



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE  
HELD AT ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON 2 SEPTEMBER AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Councillor V McWilliam
- Committee Members  
(In person)** : Aldermen – P Bradley, L Clarke, J McGrath  
and J Smyth
- Councillors – J Burbank, J Gilmour,  
AM Logue, A McAuley, H Magill,  
M Ní Chonghaile, M Stewart
- Committee Members  
(Remote)** : Councillors - R Foster, E McLaughlin
- Non Committee  
Members  
(In person)** : Councillors - S Cosgrove, M Cooper, B Webb
- Non Committee  
Members:  
(Remote)** : Councillors - M Brady, R Lynch, L O’Hagan
- Officers Present** : Director of Parks and Leisure Operations - M McDowell  
Director of Sustainability Operations – M Lavery  
Head of Parks Operations - P Mawhinney  
Head of Waste Operations – D Purdy  
Head of Leisure Operations – D O’Hagan  
Head of Environmental Health & Wellbeing – C Kelly  
ICT Change Officer – A Cole  
Member Services Officer – C McGrandle

## CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

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

### 1 APOLOGIES

None.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 3.3 - Councillor J Gilmour

### 3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

#### 3.1 EH/EHS/FC/020 TOOMACRO LTD APPROVAL OF PREMISES AS A COLD STORE

##### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members that full approval be granted to Toomacro Ltd as a cold store.**

##### 2. Introduction

Members were reminded that, since 1 June 2006, it had been a legislative requirement to approve product specific food establishments under regulation EC853/2004.

All cold store premises which handled products of animal origin (including, meat, dairy and poultry products) required approval unless they operated in a way that was exempt under Regulation 853/2004.

##### 3. Key Issues

An application for approval had been received from Toomacro Ltd, Valley Business Centre, 67 Church Road Newtownabbey, BT36 7LS.

The Council's Environmental Health Section, as the relevant enforcing authority, had inspected the following premises in accordance with Regulation (EC) 853/2004 and other relevant regulations.

Premises	Address	Identification Number
Toomacro Ltd	Unit D3, Valley Business Centre 67 Church Road Newtownabbey BT36 7LS	UK(NI) ZJ 026

The premises had been inspected and fully complied with current legislative requirements. Full approval of these premises was therefore deemed appropriate.

#### 4. Summary

Toomacro Ltd had been inspected and been found to comply with relevant food safety regulations. Officers recommended approval for its operation as a cold store under the regulations.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**full approval to Toomacro Ltd as a cold store be granted.**

*ACTION BY: Lara Nelson, Environmental Health Manager (Food)*

### 3.2 **EH/EHS/HS/002 HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE NI (HSENI) DATA SHARING AGREEMENT**

#### 1. Purpose

**A Data Sharing Agreement between HSENI and the Council was required to facilitate the exchange of information regarding health and safety enforcement duties within the Borough. This agreement would ensure compliance with The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 (RIDDOR) and address complaints made under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978.**

#### 2. Introduction

Members were reminded that the Council was responsible for enforcing the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, along with other related regulations, in premises within the Borough that fall under its jurisdiction. The enforcement duties for various types of premises were shared between the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) and Local Councils.

#### 3. Key Issues

A data-sharing agreement between HSENI and Council was required under Data Protection Regulations to facilitate the lawful transfer of personal data, including sensitive information, between HSENI and the Council's Environmental Health section.

Accident reporting arrangements allowed employers to report incidents and accidents directly to HSENI, who would forward them to Council for investigation for premises over which it had enforcement responsibility. This Data Sharing Agreement supported compliance with The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 (RIDDOR), which mandates reporting work-related deaths, injuries, diseases, and dangerous

occurrences. The agreement ensured the proper handling of data to fulfil statutory health and safety responsibilities.

