



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE ROUND CHAMBER, ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON
TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2024 AT 6.30 PM**

In the Chair	:	Councillor A O'Lone
Members Present (In person)	:	Aldermen – L Clarke, and J Smyth Councillors – A Bennington, H Cushinan, H Magill and L O'Hagan
Members Present: (Remote)	:	Alderman P Bradley Councillors - A McAuley and E McLaughlin
Non Committee Members: (Remote)	:	Councillor R Lynch
Officers Present (In person)	:	Director of Finance & Governance – S Cole Director of Corporate Strategy – H Hall Deputy Director of Finance – J Balmer Head of Finance – R Murray ICT Helpdesk Officer – J Wilson Member Services Officer – E Skillen
Officer Present (Remote)	:	Head of ICT – G Smyth

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the October Meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee, and reminded all present of recording requirements.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors J Burbank, M Cooper and S Cosgrove

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3 PRESENTATION

3.1 FI/GEN/027 FINANCE DASHBOARDS PRESENTATION

1. Purpose

A presentation was provided to Members by the Head of Finance which included an update on the key benefits of using dashboards for monitoring financial performance and data analysis across Council.

2. Introduction/Background

The Head of Finance summarised and presented the key focus areas utilised within the Dashboards after which Members' questions were addressed.

In response to a Member's question the Head of Finance advised that the dashboard was fixed to show end of period but live expenditure and income data was also available.

The Chairperson thanked the Head of Finance for his presentation.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

the presentation be noted.

NO ACTION

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 CCS/EDP/023 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES, SIGN LANGUAGE PARTNERSHIP GROUP LETTER OF OFFER

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve the Department for Communities (DfC) Sign Language Partnership Group (SLPG) Letter of Offer for grant funding.

2. Introduction/Background

Members were reminded of Council's commitment as a Deaf Friendly Council through the signing of the British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL) Deaf Charter.

3. Funding Opportunity

The Council submitted an application for funding to the Department for Communities Sign Language Partnership Group for 100% funding for the delivery of BSL Level 1 and 2 Sign Language Training.

Members were advised that a formal letter of offer had been received for £10,183, a copy of which was circulated.

Training would be offered to Elected Members, staff and Borough residents. This would be advertised in due course with an expected completion of March 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

the Department for Communities (DfC) Sign Language Partnership Group (SLPG) Letter of Offer for grant funding be approved.

ACTION BY: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

4.2 **PT/CI/061 AWARDS – APSE COUNCIL OF THE YEAR 2024**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval to grant employees an additional half days leave in recognition for their part in the achievement of the APSE UK Council of the Year 2024 Award.

2. Background

APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) was a networking community and worked with over 300 councils across the UK. It promoted excellence in public services and was the foremost specialist in local authority front line services.

3. APSE Service Awards & Council of the Year

Members would be aware that the Council had been named as the **APSE UK Overall Council of the Year 2024**.

The Council also won the Best Services Team for its Bereavement and Cemetery Services and was a named finalist in five other categories.

This was a huge accomplishment for the Council and illustrated the

commitment of our Elected Members and all employees for the quality of services we provide.

4. Employee Recognition

As part of an overall programme of recognition, celebration and building on the profile of the Council, it was suggested that we recognise employees' contribution to the achievement of the Award in a tangible way. Therefore it was proposed that as a one-off gesture, an additional half days leave, be granted for use within the 2024/2025 financial year; this acknowledged both the significance of the win and the efforts of our employees.

Members' questions were addressed by the Director of Corporate Strategy and it was agreed that a photograph/breakfast for staff working in the Bereavement/Crematorium section would be explored. She also confirmed that the half days leave would not affect the delivery of services.

Proposed by Councillor Magill

Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and agreed that

an additional half days leave in recognition of the Council of the Year achievement to employees be approved and a photograph and breakfast for staff working in the Bereavement/Crematorium section be explored.

ACTION BY: Katherine Young, Organisation Development & Employee Engagement Manager

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on Council's prompt payment performance.

