues

The proposed Data-Sharing Agreement (DSA) (**enclosed**) provides a formal framework for the lawful and secure sharing of personal and sensitive data between DAERA and Councils to support enforcement of animal welfare and dog control legislation. It covers information such as transporter and vehicle details, travel dates, statements and reports from officers or vets, photographic and CCTV evidence, conviction records, and intelligence relating to potential breaches of licensing, animal welfare, or planning regulations. The agreement sets out clear requirements for data security, handling, retention, and restricted access, and establishes procedures for managing subject access requests, FOI/EIR requests, complaints, breaches, and staff training.

The legal basis for sharing is provided under UK GDPR, specifically Article 6(1)(e) – Public Task, and Article 9(2)(g) – Substantial Public Interest. The DSA will be reviewed annually, with a full review every three years or sooner if required by changes in legislation.

4. Summary

The DSA provides a secure, legally compliant framework for sharing personal and sensitive data between DAERA and Councils. It supports statutory enforcement under the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011 and Dogs (NI) Order 1983, safeguards individual rights, and maintains public confidence in the handling of sensitive information.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Data Sharing Agreement be approved.

Prepared by: Mark Sloan, Deputy Head of Environmental Health

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 PK/PG/005 VOL 2 PROVISION OF REPLACEMENT PLAY PARK EQUIPMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's Play Park Refurbishment Project.

2. Background

Members are reminded that works have been progressing on the Play Park Refurbishment project, which was approved earlier this year. The project specification covers 34 Play Parks and is based on a Play Park Audit completed 12 months ago. In addition to this programme, two full replacement projects have already been completed at Kings Park and Rathcoole.

During the course of the project, it became evident that further works were required to deliver a more complete and safe environment for users. This was due to continued deterioration of materials and equipment, as well as additional issues identified through the annual ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) safety inspections.

3. Financial Considerations

Council approved an initial budget allocation of £890K for this project. In addition, a previously approved recurring annual reactive maintenance budget of £200,000 remains available to cover additional works. Details of both the original and additional works required, broken down by DEA, are **enclosed** for Member's reference.

4. Going Forward

Due to the additional works identified across multiple sites, the estimated completion date for the main project is now mid-January 2026. Upon completion, Officers will carry out a full review of all Play Parks and prepare a report outlining any further works required at each site in the coming years. Following this review, Estate Services will develop a tender document for the ongoing maintenance of Play Parks covering a 3–4-year contract period. The previously approved recurring £200,000 play park maintenance budget will continue to fund these works on an annual basis.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: David Blair, Head of Estate Services

Agreed and Approved by: Matt McDowell, Director of Estates and Recreation

5.2 EH/PHWB/012 WINTER WOOLLIES UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the recent Winter Woollies Campaign

2. Background

Members are reminded that the Winter Woollies Campaign 2025 provides hand-knitted and crocheted items, supplied by volunteers, to support the most vulnerable members of the community during the colder months.

3. Key Issues

Now in its fourth year, the Winter Woollies Campaign began with the Wool Drive, held from 1 July to 31 August 2025. Organised by Environmental Health, the drive diverted over 2,700 balls of wool, knitting needles, and crochet hooks from landfill. These materials were distributed to local community groups to encourage people of all ages to create warm clothing and help combat social isolation.

Winter Woollies collections took place at Mossley Mill and Antrim Civic Centre from 16 September to 14 November, gathering approximately 3,000 items that were distributed to 30 partner organisations. Donors had the option to include their contact details to receive a Thank You letter from the Mayor, with many attaching messages to their creations for recipients.

This year's campaign also encouraged the donation of 'trauma teddies' handmade teddy bears used to comfort children affected by traumatic events. Emergency service providers such as the police, fire service, and hospitals use these teddies to provide comfort and distraction to children experiencing upsetting events or difficult situations.

On 18 November, a Winter Woollies event at Mossley Mill celebrated the campaign's success. The event featured a Q&A session where donors and partner organisations discussed its positive impact. With a 100% increase in donations and eight additional partner organisations this year, Winter Woollies 2025 was a remarkable success.

A photo gallery showcasing the generosity of Antrim and Newtownabbey residents can be viewed;

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/initiatives-for-our-community/winter-woollies/>)

Winter Woollies is promoted through knitting and crocheting groups, community organisations, Council social media, and local press.

4. Equality and Rural Screening Requirements

An Equality and Rural Needs Screening exercise has been completed in accordance with Council policy. No adverse equality or rural impacts have been identified.

5. Summary

The Winter Woollies Campaign continues to inspire residents to knit and crochet warm clothing for vulnerable members of the community. This year, approximately 3,000 items were collected and distributed to 30 partner organisations.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: James O'Kane, Environmental Health Manager (Health & Wellbeing)

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

5.3 EH/PHWB/019 INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the International Men's Day event held at Mossley Mill on 19 November 2025, highlighting its role in promoting men's mental health and celebrating positive male role models in the community.