#### 4. Summary

The proposed Data Sharing Agreement between (HSENI) and Council governed the sharing of personal and sensitive data to fulfil statutory functions under relevant health and safety regulations. The agreement also outlined the legal basis for data sharing, including substantial public interest and compliance with legal obligations, ensuring both parties could perform their duties effectively.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour  
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

**the signing of the HSENI Data Sharing Agreement be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health*

*Having declared an interest in Item 3.3, Councillor Gilmour left the Chamber.*

### **3.3 L/LEI/002/VOL4 LEISURE GRANT AID SCHEME - CALL 2**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the recommendations set out within the second call of the Leisure Grant Aid Programme.**

#### **2. Introduction**

For the period June – July, a total of 17 applications were submitted. All 17 applications had been scored with a table setting out details and recommendations circulated for Members' reference. Upon approval of the listed grants, the remaining balances in each funding category were outlined below:

Category	No. of apps	Budget	Approved spend to date 24/25	No. of apps.	Grants proposed	Funding Balance remaining (subject to approval of application)
					(£)	
Capital Grants	0	£40,000	£0	0	0	£40,000
Grants to Clubs	2	£50,000	£10,750	2	£5,008	£34,242
Grants to Athletes	19	£40,000	£21,433	13	£9,715	£8,852
Grants to Coaches and Officials	4	£5,000	£1,790	0	0	£3,210
Sports Event Grant	5	£30,000	£7,582	2	£3,000	£19,418
Defibrillator Grant	2	£5,000	£2,700	0	0	£2,300
<b>Allocation total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>£170,000</b>	<b>£68,028</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>£17,723</b>	<b>£84,249</b>

			(includes £23,773 from previous financial year)			
Fitness suite Gold Card	7	20 Applications	7 applications	0	0	13 applications
Total approved spend to date including this call, if approved £85,751						

### 3. Financial Position

The approved budget for the 2024/25 programme was £170,000.

Should approval be given for the grants listed, the remaining balance would total £84,249.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
 Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

**the Leisure Grant Aid Programme recommendations, covering the period from June – July 2024 be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Anna Boyle, Funding Hub Manager and Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager*

*Councillor Gilmour returned to the Chamber at Item 3.4.*

### **3.4 PK/REG/017 APPLICATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the renewal of the Old Courthouse as an approved venue for conducting Civil Marriage/Civil Partnership ceremonies.**

#### **2. Background**

Under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act 2004, Council had the responsibility to approve appropriate applications for Place Approvals for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships, which last for three years. The process required that a Notice of Interest be displayed for a three-week period in a prominent place at the venue to allow for any public objections.

#### **3. Renewal Application**

A renewal application for a place approval had been received from the Old Courthouse, Antrim. The venue was previously approved by the Council in May 2021, with the specified area for approval as follows:

Old Courthouse: Theatre Hall.

No public objections had been received relating to the venue.

In response to a Member's query, the Director of Parks and Leisure, Operations agreed to explore the option of Mossley Mill becoming a venue for Civil Ceremonies and would report back to a future committee with further information.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
Seconded by Councillor Ní Chonghaile and agreed that

**the application from Old Courthouse, Antrim to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act 2004 be re-approved.**

*ACTION BY: Paula Redpath, Registrar*

### **3.5 PBS/PS/008 WHITEABBEY VILLAGE CLOCK**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the Council to donate salvaged clock parts to the Whiteabbey Residents Association.**

#### **2. Background**

A clock previously mounted on the gable end of red brick townhouses along the Shore Road in Whiteabbey was severely damaged during a storm in 2016. Following the incident, the Council collected and stored the remaining parts of the clock. In 2017, a new free-standing clock was installed near the War Memorial on the Shore Road, opposite the original clock's location. In 2016, Abbeyville Residents Association (now Whiteabbey Residents Association) requested the salvaged clock parts from the Council with the intention of refurbishing the clock. However, due to potential planning considerations, the condition of the salvaged parts, and the decision to erect a new clock, the request was denied.