2. Introduction/Background

Members were reminded that the Department for Communities (DfC) issued revised guidance (Local Government Circular 19/2016) on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments in November 2016. This guidance requested Councils to record specific performance targets of 10 working days and 30 calendar days and continue a cycle of quarterly reporting on prompt payment performance by Councils to the DfC and its publication on their website.

3. Prompt Payment Performance

The Council's prompt payment performance for the period **1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024** was set out below:

The default target for paying invoices, where no other terms were agreed, was 30 days.

(N.B. 30 days target is 30 calendar days and 10 days is 10 working days).

During the above period, the Council paid invoices totalling £40,873,110

The Council paid 9,513 invoices within the 30-day target. (92%)

The Council paid 8,398 invoices within the 10-day target. (81%)

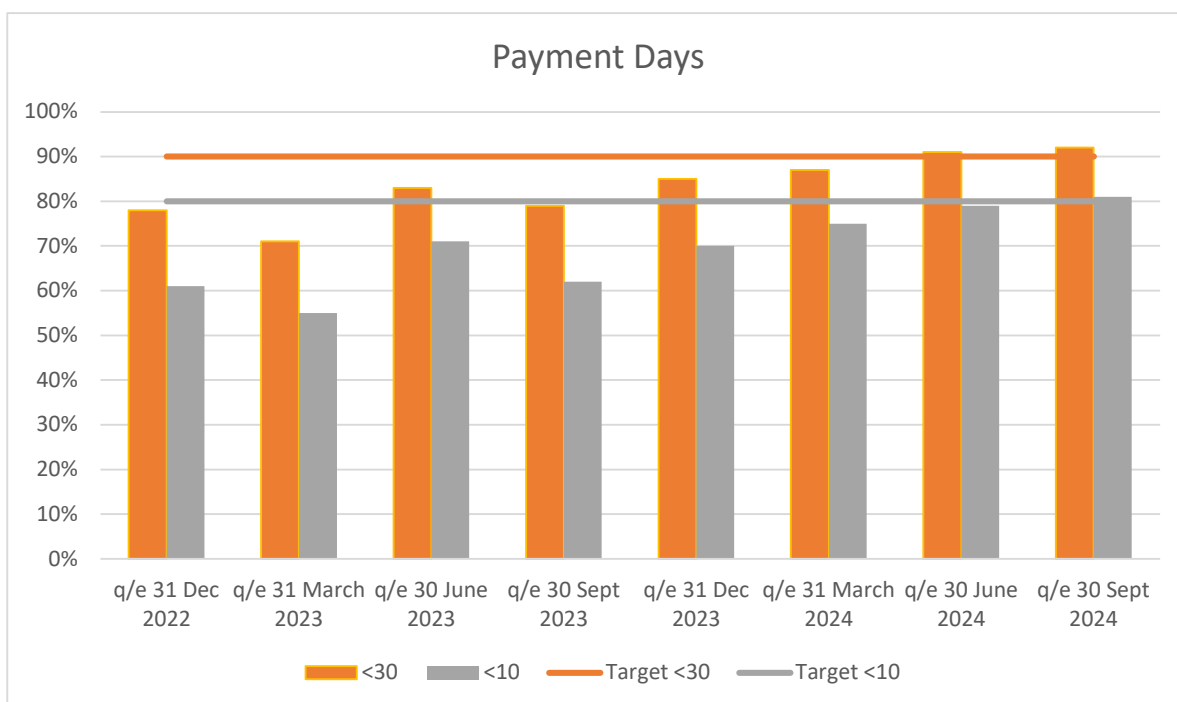
The Council paid 873 invoices outside of the 30-day target. (8%)

The Council had set a target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days and 80% within 10 days.

