



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE  
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE ROUND TOWER CHAMBER, ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE  
ON TUESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 6.30 PM**

<b>In the Chair</b>	:	Councillor B Webb
<b>Members Present (In person)</b>	:	Alderman M Cosgrove  Councillors – S Cosgrove, P Dunlop, N Kelly, H Magill and A O'Lone
<b>Members Present (Remote)</b>	:	Alderman P Bradley  Councillors - J Burbank, M Cooper, H Cushinan, M Goodman, A McAuley and T McGrann
<b>Non Committee Members (Remote)</b>	:	Councillors - M Ní Chonghaile and L O'Hagan
<b>Officers Present (In person)</b>	:	Director of Finance and Governance – S Cole Director of Organisation Development (Interim) – H Hall Deputy Director of Finance – J Balmer Head of Finance – R Murray Borough Lawyer and Head of Legal Services – P Casey Head of ICT – G Smyth ICT Helpdesk Officer – J Wilson Member Services Officer – C McGrandle
<b>Officers Present (Remote)</b>	:	Deputy Director of Governance – L Johnston

**CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the September Meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee and reminded all present of recording requirements. He welcomed Councillor Cooper to the Committee who had been nominated by his party for membership for the next two months.

## **1 APOLOGIES**

Councillor V McWilliam

## **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor T McGrann - Item 4.6

## **3 PRESENTATION**

### **3.1 SMART WORKING PILOT**

#### **1. Purpose**

**An update on the roll out of the Smart Working Pilot within the Organisation was presented at the meeting by Graham Smyth, Head of ICT.**

The Head of ICT addressed Members' queries in relation to the pilot and discussed the positive feedback received from staff.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove  
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

**the presentation be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

*Alderman Cosgrove joined the meeting at this point.*

## **4 ITEMS FOR DECISION**

### **4.1 G-LEG-14-832 LAND & PROPERTY POLICY**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to update Members regarding a Land & Property Policy for the Council.**

#### **2. Introduction/Background**

The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) and the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) collaborated and provided a guidance document in relation to the public sector use of assets in Northern Ireland.

Since October 2024 Officers had engaged with the SIB to assist Officers with drafting a new Land & Property Policy for the Council.

Officers had now completed a draft Land & Property Policy (circulated) for Members consideration.

The Policy was in line with the guidance from the NIAO and SIB.

This Policy had been equality screened, a copy of which was circulated for information.

### 3. The Draft Policy

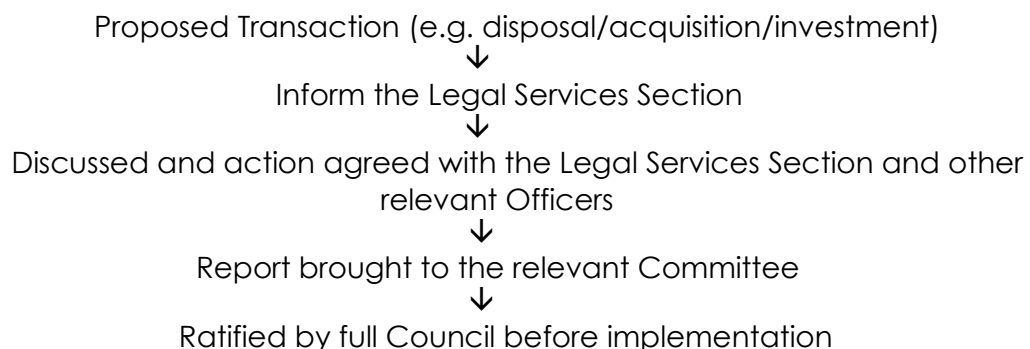
The following was a summary of the key features of the Policy.

Purpose:

- a) guidance and legal compliance in relation to applying best practice and good governance in the utilisation of Council-owned and leased land and property assets to support service delivery and wider civic outcomes.
- b) effective decision making in the Council, related to land and property use.
- c) a consistent approach for the acquisition and disposal of land and property.
- d) a consistent approach for the management of Council leases, service level agreements, licences etc., where Council is either the landlord or the tenant.
- e) guidance on how to request the use of Council's land.

Context, roles and responsibilities:

- a) The relevant Directorate would report to the Committee it was aligned to which would have the overall responsibility for making recommendations to Council on land and property matters as contained in this policy.
- b) The implementation and effectiveness of this Policy would be overseen by the Chief Executive of the Council and by Officers so designated by the Chief Executive.
- c) In general, the below diagram illustrates how any of the transactions in this document should flow through the Council – through the use of the in-house teams and external expert advisers. The Due Diligence Team would effectively be Officers from the Legal Services Section, who would then also seek views from other internal Officers as relevant to each particular transaction.



Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

**that the draft Land & Property Policy be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer & Head of Legal Services*

## **4.2 PT/CI/060 2024/25 ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT ON PERFORMANCE**

### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members that the 2024/25 Annual Report Self-Assessment on Performance (Final Draft) be approved.**

### **2. Background**

Under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Section 92(2)(b)(i) & (ii) of the Act requires the Council to publish an assessment of its performance for 2024/25.

### **3. Previous Decision of Council**

The Council's Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 was approved in June 2024. This set out a range of robust performance targets, along with identified improvement objectives and several Statutory Performance Targets.

### **4. Annual Performance Report, Self-Assessment**

This report provided an assessment of the Council's performance for 2024/25 in relation to its statutory performance and self-imposed corporate performance indicators and self-imposed performance indicators. In line with the legislation, it included a comparison of performance against previous financial years and where possible, benchmarked against other councils. The Annual Self-Assessment Report on Performance for 2024/25 was circulated for Members' information.