#### **3. Current Position**

The Council had recently received another request from the Whiteabbey Residents Association for the original salvaged clock parts. Despite being informed of the clock's condition and other concerns, the group had expressed a strong interest in preserving the parts for posterity.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

**the item be deferred and further information be requested from the Association on the proposed plans for the clock.**

*ACTION BY: David Blair, Head of Property Services*

### 3.6 PK/GEN/030 BRITAIN IN BLOOM AWARDS 2024

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek approval for attendance at the Britain in Bloom Awards 2024, which would be held in Manchester on 21 October 2024.**

#### 2. Britain in Bloom

Following Randalstown's success at the 2023 Ulster in Bloom Awards, the Council agreed to support Randalstown's nomination in the 'Small Town' category of the 2024 Royal Horticultural Society Britain in Bloom Competition, marking its 60th anniversary.

With the judging now complete and Randalstown selected as a finalist, an invitation had been received to attend the Britain in Bloom Awards in Manchester on Monday 21 October 2024. Tickets to the event were complimentary but limited to five per nomination. Traditionally, the Council had covered the travel and accommodation expenses for the awards ceremony.

It was proposed that the Mayor, the Chairperson of Operations Committee or their nominee, a Council Officer, and two community representatives from Tidy Randalstown attend the ceremony.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor Burbank and agreed that

**the attendance of the Mayor, the Chairperson of Operations Committee or their nominee, a Council Officer, and two community representatives from Tidy Randalstown at the Britain in Bloom Awards on 21 October 2024, in Manchester be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Paula Robinson, Executive Officer to Director of Parks and Leisure Operations*

### 3.7 EH/EHS/009 REVIEW OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY (HMO) LICENCE SCHEME CHARGES AND PROPOSED INCREASE IN LICENCE FEE FROM 1 OCTOBER 2024

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to advise Members of increased costs associated with licence scheme charges for Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO).**

#### 2. Background

Members were reminded that Belfast City Council's NIHMO Unit was responsible for managing the HMO service for all Northern Ireland Councils. The HMO Licensing Regime was transferred from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to local councils on a cost-neutral basis. Initial fees were based on

projected occupancy over a five-year period, with the NIHE providing £1.2 million in transitional funding.

The Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, effective from 1 April 2019, established a maximum HMO licence fee of £45 per person per year, as outlined in the 2019 Regulations.

Following a review by the NIHMO Unit for the 2022/23 period, an increase in the HMO fee from £37 to £45 per occupant was recommended, effective April 2023. However, implementation was delayed in order to seek further information on implementation of the change. The proposed fee increase was set to take effect on 1 October 2024, pending Members' approval. This increase was endorsed by SOLACE on 2 August 2024, and each Council must seek approval for the price increase from their relevant committees.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

In April 2019, Northern Ireland Councils set the HMO licence fee at £37 per person per year. Additional fees established at that time included:

<b>Licence variations</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Addition of a new managing agent	£185
Addition of a new occupant	£185 for each new occupant + £75 inspection fee (per visit)

### 4. Financial Position/Implication

Belfast City Council managed a small number of 15 HMO units on behalf of the Council, mostly located around Ulster University area. The NIHMO Unit was actively monitoring the financial status to maintain cost-neutrality across the service and further financial changes may be required in the future with the Chair of Solace addressing this by writing to the Department for Communities Permanent Secretary to bring forward legislation within the current mandate.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley

Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**a) the increase of the HMO licence application fee to £45 per person per year, the maximum permissible under the 2019 Regulations be approved;**

**b) the increased costs of varying an HMO licence as follows be approved:-**

<b>Licence variations</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Addition of a new managing agent.	£225
Addition of a new occupant	£225 for each new occupant



	+ £100 inspection fee (per visit)
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*ACTION BY: Kevin Bloomfield NIHMO Manager (Belfast City Council)*

### **3.8 EH/PHWB/018 PUBLIC HEALTH BILL**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The Department of Health had launched a consultation asking for views on new health protection measures being implemented through a Public Health Bill to replace the current Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) 1967.**

#### **2. Background**

The overarching principle of the legislation was to protect the population against various forms of infection and contamination and enabling relevant bodies to respond to public health emergencies. The legislation provided powers and duties for the health management of, and mitigation against, infection and contamination including biological, chemical and radiological in addition to infectious diseases, which was the current focus of the 1967 Act.