This compared to previous quarterly results as below:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
q/e 31 December 2022	5,780	78%	61%
q/e 31 March 2023	5,558	71%	55%
q/e 30 June 2023	7,050	83%	71%
q/e 30 September 2023	6,498	79%	62%
q/e 31 December 2023	7,074	85%	70%
q/e 31 March 2024	5,776	87%	75%
q/e 30 June 2024	5,533	91%	79%
q/e 30 September 2024	4,853	92%	81%

The performance presented graphically highlighted the performance metrics for the above.



The table and graph above show the performance over the last two years. In comparison with the previous quarter, performance levels had improved for both the 30-day figure and 10-day figure.

The RAG weekly status report showed the improvement in Quarter 2:

Period	No of invoices	% Paid Within 10 Days	11-30Cum	30plus cum	% Paid Within 30 Days
01/04/2024 - 06/04/2024	337	75%	18%	7%	93%
08/04/2024 - 14/04/2024	382	73%	14%	13%	87%
15/04/2024 - 21/04/2024	406	69%	8%	23%	77%
22/04/2024 - 27/04/2024	398	62%	33%	4%	96%
29/04/2024 - 05/05/2024	447	77%	15%	7%	93%
06/05/2024 - 12/05/2024	324	78%	10%	11%	89%
13/05/2024 - 19/05/2024	388	74%	14%	12%	88%
20/05/2024 - 25/05/2024	332	79%	11%	10%	90%
27/05/2024 - 01/06/2024	238	81%	8%	12%	88%
03/06/2024 - 08/06/2024	433	86%	9%	5%	95%
10/06/2024 - 15/06/2024	886	89%	6%	5%	95%
17/06/2024 - 22/06/2024	471	80%	11%	9%	91%
24/06/2024 - 29/06/2024	487	83%	10%	7%	93%
01/07/2024 - 06/07/2024	307	91%	5%	4%	96%
08/07/2024 - 14/07/2024	315	88%	9%	4%	96%
15/07/2024 - 20/07/2024	342	78%	14%	8%	92%
22/07/2024 - 28/07/2024	486	83%	6%	11%	89%
29/07/2024 - 04/08/2024	436	86%	9%	4%	96%
05/08/2024 - 11/08/2024	507	84%	5%	11%	89%
12/08/2024 - 18/08/2024	410	85%	7%	8%	92%
19/08/2024 - 25/08/2024	317	81%	9%	10%	90%
26/08/2024 - 01/09/2024	277	66%	27%	7%	93%
02/09/2024 - 07/09/2024	306	85%	8%	7%	93%
09/09/2024 - 15/09/2024	428	84%	9%	8%	92%
16/09/2024 - 21/09/2024	421	81%	11%	9%	91%
23/09/2024 - 29/09/2024	301	86%	8%	6%	94%

The table below shows the quarter performance by section;

section	Category	Number of Invoices	Number of Invoices %
Arts & Culture	1-10 days	280	83.33%
	11-30 days	19	5.65%
	30 Plus days	37	11.01%
Arts & Culture Total		336	6.92%
Chief Executive	1-10 days	12	85.71%
	11-30 days	1	7.14%
	30 Plus days	1	7.14%
Chief Executive Total		14	0.29%
Community Planning	1-10 days	271	92.18%
	11-30 days	7	2.38%
	30 Plus days	16	5.44%
Community Planning Total		294	6.06%
Environmental Health	1-10 days	31	72.09%
	11-30 days	8	18.60%
	30 Plus days	4	9.30%
Environmental Health Total		43	0.89%
Leisure	1-10 days	627	92.21%
	11-30 days	26	3.82%
	30 Plus days	27	3.97%
Leisure Total		680	14.01%
Parks	1-10 days	761	92.47%
	11-30 days	32	3.89%
	30 Plus days	30	3.65%
Parks Total		823	16.96%
Estate Services	1-10 days	387	69.48%
	11-30 days	105	18.85%
	30 Plus days	65	11.67%
Estate Services Total		557	11.48%
Waste Management	1-10 days	494	76.71%
	11-30 days	101	15.68%
	30 Plus days	49	7.61%
Waste Management Total		644	13.27%
Non-Order	1-10 days	707	81.73%
	11-30 days	78	9.02%
	30 Plus days	80	9.25%
Non-Order Total		865	17.82%
Finance & Governance	1-10 days	324	72.81%
	11-30 days	60	13.48%
	30 Plus days	61	13.71%
Finance & Governance Total		445	9.17%
Economic Development & Planning	1-10 days	137	90.13%
	11-30 days	12	7.89%
	30 Plus days	3	1.97%
Economic Development & Planning Total		152	3.13%
Grand Total		4853	100.00%