### **5. Governance**

The Annual Self-Assessment Report on Performance for 2024/25 was reported to relevant Committees.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly

Seconded by Councillor O'Lone and agreed that

**the 2024/25 Annual Self-Assessment Report on Performance for 2024/25 (Final Draft) be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer*

#### **4.3 PT/CI/066 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025/26, PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT QUARTER 1**

##### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26, Quarter 1 Performance Progress Report.**

##### **2. Background**

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 puts in place a framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services.

##### **3. Previous Decision of Council**

The Council's Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 was approved in June 2025. This set out a range of robust performance targets, along with identified improvement objectives and several Statutory Performance Targets.

##### **4. Performance Progress Reports**

First Quarter Performance Progress Report was circulated for Members' information.

##### **5. Governance**

Quarterly performance progress reports were reported to relevant Committees.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly  
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

**the Quarter 1 Performance Progress Report 2025/26 be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer*

#### **4.4 HR/SG/001 CHILD AND ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

##### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve an updated safeguarding policy and associated procedures and progress to a 12-week public consultation.**

##### **2. Background**

The current safeguarding policy was developed in 2016. The policy and procedures (circulated) had been updated in line with legislation, regulation and best practice. In accordance with Council policy guidance, the

updated safeguarding policy and procedures would be subject to a 12-week public consultation.

### 3. Governance

This policy had been equality screened, a copy of which was circulated for information.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

**the updated safeguarding policy and procedure be approved and progressed to a 12-week public consultation.**

*ACTION BY: Helen Hall, Director of Organisation Development (Interim)*

## 4.5 **HR/ER/002 LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION, CONSULTATION ON DRAFT LGSC CODE OF PROCEDURES ON RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to approve the draft consultation response on the revised Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection.**

### 2. Introduction/Background

The Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) had issued a revised Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection (the Code) for consultation.

This Code was a Statutory Code based on Section 40 (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The Commission recommended this Code for adoption and implementation in the district Councils in Northern Ireland in line with its statutory responsibilities to establish:

"... a Code of procedure for securing fair and equal consideration of applications to Councils by persons seeking to be employed by them as officers, and fair and equal treatment of persons who are so employed". Extract from paragraph 40 (4) (b) of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972.

The Commission had engaged with Councils, the NIHE and other key stakeholders on the structure and provisions of a revised Code and now seek feedback on these changes through an 11-week consultation period running from Friday 11 July 2025 until Friday 26 September.

A draft copy of the revised LGSC Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection was circulated for information.

### 3. Consultation Response

The revised Code provided a more concise guide, and a draft consultation response was circulated for approval.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly  
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

**the draft consultation response on the revised LGSC Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Gary Gardner, HR Manager*

*The Supplementary report was taken at this point.*

## 4.6 CCS/EDP/025 DUAL LANGUAGE STREET SIGN APPLICATIONS

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve and note the Dual Language Street Sign applications as follows:**

#### **Stage 1**

- **No applications at stage 1 be noted.**

#### **Stage 2**

- **Arthur Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 7EH be noted**
- **Arthur Park, Newtownabbey, BT36 7EL be noted**
- **Gallagh Road, Toome, BT41 3PD be noted**

#### **Stage 3**

- **Shore Road, Toome, BT41 3NW be approved**
- **Brae Terrace, Crumlin, BT29 4XW be approved**
- **Glenville Green, Newtownabbey, BT37 0TT be approved**

### 2. Background

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

### 3. Application Update

**STAGE 1:** PETITION VERIFICATION - there are no applications at stage 1.

**STAGE 2:** RESIDENTS CANVASS - There are three applications at stage 2.

1. ARTHUR ROAD, NEWTOWNABBHEY, BT36 7EH
2. ARTHUR PARK, NEWTOWNABBHEY, BT36 7EL
3. GALLAGH ROAD, TOOME, BT41 3PD

Canvass letters would be issued to the above residents, the outcome of which would be reported to Members.

**STAGE 3: STREET SIGN INSTALLATION** - There are three applications at stage 3.

1. SHORE ROAD, TOOME, BT41 3NW
2. BRAE TERRACE, CRUMLIN BT29 4XW
3. GLENVILLE GREEN, NEWTOWNABBAY, BT37 0TT

The occupiers of the above streets have been canvassed and meet the two thirds or more in favour of the erection of second language street signs.

Maps and Costs had been circulated for information.

Proposed by Councillor Cushinan

Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

**the Dual Language Street Sign applications at:**

**Stage 1**

- No applications at stage 1 be noted.

**Stage 2**

- Arthur Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 7EH be noted
- Arthur Park, Newtownabbey, BT36 7EL be noted
- Gallagher Road, Toome, BT41 3PD be noted

**Stage 3**

- Shore Road, Toome, BT41 3NW be approved
- Brae Terrace, Crumlin, BT29 4XW be approved
- Glenville Green, Newtownabbey, BT37 0TT be approved

*ACTION BY: James Porter, Customer Services Manager*

**5 ITEMS FOR NOTING**

**5.1 FC/FA/8 ANNUAL REVIEW OF PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS & TREASURY MANAGEMENT – 2025/26 QUARTER 1 UPDATE**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to provide a review of the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management activities for Quarter 1 of the 2025/26 financial year for noting.**

**2. Introduction**

The Council measures and manages its capital expenditure, borrowings and investment activities with reference to the CIPFA Prudential Code. This report provided an update on these activities that took place during April to June 2025.