It was proposed that the new Bill:

- Included all infection and contamination that present, or could present, a significant harm to human health. This all-hazards approach aligned with the legislative frameworks in other UK jurisdictions;
- Aligned with the World Health Organization (WHO) International Health Regulations published in 2005;
- Updated certain powers around restrictions on employment, quarantine, isolation and medical examination;
- Clarified roles and responsibilities for different authorities including Councils and;
- Ensured that powers to intervene were proportionate to the public health risk and therefore compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

The procedural steps included in the proposals provided powers and clarity in relation to three main areas:

- A duty on registered medical practitioners to notify the Public Health Agency (PHA) of any incident that may cause a risk to public health;
- Powers for the Public Health Agency to investigate and risk-assess the threat to public health of an infection, contamination or infectious disease;
- Powers for the Public Health Agency to respond to the threat to mitigate the impact on public health.

A draft consultation response (circulated) had been prepared in collaboration with all the Councils in Northern Ireland.

### 3. Summary

The Department for Health had launched a consultation on a new Public Health Bill for Northern Ireland which would give the Public Health Agency powers to investigate, risk assess and respond to infectious diseases and other infections or contaminants that affect Public Health. The consultation proposes to align Northern Ireland with other areas of UK. The proposed changes to the legislation would clarify roles and responsibilities of those tasked with implementation of the health protection measures.

Proposed by Councillor Logue  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**Members respond on an individual or party political basis.**

*ACTION BY: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing*

*Amended by Council 30 September 2024.*

## 4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

### 4.1 EH/EHS/FC/012 DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

#### 1. Purpose

**This report reminded Members that Northern Ireland Water published an annual report on water quality for each council, based on compliance with the 2017 Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland).**

#### 2. Background

Northern Ireland Water's supply area was divided into Water Supply Zones, each serving up to 100,000 people. There were 7 Supply Zones in the Borough. Random water samples were taken from customer taps and planned samples from Supply Points in each zone. The report detailed water quality by Council area, based on compliance percentages from these samples.

The NI Water Drinking Water report for Northern Ireland was circulated. While the compliance rate for Antrim and Newtownabbey was 99.9%, the following drinking water incidents were recorded in 2023:

- In early June 2023, dry weather increased water usage across Northern Ireland by about 20%. To maintain supply, alternative sources and water tankering were implemented.
- In the Dorisland, Whiteabbey zone of Antrim and Newtownabbey Council area, aluminium levels exceeded the Health Notification Value. While no treatment issue was found, and the cause remained unidentified, NI Water stated that all physical, chemical, and microbiological standards as per the

2017 Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) had been met.

### 3. Summary

In 2023, the compliance rate at customer taps within the Borough was 99.9% and NI Water stated that it planned significant water mains rehabilitation and other works to ensure efficient, cost-effective operations and maintain water quality and supply.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
 Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

NO ACTION

## 4.2 L/LEI/SD/018 HEALTH INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN - UPDATE

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to provide a Quarter 1 update on Council's Health Intervention Action Plan for 2024-25**

### 2. Introduction/Background

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

### 3. Results in Quarter 1 2024/25

Officers developed and coordinated delivery of a range of Council led programmes as well as working in collaboration with relevant partner organisations, to facilitate the effective delivery of the Action Plan. During Quarter 1, a total of 6,331 participated in these programmes, 11% above the overall target with a detailed breakdown as follows:

<b>Programmes</b>	<b>24/25 Annual Target</b>	<b>Q1 Target</b>	<b>Q1 Actual</b>
Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS)	200	50	44 completers
Move More Cancer Rehabilitation and Rehabilitation Programme	150	38	10
Age Friendly (Live Long, Fall's Prevention,	20,000	5000	5388

Walking Netball, Aqua Fit and Nordic Walking)			
Exercise for Mental Health Programme	900	225	364
Respiratory Rehabilitation and Maintenance Programme	800	200	168
Cardiac Rehabilitation and Maintenance Programmes	600	150	310
Programmes for People with a Disability	400	50	47

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

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Funded by</b>	<b>Total</b>
Physical Activity Referral Schemes (PARS)	PHA	£31,461
Walking Football Programme	NHSCT	£1,890
Falls Prevention Steady and Strong Programme	NHSCT	£1,500
Move More (Cancer Rehabilitation Programme)	Macmillan	£5,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£39,851</b>

#### 4. New Programmes

Funding had been secured from the Public Health Agency for a Walking Football Programme in Antrim Forum, Crumlin and Valley Leisure Centre which would also complement the successful Walking Netball Programme which was introduced in 2023/24.