There was now a full complement of staff within the Finance section and work was ongoing with all departments to make further improvements.

Service improvements had included:

- Additional reporting capability to monitor performance
- Staff training/refresher sessions
- Process review for high volume suppliers

The prompt payment performance for Councils in Northern Ireland was published quarterly by the Department for Communities (DfC). The prompt payment performance for the quarter ended June 2024 had been circulated; the Council's performance for Quarter 2 of 2024/25 against the average performance for the other Councils for Quarter 1 of 2024/25 was set out in the table below:

Council	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Antrim & Newtownabbey BC (Quarter 2 24/25)	92%	81%
All Councils (Quarter 1 24/25)	93%	72%

Proposed by Councillor Bennington
Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.2 CCS/COM/050 LOCAL GOVERNMENT MODEL COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE (MCHP) COMPLIANCE CHECK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to note the outcome of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO), Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) compliance check.

2. Previous Decisions of the Council

Members were reminded that the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure was revised in accordance with NIPSO's general guidance to all Councils to ensure consistency.

3. NIPSO Compliance Audit Outcome

The NIPSO Complaints Standards team had recently carried out a procedural compliance check on the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure (parts 1-3) and had confirmed that it complied with the Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

the outcome of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO), Model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) compliance check be noted.

NO ACTION

5.3 CCS/EDP/025 DUAL LANGUAGE STREET SIGN APPLICATIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to note the Dual Language Street Sign update.

2. Background

Members were reminded that in accordance with the Dual Language Street Sign Policy, adopted by Council on 30 May 2022 (circulated), the following update outlined the current status of applications received.

3. Application Update

STAGE 1: PETITION VERIFICATION

There were no applications at stage 1.

STAGE 2: RESIDENTS CANVASS

One application had been received at stage 2.

1. OLD MILL DRIVE, NEWTOWNABBEY, BT36 7XP

Canvass letters would be issued to residents, week commencing 30 September 2024.

STAGE 3: STREET SIGN INSTALLATION

There were no applications at stage 3.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the Dual Language Street Sign Applications update be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Cushman
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed

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

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 **IN-CONFIDENCE** FI/PRO/QUO/426 REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL IMPLICATIONS OF HOLDING FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS IN THE CHAMBER IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide information on the financial and technical implications of holding Full Council meetings on a bi-monthly basis in Antrim Civic Centre Chamber.

2. Introduction

During the September 2024 Policy and Governance Committee, Officers were asked to investigate the technical and financial implications of holding Full Council meetings on a bi-monthly basis in the Antrim Civic Centre Chamber. Members would recall that post COVID only Committee meetings had been held in this Chamber with a maximum of 15 Elected Members being facilitated.

As part of the research, Officers reviewed the capacity and logistical considerations of accommodating 40 Members, the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), Deputy Directors, Heads of Service, and members of the public in the current seating arrangement within the Antrim Chamber.

3. Discussion System Limitations

The fundamental issue identified was with the current discussion system:

- **Age and Reliability:** The discussion system in place was approximately 18 years old and there had been many technical changes and advancements since then in discussion systems. It was important to note that if this system were to fail, it would not be possible to repair it due to its age and the lack of available replacement parts or support.
- **Microphone Placement:** The microphones were fixed and could not be moved to accommodate different seating arrangements or additional Members. This presented a challenge in terms of equitable access to microphones.
- **Hybrid Setup:** The current hybrid setup in this Chamber was implemented as a temporary measure during the COVID-19 pandemic. This setup does not meet the long-term requirements of Council meetings including the legal requirement to facilitate hybrid meetings.