### 3. Previous Decisions of Council

Council approved the Prudential Indicators for 2025/26 to 2027/2028 and the Treasury Management Strategies for 2025/26 in February 2025.

Under the Prudential Code and the Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services, Council was required to monitor and review its prudential indicators. The key objective of which was to ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the Council affordable, prudent and sustainable and that treasury management decisions were taken in accordance with good professional practice. The Council's Treasury Management Policy required quarterly and annual reports on treasury management activities.

This report compared the approved Prudential Indicators for 2025/26 with the quarterly position and the quarterly report on the Council's borrowing and investment activities for 2025/26.

A copy of the annual report was circulated for Members' information.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly

Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

**that the report be noted.**

NO ACTION

## 5.2 **FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE 2025/26 QUARTER 1 UPDATE**

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to note the Council's quarterly prompt payment performance.**

### 2. Introduction/Background

The Department for Communities (DfC) issued revised guidance (Local Government Circular 19/2016) on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments. 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

Council's prompt payment performance for the period 1 April to 30 June 2025 was set out below:

During the above period, the Council paid invoices totalling £18,141,474.

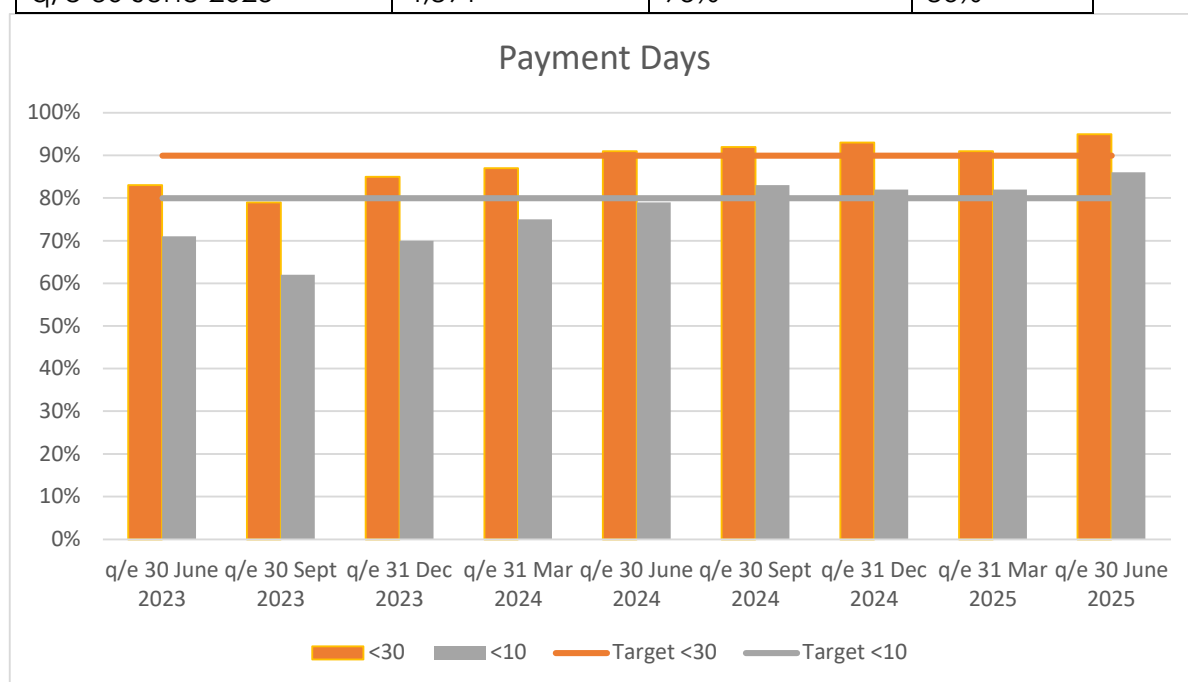
Council paid 4,665 invoices within the 30 calendar days target (95%).

Council paid 4,218 invoices within the 10 working days target (86%).

Council paid 226 invoices outside of the 30 days target (5%).

This compares to previous quarterly results as below:

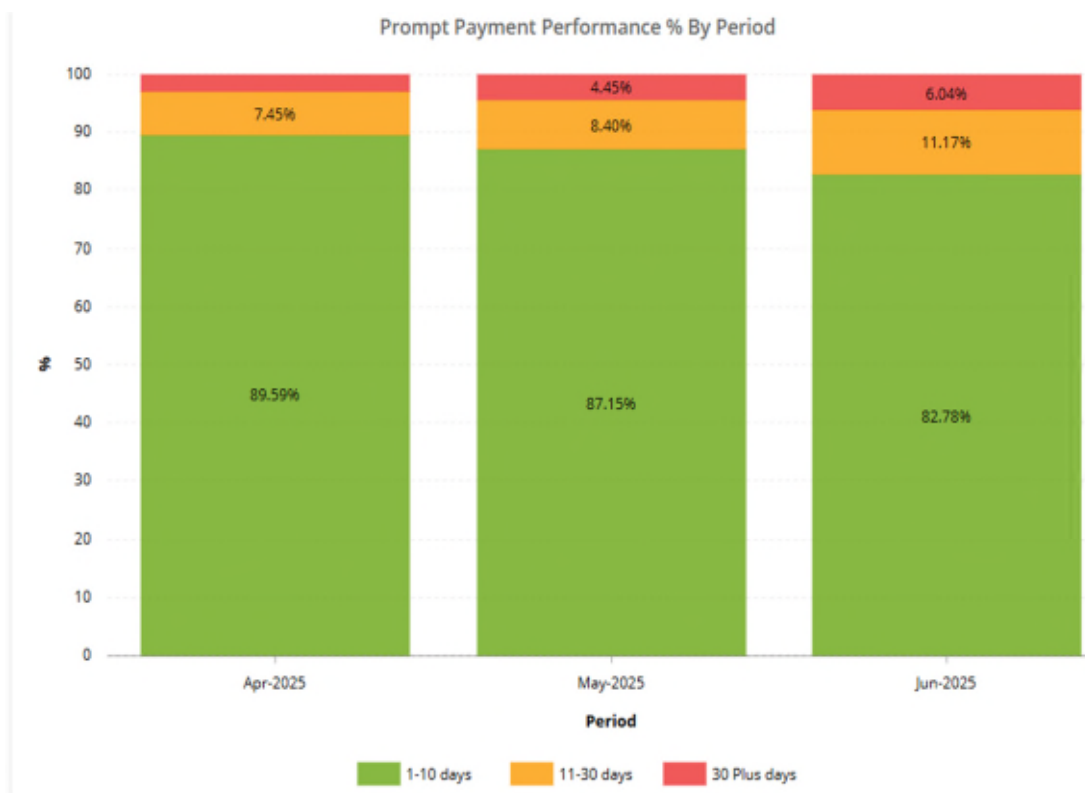
Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
<b>Target</b>		<b>90%</b>	<b>80%</b>
q/e 30 June 2023	7,050	83%	71%
q/e 30 September 2023	6,498	79%	62%
q/e 31 December 2023	7,074	85%	70%
q/e 31 March 2024	5,776	87%	75%
q/e 30 June 2024	5,533	91%	79%
q/e 30 September 2024	4,871	92%	83%
q/e 31 December 2024	4,849	93%	82%
q/e 31 March 2025	6,787	91%	82%
q/e 30 June 2025	4,891	95%	86%



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

The table and graph above showed the performance over the last two years. Both targets had now been met for the previous four quarters.

The monthly performance for the financial year to date i.e. April to June was as shown below:



Staff within the Finance section continued to work with all departments across the Council and with the software provider to ensure that the targets continue to be met and improved as much as possible.

Service improvements included:

- Additional reporting capability to monitor performance
- Staff training/refresher sessions
- Process review for high volume suppliers
- Introduction of a new process to scan invoices and send to Council officers for action or to return invoices to the supplier for more information.

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 2025 was shown in Appendix 1 (circulated); the Council's performance for Quarter 1 of 2025/26 against the average performance for the other Councils for the same quarter was set out in the table below:

Council	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Antrim & Newtownabbey BC (Quarter 1 25/26)	95%	86%
All Councils (Quarter 1 25/26)	93%	73%

#### 4. Supplier Balances

	June 2025	March 2025
	£	£
Creditors Control Account	128,247	243,596
% of quarterly spend	0.71%	1.5%

The outstanding amount due to suppliers would fluctuate markedly depending on the timing of payment, invoice value and timelines of verification. The low value of the outstanding amount was consistent with the payment performance for the quarter.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove  
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

**the Council's quarterly prompt payment performance report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

### 5.3 **FI/FIN/011 ESTIMATES TIMETABLE 2026/27**

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to provide Members with the 2026/27 Estimates Timetable for noting.**

#### 2. Introduction/Background

Under the Local Government Finance Act Northern Ireland 2011, District Councils were obliged to set the estimates of rates before 15 February each year. District Councils were also obliged under the Rates Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 to set both domestic and non-domestic district rates no later than this date.

A timetable outlining key stages in the process was circulated. This included the work that would be completed by budget holders as well as Corporate Workshops and presentations to Committees and Council. CLT approved the timetable on 28 July 2025.

Proposed by Councillor O'Lone  
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

**the Estimates Timetable be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## 5.4 G/DPFI/2 QUARTERLY REPORT ON FOI/EIR/DPA REQUESTS

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to inform Members on the Quarter 1 statistics relating to FOI/EIR/DPA Requests.**

### 2. Introduction/Background

A report had been prepared on requests received and completed in the first quarter of the year (1 April to 30 June 2025) under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) and was circulated.

### 3. Summary

A summary of the quarter's statistics was as follows:

- The number of requests received was higher than the number in the same period the previous year – an increase of 27%.
- Of the 126\* requests received, 92 were under FOI, 24 under EIR and 11 under DPA.

*\* One request was a combined FOI/SAR*

- 119 requests were completed within the quarter.
- 100% of the requests received within the quarter were completed within the legislative deadlines of 20 days for FOI and EIR requests and a calendar month for requests made under DPA.
- The sections that received the most requests in the quarter were Environmental Health (35), Finance (29), Governance (19) and Estate Services (16).
- Five appeals were received during the quarter. The Council's original decision was upheld on 2 occasions and additional information was provided on 3 occasions.
- 2 complaints to the ICO were notified within the quarter.

*Complaint Number 1:*

ICO reference - IC-363284-F0Q2

On 14 February 2025 the ICO notified the Council that they had received a complaint re SAR 2024/11/016 – application of Section 42 exemption – Legal Professional Privilege. The SAR related to a compensation claim made by the subject. On 19 June 2025 the ICO requested further information from the

Council to be provided by 3 July. The Council's legal adviser responded to the ICO.