The Head of Leisure Operations responded to a Member's question relating to the Q1 performance and agreed to look at options to further promote the programmes through the Health Trust.

Proposed by Councillor Logue  
Seconded by Councillor Ní Chonghaile and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

### 4.3 **PK/GEN/022 and PK/GEN/057 IRELAND'S BEST KEPT TOWN AND GREEN FLAG AWARDS 2024**

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to provide an update on Ireland's Best Kept Town Competition and the Green Flag Awards for 2024.**

2. Ireland's Best Kept Town

Ireland's Best Kept Town was a competition that pits top-performing villages and towns from Ireland's "Tidy Towns" contest against winners from Northern Ireland's Best Kept competition. The Awards Ceremony took place at Riddel Hall, Belfast on 18 June 2024.

Randalstown, Ballynure, and Antrim were among the final 14 out of nearly 1,000 eligible towns and villages. Randalstown was named the overall winner of Ireland's Best Kept Town and also won the title of Ireland's Best Kept Small Town. Ballynure ranked in the top three in the Village category, while Antrim placed in the top four in the Large Urban Centre category.

3. Green Flags

The Green Flag Award was an internationally recognised accolade that signified excellence in the management, maintenance, and community involvement in parks and open spaces. The programme in Northern Ireland was managed by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. To earn Green Flag status, a site must have a management plan that met strict criteria, including horticultural standards, cleanliness, environmental management, biodiversity, community involvement, and safety.

In 2024, in addition to the 18 sites directly managed by the Council, two new applications were submitted for Duneane Community Garden and Cranfield, along with seven additional submissions for sites managed by community groups within the Borough. All 29 submissions successfully achieved Green Flag status, making Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council the leading Council in Northern Ireland for Green Flag Awards. The awarded sites were as follows:

<b>Park / Open Space</b>	<b>Green Flag Awarded by Type</b>
Antrim Castle Gardens	Heritage
Sentry Hill Historic House	Heritage
Antrim / Belmont and Six Mile Cemetery	Council - Parks
Antrim Lough Shore Park and Gateway	Council – Parks
Ballynure Old Graveyard	Council - Parks
Jordanstown Loughshore Park, Hazelbank Park & Gideon's Green	Council – Parks
Kilbride Cemetery	Council – Parks

Lilian Bland Park	Council – Parks
Mallusk Cemetery	Council – Parks
Mill Race Trail	Council – Parks
Newtownabbey Way	Council – Parks
Randalstown Riverside Walk	Council – Parks
Sixmilewater Park	Council - Parks
Rashee Cemetery	Council – Parks
Valley Park (V36 and Glas-na-Braden Glen)	Council – Parks
Wallace Park	Council – Parks
Crumlin Glen	Council – Parks
Threemilewater Park	Council – Parks
Whiteabbey Glen	Council – Parks
Clotworthy Courtyard at Antrim Castle Gardens	Community
Maine Fold - Randalstown	Community
The Sovereign Complex, Rathfern	Community
Sentry Hill Community Garden	Community
Toome Linear Park	Community
Ballyeaston Church Ruin	Community
Elevation Randalstown	Community
Duneane Community Garden (new)	Community
Cranfield (new)	Community

Proposed by Councillor Burbank

Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

#### **4.4 EH/EHS/CP/002 OFFICE FOR PRODUCT SAFETY & STANDARDS GRANT FUNDING FOR THE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY BUILDING PROGRAMME IN NORTHERN IRELAND: NON-FOOD PRODUCTS 2024/25**

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

**The purpose of this report was to inform Members that grant funding had been offered from The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) in respect of the Council responsibilities to product safety and standards.**

## 2. Background

Since 2018, The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), the national regulator for product safety, had worked with Councils in Northern Ireland to assist with the provision of advice and support to local businesses regarding their product safety responsibilities. This arrangement had included grant funding either made directly to Council or through a Service Level Agreement with a lead Council. In 2023/2024 Council received £55,000 in grant funding from OPSS.