4. Seating Capacity and Arrangement

The formal seating areas within the Civic Centre Chamber were adequate to accommodate 40 Members and the CLT. However, Deputy Directors and Heads of Service would need to use the wings, meaning that space for members of the public, including press, would be limited to 12 people.

As mentioned, a key issue identified related to the configuration of the discussion system, particularly the fixed microphone placements and the distribution of these microphones amongst Members.

- 38 microphones were installed and positioned in the Member's central seating area along with 13 microphones at the top table.
- A number of different seating configurations were considered, however the fixed setup of the microphones and Political Party Sizes meant the most appropriate seating arrangement for full Council this year would be as follows:

The largest parties of DUP and Sinn Féin would be accommodated in the outer semi-circle along with the 3 Independent Members ie 12 on each side. The Alliance Party in the next row of 7 and the UUP party in the middle row however only 5 mics were available for 6 Members. The SDLP Member would then be in the row nearest the top table. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, CLT, Member Services and 2 presenter spaces would be accommodated at the top table.

5. Required Upgrades

Whilst efforts had been made to ensure the equipment remained functional and could facilitate hybrid meetings, it was now apparent that the audio was not of sufficient quality to deliver the required high sound resolution for Council meetings. To ensure a robust and modern setup and to reduce the risk of system failure, a new discussion system with an integrated public address (PA) and camera system would be necessary. The estimated cost for such an upgrade was approximately £[REDACTED]. This investment would provide a more reliable, flexible and future-proof solution to accommodate all Members.

6. Accessibility Concerns

There were additional accessibility concerns related to the chamber layout. Access for wheelchair users, particularly for those wishing to present to the Council, was restricted at the end two positions on the top table in front of the IT desk; this presented a barrier for individuals with mobility impairments.

7. Other Considerations

Consideration needed to also be given to the Chamber in Mossley Mill as the current discussion system is over 10 years old, and was now an end-of-life system with no support available from the hardware vendor. A further investment in the region of £[REDACTED] would also be required to upgrade the discussion system, PA and cameras/audio visual in this Chamber.

Accessibility for wheelchair users was also restricted in this venue and this needed to be resolved.

8. Conclusion

The Council was faced with significant challenges relating to the current discussion system and seating arrangements in the chamber at Antrim Civic Centre. The fixed microphone placements, limited flexibility in accommodating different party sizes, and the potential sound clarity issues due to seating reconfigurations highlights the need for a modernised discussion system. An investment of approximately £[REDACTED] was required to upgrade to a new discussion, PA, and camera system in this Chamber.

The current discussion system in Mossley Mill was now an end-of-life system and a further £[REDACTED] would also be required to update this, PA and cameras/audio visual.

Therefore in order to make use of both Chambers for Council meetings, approximately £[REDACTED] would be required to be invested to provide modern future-proofed systems designed to meet the needs of Council. This cost had not been factored into 2024/2025 budgets. In addition accessibility restrictions in both Chambers needed to be considered and the Accessibility and Inclusion Officer was currently researching possible options and costings for future consideration.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the information on the financial and technical implications of holding Full Council meetings on a bi-monthly basis in Antrim Civic Centre Chamber be noted.

NO ACTION

6.2 **IN-CONFIDENCE** G/MSMO/031 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS OF ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH COUNCIL 1 JANUARY 2025 – 31 DECEMBER 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members the approval of the Schedule of Meetings for the period 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025.

2. Introduction

It was standard practice for the Schedule of Meetings for the year from 1 January to 31 December to be approved by Members. Members would recall deferring a decision on this Schedule at the September Policy and Governance Committee meeting pending provision of additional information on the use of the Antrim Chamber for Council meetings.

3. Schedule

The following schedule of dates for Council and Committee meetings were proposed for the period 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025.