The ICO had now advised that the case had been closed under their informal resolution process and no further action was required of the Council.

*Complaint Number 2:*

ICO reference - IC-387945-V8Q1

On 10 June 2025 the ICO notified the Council that they had received a complaint re EIR 2025/03/036 – Council's brown bin waste guidelines- regarding whether the Council had disclosed all information that it held within the scope of the request. Once the case had been allocated to a case officer the ICO would proceed to a decision notice or request further information from the Council.

#### 4. Cost of FOI requests

Members had asked for information to be provided on the cost of processing FOIs. An accurate costing would be extremely difficult to provide. FOI responses were co-ordinated by the 5 members of the Information Governance Team who had other deliverables. Input was also required from the various sections compiling the information in response to requests. This would vary with the nature of the request and the number and grades of staff required to have input in responding to requests.

The FOI Fees Regulations allow for a flat rate of £25 per hour to be used in estimating the cost of responding to FOIs. We had based the estimated cost on using this flat rate. It had also been estimated that the average time to process and respond to requests for information would be 3 hours per request.

Based on 126 FOI requests received by Council this quarter.

126 x 3 hours per request = 378 hours

378 hours x £25 per hour = overall estimated cost of £9,450 for this quarter.

The Council was obliged to comply with the FOI legislation irrespective of costs. However, if it was anticipated that a request would take more than 18 hours work a public authority may refuse to provide the information or may provide assistance to the requester to refine their request and bring it under the 18-hour limit.

Councillor Cosgrove's concern that individuals making Freedom of Information (FOI) requests could remain anonymous, was noted.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor O'Lone and agreed that

**the Quarter 1 statistics relating to FOI/EIR/DPA Requests be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

**5.5 G/MSMO/41 MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS – DECEMBER 2024 TO MAY 2025**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to provide a summary of Members' attendance for each of the Council meetings and Committee Member attendance for each of the Committee meetings, from December 2024 to May 2025, prior to publication on the Council's website.**

**2. Introduction/Background**

In February 2017 at the Policy and Governance Committee meeting, it was agreed that monthly attendance records for each of the Council and Committee meetings would be summarised on a six-monthly basis and published on the Council's website.

At the Policy and Governance Committee meeting in September 2024 it was further agreed that the summary attendance sheet would be updated to record in person and remote attendance at meetings.

A summary sheet had been prepared showing the total attendance for each of the Council and Committee meetings for the period 1 December 2024 to 31 May 2025 (circulated).

Proposed by Councillor Kelly  
Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

**the summary sheet recording Members' attendance for each of the Council meetings and Committee Member attendance for each of the Committee meetings for the period from 1 December 2024 to 31 May 2025 be noted and published on Council's website.**

*ACTION BY: Member Services*

**5.6 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – PERIOD 4 APRIL 2025 TO JULY 2025**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the financial performance for the Directorates reporting to the Policy and Governance Committee and for the whole Council for Period 4 April 2025 to July 2025.**

## 2. Introduction/Background

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

## 3. Summary

As at period 4:

The Finance and Governance Directorate had a favourable variance of £113k, or 5.1%, against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

The Organisation Development Directorate had a favourable variance of £149k, or 16%, against the budgeted financial performance for the period. Overall, the Council had a favourable variance of £973k or 4.8% against the budgeted financial performance for the period.

A report on the financial performance, employee costs, highest areas of expenditure and income, and the financial performance by Head of Service was circulated for Members' information.

This report also included the overall financial performance of the Council, including a summary of the financial performance of each Directorate.

Councillor Cosgrove requested that it be noted that Council was in a favourable position due to the manner in which the budget had been managed.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

**that the report be noted.**

NO ACTION

## 5.7 **CCS/CS/011 CUSTOMER SERVICES QUARTERLY REPORT**

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to note the Quarter 1 Customer Service report for the period April to June 2025.**

### 2. Introduction/Background

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025-26 sets out the performance improvement objective; *'We would provide best-in-class services for our residents and make them feel valued and engaged. By fostering trust, engagement and increased satisfaction, we are committed to elevating the customer service experience.'*



Four indicators were set as measures of success and the Customer Services Report for Quarter 1 2025-26 (circulated) provided an update on performance.

In addition, there was an update on key consultations to serve the Plan, and the performance of the Complaints Handling Procedure, during the period April to June 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly

Seconded by Councillor O'Lone and agreed that

**the Quarter 1 Customer Service report for the period April to June 2025 be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## **5.8 OD/OD/002 ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP MINUTES**

### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to note the minutes of the Elected Member Development Working Group meeting held on 16 June 2025.**

### **2. Minutes**

A copy of the minutes of the meeting were circulated for information.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

**the minutes of the Elected Member Development Working Group meeting held on 16 June 2025 be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## **5.9 HR/LD/004 LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING GROUP CONTRIBUTION 2025-26**

### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to note the Council's contribution to the Local Government Training Group for 2025/26.**

### **2. Introduction**

The functions of the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) were still being administered by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and would continue until 1 April 2029.

Annually a request for contribution from the participating Councils was sought. This was based on the Council's percentage rateable value in relation

to all rate payers across Northern Ireland and applied to the total amount agreed to run the LGTG.

### 3. Local Government Training Group (LGTG)

Council currently benefits most from the below elements provided by the Local Government Training Group:

- LGTG e-learning platform: relaunched as the iLearn Portal
- LGTG Call Off Framework
- Funding towards NILGA Elected Member Learning and Development

Circulated for Members' information was the agreed Governance, Accountability and Audits Arrangements Paper and the Service Level Agreement.