## 3. Key Issues

The funded activities were listed in Annex 2 of the Agreement (circulated) and were for targeted and prioritised regulatory activity on non-food consumer goods to ensure a robust market surveillance across the UK.

The funding was used by Council to undertake a range of activities on non-food consumer products including to:

- Build on previous product safety capacity and capability building work;
- Ensure access to enforcement equipment and facilities;
- Provide advice and support to local businesses to meet their obligations under product safety legislation for importing and appropriate labelling/marketing of goods;
- Define work processes;
- Develop officers' understanding of local supply chains and their associated risks;
- Prioritise efforts and resources according to OPSS policy and national regulatory interests;
- Fulfil ad hoc requests for case studies or other additional information.

The funding would be drawn down to deliver the specified activities above.

## 4. Financial Position

A grant funding offer of up to £55,000 had been received for eligible expenditure related to funded activities. This amount would be paid directly to the Council in the financial year ending on 31 March 2025.

## 5. Summary

The Office of Product Safety and Standards would be providing Antrim and Newtownabbey Council with a grant of £55,000, for a capacity and capability building programme focused on non-food products. This grant was intended for eligible expenditures.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

NO ACTION

#### **4.5 EH/EHS/PC/042 THE POLLUTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (DISTRICT COUNCILS) CHARGING SCHEME (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2024**

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

**The purpose of this report was to inform Members that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) had published its annual scheme that detailed the charges that Councils apply in relation to their statutory enforcement duties undertaken under the Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (NI) 2013.**

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

Operators of Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) activities were required to pay a fee to the regulator to cover the regulator's costs. This was in line with the 'Polluter Pays' key principle, where operators bear the cost of measures to prevent environmental harm they may cause. Council had a statutory responsibility to review activities permitted under the Pollution Prevention Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (NI) 2013 and conduct inspections based on risk assessments. Permit holders were to ensure compliance with specified conditions.

##### **3. Key Issues**

Council had a statutory obligation to regulate emissions to air from activities prescribed as Part C under Schedule 1 of the Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (NI) 2013. The Council oversees 42 premises in the Borough that fall under these regulations. These premises would engage in activities such as the bulk handling of cement, solvent handling, timber treatment activities, and petrol stations. A risk assessment method would determine the level of risk associated with regulated activities, assigning a proposed 'regulatory effort' (high, medium, or low) to individual activities based on their relative risks. The risk level would dictate the applicable charges, which would be periodically reviewed. The fees and charges for 2024/2025 relating to Part C permits issued under regulation 25 of the regulations can be found at;

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/pollution-prevention-and-control-fees-and-charges>

##### **4. Financial Implication**

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DAERA), as the primary regulator, must set the fee rate and had announced that the scheme structure remains unchanged from last year, with a 1.68% price increase in line with the



Gross Domestic Product (GDP) deflator. Operators of activities permitted by the Council would be invoiced according in line with this updated price increase.

## 5. Summary

DAERA had published details of its annual charging scheme for activities permitted and inspected by the Council under the Pollution Prevention Control Regulations (NI) 2013. There had been a 1.68% increase in fees in line with GDP deflator.

Proposed by Councillor Logue  
Seconded by Alderman Bradley and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## 4.6 **PK/PG/005 PLAY PARK REFURBISHMENT UPDATE**

### 1. Purpose

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

### 2. Introduction/Background

A comprehensive audit of play parks was conducted over several months in 2023. The audit assessed the condition of every piece of equipment, surface, and ancillary items such as fencing and gates. Each play park was categorised and ranked based on its current condition and the value of works needed to improve the facilities. In January 2024, the Council approved several recommendations from the audit, and in June 2024, it authorised the Play Park Refurbishment Project to advance to stage 2 of the Council's Capital Development Programme, which included design and procurement.