2. Background

At a previous Community Development Committee meeting, the Council recognised the importance of supporting men's mental health in alignment with International Men's Day. Members agreed, in principle, to deliver an event for staff and Elected Members reflecting the themes of International Men's Day.

3. Key Issues

On 19 November 2025, International Men's Day, Mossley Mill hosted a breakfast and podcast event to celebrate "positive male role models", highlighting the contribution of men who lead by example supporting, mentoring, and inspiring others through their actions and character.

The event was open to staff, schools, and members of the public, attracting 120 attendees. The live podcast, hosted by BBC Sport presenter Thomas Niblock, featured two speakers who shared inspiring local stories of resilience, determination, and leadership.

Speakers:

- **Mr Daryl Clarke** – Highlighted the work of Monkstown Boxing Club and discussed how the club improves health and wellbeing through sport. He reflected on how being part of the club provides a sense of belonging.
- **Mr Jonny Murphy** – Former professional rugby player turned star baker, spoke about his journey through professional sport, his transition to life after retirement, his discovery of baking, and the ways he now maintains and protects his mental wellbeing.

Evaluation indicated extremely positive feedback, with 100% of respondents rating the event as excellent or very good. Examples of participant comments included:

"The podcasts were absolutely amazing and the two guests were inspirational. Thanks so much to Antrim and Newtownabbey Council for arranging this event."

"There was a good balance highlighting the challenges facing men but also acknowledging it shouldn't be all doom and gloom and the stigmas associated with being a man/masculinity."

The podcast was recorded and is available to watch on the Council website: <https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/community-initiatives/international-men-s-day-2025/>

4. Financial Position

The event cost £7,500 and was funded through the Executive Office's Ending Violence Against Women and Girls programme.

A similar event is proposed for next year, subject to Members' approval. A further report will be presented to seek Members' formal approval.

5. Equality and Rural Screening Requirements

An Equality and Rural Needs Screening exercise has been completed in accordance with Council policy. No adverse equality or rural impacts have been identified.

6. Summary

The report summarises the International Men's Day event held at Mossley Mill on 19 November 2025, which featured a live podcast promoting positive male role models and highlighting mental health and wellbeing.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: James O'Kane, Environmental Health Manager (Health & Wellbeing)

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

5.4 WM/WM/040 WASTE MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE ANNUAL UPDATE 2024-25

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of Council's waste management performance 2024-25.

2. Background

Under the Landfill Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003, Council is required to submit waste data returns to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. These are completed on a quarterly basis throughout the year and are used by the NIEA to calculate Council's recycling rate and compliance with the relevant legislation.

The new legislative targets for Council under the Circular Economy Package are:

1. Recycle 65% of municipal waste by 2035
2. Interim targets of 55% recycling rate by 2025 and 60% by 2030;
3. Maximum of 10% of municipal waste to be landfilled by 2035.

The annual waste data submission for 2024-25 has been verified and sets out Council's performance for the year for both Household and Municipal waste.

3. Key Issues

A summary of the recently published results for Council for 2023/2024 together with the results from 2023/2024 are set out below. The results include the performance of all 11 Northern Ireland Local Authorities for reference.

	2023-24		2024-25		Ranking
	Tonnes	%	Tonnes	%	
Total Household Waste Arisings	79,663		82,198		3 rd largest tonnage
Household Waste Arisings to Recycling	47,330	59.4	46,770	56.9	2 nd household recycling rate (%) in Northern Ireland
Household Waste Arisings to Recovery	14,060	17.7	17,905	21.8	7 th largest % of household waste sent to recovery
Household Waste Arisings to Landfill	18,273	22.9	17,523	21.3	4 th largest % of household waste sent to landfill
Total Local Authority Collected	106,040		109,028		3 rd largest tonnage

Municipal Waste Arisings					
Municipal Waste Arisings to Recycling	66,006	62.2	64,851	59.5	1 st % of waste recycled in Northern Ireland.
Municipal Waste Arisings to Recovery	15,679	14.8	20,868	19.1	7 th largest % of waste sent to recovery.
Municipal Waste Arisings to Landfill	23,451	22.1	22,472	20.6	4 th largest % of waste sent to landfill.

* Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste (LACMW) is ALL the waste that the Council collects i.e. commercial, street sweepings, recycling centres as well as household waste.

The table above shows the following:

- Antrim and Newtownabbey achieved the highest recycling rates for Councils in Northern Ireland for all waste collected and were second highest for Household waste collected;
- There was a decrease in recycling rates from 2023/24, however this was evident across all Councils in Northern Ireland;
- Overall waste arisings increased across the recovery waste streams, however there was a decrease in waste arisings being sent to Landfill. This indicates that new contracts were diverting waste from landfill and residents are continuing to manage their waste correctly, however waste production across the Borough is rising slightly.

The data demonstrates the high performance of the recycling across the Borough of Antrim and Newtownabbey, however with new contracts and collection systems in place and further innovation for future collected materials Council will continue the increase of recycling and diversion from landfill.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability

Agreed by and Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Any Other Relevant Business (AORB) may be taken at this point.