### 4. Financial Position/Implication

Council's contribution for 2025/26 was £18,985 and would be met in line with current budget allocations.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly

Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

**the Council's contribution to the Local Government Training Group for 2025/26 be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## 5.10 **CCS/EDP/7 QUARTERLY SCREENING REPORT SECTION 75 AND RURAL SCREENING**

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to update Members on the quarterly section 75 and rural screenings which had taken place within the period of March and July 2025.**

### 2. Background

In line with the Council's Equality Scheme, it was agreed to provide quarterly updates on the screening of policies under Section 75. Within the Scheme, the Council made a commitment to apply screening methodology to all new and revised policies. Where necessary and appropriate, these new policies would be subject to further equality impact assessment.

### 3. Section 75 and Rural Screenings

The policies noted below had been screened between March – July 2025.

POLICY	SCREENING DECISION
Car Loan Scheme	1
Cycle2Work Scheme	1
Health and Safety Policy	1
Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26	1
School Uniform Re-use Scheme	1
Social Supermarket and Family Support Programme	1
Hardship Scheme	1
Holocaust Programme	1
Christmas Toy Scheme	1
Community Planning Partnership – Draft Love Living Here Delivery Plan 2030	1
Ending Violence Against Woman and Girls (EVAWG)	1
Werea's at Risk Funding	1
Development of Walking Tours	1
Review of Waste Collection Policy 2025	1
Review of Environmental Policy	1
PeacePlus Programme	1
Facility closures and opening hours- Leisure Services	1
Schedule of Charges and Pricing Policies, Parks and Leisure 2024/25	1
Schedule of Charges and Pricing Policies, Parks and Leisure 2025/26	1
Updated Cemeteries Rules and Regulations	1
Proposed Changes to Bereavement Services Charges 2025/26	1
Leisure Grant Aid Programme	1
Ballyearl Car Parking Resurfacing	1
Discount to 3G Pitch Training Rate	1
Valley Leisure Centre & Crumlin Leisure Centre – Replacement of Fitness Equipment	1
Ballyearl Leisure Centre – Driving Range Drainage Works	1
Proposed Changes to Leisure Services Charges 2025/26	1
Ballyclwere Rugby Club – The Cloughan Project	1
Take a Seat Initiative	1
Van Booking System at Household Recycling Centres	1
Work Smart Initiative	1
Pay Protection Policy	1
Pensions Discretions Policy Statement Options Paper	1
Voluntary Severance	1
Voluntary Redundancy Policy	1
The Sovereign Complex – Land Lease Renewal	1

- (1) Screened with no mitigation  
(2) Screened with mitigation  
(3) Screened and EQIA required

Proposed by Councillor Kelly  
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

**the quarterly screening report for March - July 2025 be noted.**

NO ACTION

**5.11 HR/GEN/019 MANAGING ATTENDANCE QUARTER 1 APRIL – JUNE 2025**

**1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members to note the Quarter 1 Managing Attendance Update for the period April 2025 to June 2025 and associated Action Plan for 2025/26.**

**2. Managing Attendance Update Summary**

The Council's 2025/26 annual target for absence was 14 days lost per employee.

Absence at the end of Quarter 1 2025/26 was below the set target of 3.51 days per employee for quarter 1, sitting at 3.06 days per employee.

A comprehensive action plan was in place to manage absence, with further details provided in the circulated Managing Absence Report and updated Attendance Management Action Plan.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor Goodman and agreed that

**the Quarter 1 Managing Attendance Update for the period April 2025 to June 2025, and associated Action Plan for 2025/26, be noted.**

NO ACTION

**6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

Members were advised that Any Other Relevant Business (AORB) would be taken at this point.

There were no AORB raised.

**PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'**

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove

Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed

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

## 7 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

### 7.1 **IN CONFIDENCE** CD/GEN/005 CAPITAL PROJECTS PROGRESS REPORT TO 31 JULY 2025

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to update members on the entirety of the Capital Programme, the progress of specific capital projects and the post implementation review of completed projects.**

#### 2. Background

Council approved a capital prioritisation scheme at the March 25 Council Meeting. The scheme ensures that the capital plan remains affordable and deliverable in the medium term and takes into account the duration, cost, scale and funding of projects.

The Council was last provided with an update on the capital programme at the Corporate Workshop on 19 June 2025. This report provided an update on capital project delivery up to the 31 July 2025.

#### Phases of Capital Project Management

The report was presented under the following sections or stages:

- Stage 0 - Preliminary work to establish the justification for the Capital Investment or Strategic Outline Case to identify preferred way forward.
- Stage 1 – The completion of an Outline Business Case to evidence the viability, sustainability, scope / scale and affordability of the project. At Stage 1, a preferred option emerges and design costs to appoint an Integrated Consultancy Team were approved.
- Stage 2 – With a focus upon the preferred option, detailed design to allow the CAPEX and whole life Revenue costs to be estimated. Note that during this stage, all costs were 'Pre-tender Estimates'. The completion of the Full Business Case allows Planning Approval to be sought and a procurement exercise for a contractor or supplier to be completed. The completion of Phase 2 provided:
  - A Full Business Case.
  - Detailed Design.
  - Planning approval.
  - A tender report for the supplier or contractor.
  - A report to Council to make the Investment Decision to proceed to approve/appoint winning tenderer, sign contract and manage construction.

The Council approval at the conclusion of this stage was the Investment Decision, allowing the appointment of the winning tenderer, contract management and construction.