Meetings marked in **red** were held at Antrim Civic Centre, while those in black were held at Mossley Mill. All meetings commenced at 6.30 pm with the exception of the Planning Committee which would start at 6 pm.

** Denotes change of date due to bank/public holiday/annual meeting.*

Council / Committee Meetings	Date of Meeting
Operations Committee	Monday 6 January 2025
Policy & Governance Committee	Tuesday 7 January 2025
Community Development Committee	Monday 13 January 2025
Economic Development Committee	Tuesday 14 January 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 20 January 2025
Council Meeting	Monday 27 January 2025
Operations Committee	Monday 3 February 2025
Policy & Governance Committee	Tuesday 4 February 2025
Community Development Committee	Monday 10 February 2025
Special Council Meeting	Monday 10 February 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 17 February 2025
Council Meeting	Monday 24 February 2025
Operations Committee	Monday 3 March 2025
Policy & Governance Committee	Tuesday 4 March 2025
Community Development Committee	Monday 10 March 2025
Economic Development Committee	Tuesday 11 March 2025
Planning Committee	Tuesday 18 March 2025*
Audit and Risk Committee	Wednesday 19 March 2025*
Council Meeting	Monday 31 March 2025
Operations Committee	Monday 7 April 2025
Policy & Governance Committee	Tuesday 8 April 2025
Community Development Committee	Monday 14 April 2025
Planning Committee	Wednesday 23 April 2025*
Council Meeting	Monday 28 April 2025
Operations Committee	Tuesday 6 May 2025*
Policy & Governance Committee	Wednesday 7 May 2025*
Community Development Committee	Monday 12 May 2025
Economic Development Committee	Tuesday 13 May 2025
Planning Meeting	Monday 19 May 2025
Council Meeting	Tuesday 27 May 2025*

Annual Council Meeting	Monday 2 June 2025
Operations Committee	Monday 9 June 2025*
Policy & Governance Committee	Tuesday 10 June 2025*
Community Development Committee	Monday 16 June 2025*
Planning Committee	Monday 23 June 2025
Audit and Risk Committee	Tuesday 24 June 2025
Council Meeting	Monday 30 June 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 21 July 2025
Council Meeting	Monday 28 July 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 18 August 2025
Council Meeting	Tuesday 26 August 2025*
Operations Committee	Monday 1 September 2025
Policy & Governance Committee	Tuesday 2 September 2025
Community Development Committee	Monday 8 September 2025
Economic Development Committee	Tuesday 9 September 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 15 September 2025
Audit and Risk Committee	Tuesday 16 September 2025
Council Meeting	Monday 29 September 2025
Operations Committee	Monday 6 October 2025
Policy & Governance Committee	Tuesday 7 October 2025
Community Development Committee	Monday 13 October 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 20 October 2025
Council Meeting	Monday 27 October 2025
Operations Committee	Monday 3 November 2025
Policy & Governance Committee	Tuesday 4 November 2025
Community Development Committee	Monday 10 November 2025
Economic Development Committee	Tuesday 11 November 2025
Planning Committee	Monday 17 November 2025
Council Meeting	Monday 24 November 2025
Operations Committee	Monday 1 December 2025
Policy & Governance	Tuesday 2 December 2025
Community Development Committee	Wednesday 3 December 2025*
Planning Committee	Monday 8 December 2025*
Audit and Risk Committee	Tuesday 9 December 2025*
Council Meeting	Monday 15 December 2025*

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

the Schedule of Meetings for the period 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025 be approved.

ACTION BY: Liz Johnston, Deputy Director of Governance

6.3 IN CONFIDENCE OD/OD/002 ELECTED MEMBER CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve the Elected Member Continuous Professional Development applications.

2. Introduction

The Council was committed to supporting Elected Members to enhance and develop the skills and knowledge they needed to carry out their wide ranging and fast changing roles as effectively as possible.

The Council's Elected Member Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Policy provided support to Members by enabling access to a variety of Learning and Development opportunities.