- Stage 3 - Construction Contract Management normally via NEC 4 contract.
- Stage 4 - Benefit Realisation. Approve handover of asset into service and manage operations.

A Council decision was required to progress a project through each and every stage.

The aforementioned stages were presented in reverse order i.e. starting with those projects which had been completed year to date.

#### Stage 4 – Benefit Realisation. Projects Completed Year to Date

The table below lists the projects completed in the 4 months to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. The value of these schemes total £219k and would be capitalised as part of Council's investment in the Borough in the relevant financial year.

Project	Expenditure b/fwd £	25/26 Spend (est) £	Total Spend £	External Funding £	Net Cost £
Mallusk Play Area	██████	██████	██████	██████	██████
<b>Total</b>	██████	██████	██████	██████	██████

#### Post Project Evaluation (Capital) – Mallusk Play Area

This scheme was delivered within the approved budget of £██████. Whilst there was some delay in finalisation of legal agreements with Belfast City Council, the project was delivered within the contractor's agreed programme.

Retrospective grant funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund was successfully applied for and the scheme was delivered within the parameters required by the funder.

The consultancy and main contractor procurements received several competitive bids and there were no challenges to the procurement outcomes.

No consultant or contractor issues arose during the project.

Vandalism and anti-social behaviour was an ongoing challenge for this play area and was impacting on the benefit realisation. Operational performance against the business case targets would be assessed by the Parks section and included in a full Post Project Evaluation review and reported to the Operations Committee in due course with a summary of all PPE's being presented to the Audit and Risk Committee.

### Stage 3 – Contract Management – Projects Currently Under Construction

The table below listed all projects which were currently 'on-site' or where a contractor appointment had been made, following the Council's Investment Decision.

The value of schemes currently under construction total £[REDACTED] in value.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Project Budget £</b>	<b>External Funding £</b>	<b>Estimated Cost to Council £</b>	<b>Expected Completion</b>
Glengormley Office Block	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Jan-26
Farmley, Glenwell Road Glengormley	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Oct-25
Craigmore HRC – site remodelling (Estate Lifecycle Projects priority)	[REDACTED]	-	[REDACTED]	Nov-25
3G Pitch Ballyclare, Cloughan Project	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Jul-26
Kings Park Play Area	[REDACTED]	-	[REDACTED]	Sept-25
Rathcoole Play Area	[REDACTED]	-	[REDACTED]	Oct-25
<b>Total</b>	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	

### Stage 2 - Projects Currently at Final Business Case, Planning & Procurement

The table below listed the projects which were at the 'Final Business Case stage. The completion of the Full Business Case allowed planning approval to be sought and a procurement exercise for a contractor or supplier to be completed.

The Council approval at the conclusion of this stage was the Investment Decision, allowing the appointment of the winning tenderer, thereafter contract management and construction.

The value of schemes currently at this stage total £6.3m.

Project	Project Budget £	External Funding £	Est Cost to Council £	Expected On-Site	Expected Completion
Glengormley Environmental Improvement Scheme	██████	██████	██████	Jul-26	May-28
Car Park Resurfacing Programme (Estate Lifecycle Projects priority)	██████	-	██████	Oct -25	Dec-25
Ballyearl Drainage Scheme (Estate Lifecycle Projects priority)	██████	-	██████	May-26	July-26
Mossley Pitches Drainage Scheme (Estate Lifecycle Projects priority)	██████	-	██████	May-26	July-26
<b>Total</b>	██████	██████	██████		

#### Stage 1 – The completion of an Outline Business Case

The completion of an Outline Business Case provided evidence for the viability, sustainability, scope / scale and affordability of the project. At the completion of Stage 1, a preferred option emerges.

The table below lists projects where scoping and feasibility work had started on the project.

Project	Project Budget £	Expected On-site	Expected Completion	Notes
Valley LC - Essential upgrading works	██████	tbc	tbc	Awaiting scope /design
Castle Gardens Café Refurbishment	██████	tbc	tbc	Awaiting scope /design



Steeple House & Gardens Refurbishment	Tbc	tbc	tbc	HLF funding for feasibility development received, OBC to be developed
Whiteabbey Public Realm Scheme	Tbc	tbc	tbc	Business case to be developed. Traffic survey complete
Crumlin Public Realm Scheme	Tbc	tbc	tbc	Business case to be developed. Traffic survey complete
Valley Park New Cemetery	Tbc	tbc	tbc	Business case to be developed.
Sustainability Projects	Tbc	tbc	tbc	PIDs to be developed
3G Pitch, The Diamond, Rathcoole and Community Hub Building	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Hazelbank Park – Phase 2 – Pavilion and Visitor Facilities	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Play Parks Development	Tbc	tbc	tbc	Schemes to be developed from play park audit
Jordanstown Loughshore Park Café extension	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Mossley Mill Plant Room	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
AF 2G pitch – floodlight replacement	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Cranfield Jetty	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Mossley Pavilion and Pitches	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Mossley Mill – Heritage Masterplan	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
Peace Plus Projects	██████	tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case
Illumination Schemes (8no.)	██████	tbc	tbc	Tbc

Belmont/Sixmile Cemetery – Memorial Garden		tbc	tbc	tbc – subject to business case review
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### Stage 0 – Projects at the Earliest Stage of the Project Management Process

Preliminary work to establish the justification for the Capital Investment and associated operational responsibilities.

<b>Project</b>
Randalstown 3G pitch – site tbc
Ballyearl LC - Phase 3 Refurb
Threemilewater Park Phase 3
Crumlin Glen Phase 2
Threemilewater Sports Pavilion
Neillsbrook Community Centre Improvements – business case to be reviewed
Sixmile LC – Changing Area Refurbishment
Wet-Side LC – Village Changing Refurbishment
Crumlin HRC - site tbc
Parks and Cemeteries Improvement Works
Rathcoole Allotments – site tbc
Leisure Centre Improvement Works
Antrim Forum – Additional Car Parking

Further detailed information on the full capital programme, the prioritisation of projects and the impact on the rates estimates process would be provided at the Capital Workshop in November 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove  
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

**that the Capital update be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## **7.2 IN CONFIDENCE OD/OD/002 ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT – CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION**

### **1. Purpose**

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

## 2. Background

In April 2023, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council introduced its Elected Member Continuous Professional Development Policy, enabling Elected Members to access:

- Full coverage of part-time study costs (up to degree level)
- An annual individual development allowance of £800 (£3200 per term)
- 75% funding for approved CPD applications

Members could use their individual budget towards any professional or academic development programs.

## 3. CPD Application

Following recent communication of the Policy to Elected Members via email and Council's new Elected Member app, two applications had been received:

<b>Elected Member</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Indicative Costings</b>	<b>Proposed funding</b>
Councillor Michael Goodman	Public Policy Analysis	Online – 10 weeks 16 July-17 September 2025	£2420	£1815 (75% CPD) £605 (individual development allowance)
Councillor Robert Foster	Economic and International Relations Learning Visit to Poppy Country	22 <sup>nd</sup> August – 24 <sup>th</sup> August	£590	£590 (individual development allowance)

## 4. Financial Position

There were no additional cost implications, request could be met in line with current budget expenditure.

## 5. Governance

The Elected Member Development Working Group were circulated the CPD applications to review, assessing it against the policy, and recommends it for approval.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley

Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

**the Elected Member Continuous Professional Development Applications be approved**

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

### **7.3 IN CONFIDENCE ST/G/63 CAR LEASING SCHEME**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend the approval of a Council Car Leasing Scheme.**

#### **2. Introduction/Background**

Recently Council Finance staff had been working collaboratively with NHS Fleet Solutions who provide salary sacrifice car leasing arrangements. These arrangements provide staff across the public sector access to cars in compliance with HMRC salary sacrifice tax and National Insurance rules.

#### **3. Previous Decision of Council**

In July 2025, Council approved the appointment of NHS Fleet Solutions to provide a salary sacrifice private car leasing arrangement for Council.

#### **4. Key Issues**

Following Council approval, officers had developed a draft Council Car Lease Scheme (circulated).

This Scheme included information on eligibility, insurance, early termination, servicing and payments.

There was no cost to Council in relation to the scheme as the cost of the car was fully recovered through deductions from salary and reduced Employer's National Insurance contributions.

#### **5. Governance**

A copy of the Section 75 screening form and DPIA were circulated for information.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

**the Council Car Leasing Scheme be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Richard Murray, Head of Finance*

## 7.4 **IN CONFIDENCE** FI/ICT/4 DATA PROTECTION BACKUP SOLUTION

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members approval for the procurement of a new Backup solution to protect Council data and systems.**

### 2. Background

Council manages approximately 9 terabytes of digital file data alongside a virtual server estate of 66 servers distributed across multiple sites. These were backed up daily to a cloud-based solution, providing the essential foundation for business continuity. The backup service enables recovery from accidental file loss, hardware failure, or operational disruption. This also underpins the Council's cyber security resilience.

The current backup infrastructure had reached the end of its operational life, with the supporting contract expiring and hardware now outdated.

Continuing with the existing arrangements increases the risk of disruption and potential data loss. To ensure resilience, security, and efficiency, Council should secure a modern, fully managed backup solution that delivers reliability, security, and capacity to meet future operational needs.

The options presented within the business case were summarised below:

- Option 1 - Continue with existing backup solution for file level backup and replace aging hardware for server level backup.
- Option 2 - Migrate to new Data Protection Solution for both file and server backups

The full business case was circulated.

### 3. Procurement

In order to identify the available backup solutions and costs for the business case, Officers investigated the market via the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) G-Cloud Framework. This framework offered access to the latest technology and innovation from over 4000 suppliers and provided a compliant route to market which reduces the timescales and the procurement risk.

Several software solutions were extensively reviewed in terms of capability and cost and were evaluated as follows:

#### Stage 1 – Capability Assessment

The software solutions were evaluated for:

- compliance with specification
- cyber security, data protection and infrastructure resilience
- management and pro-active support provision

## Stage 2 – Pricing

Following the capability assessment, the preferred solution price for Option 2 was set out below:

Supplier	Estimated Cost including Implementation and Installation (£) (excl. VAT)	Annual IaaS Fees (£) (excl. VAT)
Iomart		

### 4. Financial Position/ Implication

The recommended option provided a cost saving of approximately £94,000 over the 4-year project life in comparison to the current service provision.

Proposed by Councillor Goodman

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

- a) approval be given to proceed with Option 2 of the Business Case at an estimated cost of £.
- b) approval be given for the implementation of the backup solution supplied by Iomart, through the G-Cloud Framework, at an estimated cost of £ for 3 years with an option to extend for up to a further 12 months.

*ACTION BY: Graham Smyth, Head of ICT*

### **PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'**

Proposed by Councillor Goodman

Seconded by Councillor McGrann 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 7pm.

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**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.***