As outlined in the policy, Elected Members had access to:

- Part-time study application costs met in full (up to degree level)
- An individual development allowance of £800 per annum (£3200 per term)
- 75% of costs met for approved Continuous Professional Development (CPD) applications

Elected Members could use their individual development allowance as a contribution towards any professional development or academic programmes of study.

3. CPD Applications

One application for continuous professional development had been received for 2024/25 as follows:

Elected Member	Course	Duration	Indicative Costings	Proposed funding
Councillor Jay Burbank	PRINCE2 7 Foundation	Online – self paced learning	£1439	£1079.25 (75% CPD) £359.75 (individual development allowance)

4. Financial Position/Implication

The associated costs would be met from existing budgets.

Members were advised by the Chairperson that this Item would be deferred until a future meeting.

ACTION BY: Katherine Young, Employee Engagement and Organisation Development Manager

6.4 **IN CONFIDENCE** HR/HR/027 **ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT, HUMAN RESOURCES STRUCTURE**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve the proposed Human Resources structure to include the appointment of a Head of Human Resources.

2. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded that an updated Corporate Leadership and Senior Management Team Structure was approved by Council subject to consultation with staff and Trade Unions in March 2023, which removed the Head of Human Resources post from the structure.

3. Current Position

The Director of Organisation Development oversees the Head of Organisation Development. This role encompasses responsibility for Corporate Performance, Leadership Development, Employee Wellbeing, Internal Communications, Recognition, Continuous Learning, Elected Member Development, Diversity and Inclusion and Customer Service.

The Human Resources function is led by three Human Resources Managers, to include a HR Systems and Analytics Manager and two Generalist HR Managers. All three Managers report directly to the Director of Organisation Development (circulated at Appendix 1: current structure).

As a result of the unavoidable sickness absence of the Director of Organisation Development, and having only one Head of Service in place (Head of Organisation Development), this had highlighted a significant risk for the Council.

4. Strategic & Corporate Human Resources Projects Ongoing

Members were reminded that the Council had committed to the achievement of a number of key strategic projects, for example:

- Terms and Conditions Alignment
- Pay and Grading Review

- Implementation of the electronic Human Resources system

The enormity of the work involved cannot be underestimated and indeed the skills and experience required to deliver these projects while protecting the Council's interests was paramount.

In addition to these corporate projects, additional strategic priorities were identified in Appendix 2 (circulated).

5. Proposal

It was proposed to appoint a Head of Human Resources to ensure the Council met its agreed commitments, and to guarantee that the Human Resources function supports and drives the organisation's strategic objectives, fostering a productive, engaged and efficient workforce.

The appointment would bridge the gap between the Director or Organisation Development and Managers, and support with the delivery of a transformational Human Resources service for the Council (circulated Appendix 1: proposed structure).

6. Governance

For the purposes of good governance the original business case under the Voluntary Severance and Voluntary Redundancy Procedure had been re-calculated with the re-introduction of a Head of Human Resources role. The business case was compliant with the policy criteria and the 3 year payback period. (Overall payback period 2.63 years).

7. Financial Implication

The salary scale for a Head of Human Resources is PO10 (SCP 51-54) £60,349-£63,751 (with employer costs £79,189 - £83,724) per annum.

These costs had not been budgeted for in the 2024/25 year however it was anticipated that they can be provided for within existing budgets.

8. Summary

Appointing an experienced Head of Human Resources was critical to ensuring that the Human Resources function supports and drives the organisation's strategic objectives, fostering a productive, engaged and efficient workforce.

The proposed structures were circulated at Appendix 1 for consideration.

In response to a Member's query the Director of Corporate Strategy confirmed that the proposed Human Resources restructure was compliant with good governance arrangements.

Proposed by Councillor O'Hagan

Seconded by Councillor Bennington and agreed that

the proposed Human Resources structure is approved to include the appointment of a Head of Human Resources.

ACTION BY: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Alderman Smyth 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 6.57pm.

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.