### 3. Current Position

General repairs identified in the audit were being addressed in conjunction with the annual Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) inspection-related tasks. This work included power washing and the replacement of ancillary items such as bins and fencing where needed. Additionally, the Council's Capital Development Section prepared tender documents to create a framework for replacing Play Parks at Kings Park and The Diamond, Rathcoole, as well as refurbishing the remaining 34 Play Parks. This framework would streamline the procurement process, reducing the need for repeated tender actions for repairs and replacements throughout the framework's duration.

### 4. Mallusk and Steeple Play Parks

The development of a new play park at the City of Belfast Playing Fields, Mallusk, was previously approved. A contractor was appointed in July, with construction set to begin in the autumn, pending the land transfer from Belfast City Council.

At Steeple Play Park, the play equipment was previously damaged in an arson attack, and an insurance payment of £97,000 had been secured to restore the vandalized equipment and complete associated works. The scope of the work at Steeple Play Park included:

- Removal of the existing fire-damaged play equipment and safety surfacing
- Installation of new play equipment and safety surfacing
- Re-spray and re-lining of two Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

Work had already begun on-site, with completion expected by October 2024.

The Director of Parks and Leisure Operations addressed a Member's query regarding timescales for completion of the refurbishment works and confirmed that a lot of the work had already commenced with further work led by the Capital Development section due to commence early next year.

In response to a Member's comment regarding the importance of continuing to identify those areas in the Borough which may require playpark facilities, he confirmed there is currently a supply and demand analysis being carried out and further information resulting from that would be brought back to Members in due course.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

#### **4.7 PT/CI/049 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

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

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members that the Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Performance Progress Report Quarter 1 for Parks, Leisure and Estate Services and Sustainability be noted.**

##### **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.

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 a number of Statutory Performance Targets.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

As agreed at the August 2023 Council meeting, quarterly performance reports would be presented to the relevant committee.

### 4. Key Points

First Quarter performance progress reports for Parks, Leisure & Estate Services, and Sustainability were circulated for Members' information.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

**the Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Performance Progress Report Quarter 1 be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## 4.8 **EH/EHS/015 TEST PURCHASE EXERCISE – SUNBED UNDERAGE SALES**

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to remind Members that Local Councils in Northern Ireland have a statutory duty to enforce the provisions of The Sunbeds Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the results of a test purchase exercise in the Borough.**

### 2. Introduction

The Sunbeds Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 prohibited the use, sale, and rental of sunbeds to individuals under the age of 18. This legislation was enacted due to increasing evidence linking sunbed use to serious health risks, including skin cancer, particularly among young people. Studies indicated that childhood sunburn and exposure to ultraviolet radiation from sunbeds significantly heighten the risk of developing skin cancer later in life.

### 3. Key Issues

The Public Health Agency had recommended that all sunbed-operating premises be subject to a test purchase by Councils at least once every two years.

The objectives of the test purchase exercise were:

- To evaluate business operators' awareness of the legislation;
- To assess compliance with The Sunbeds Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, particularly regarding the prohibition of sunbed use by individuals under the age of 18.

Before the exercise, a survey identified 18 sunbed premises within the Borough, which was a decrease of one from 2023. Last year, pre-test purchase letters were sent to the 18 premises, reminding them of their legal obligations and notified them of an upcoming test purchase within the next 12 months. Links to Department of Health guidance were also provided.

Over the last 12 months, the premises had been inspected by Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) accompanied by a young person under 18. One premises sold a sunbed session to the minor.

The premises which sold to a minor had recently changed ownership, and the new owners had not received an advisory visit. Consequently, a warning letter was issued, and an EHO conducted an educational visit to the premises, in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy.

#### 4. Summary

A sunbed test purchase exercise revealed that one premises failed to comply with legislative requirements by selling a sunbed session to a person under 18. As a result, the premises was issued a written warning.

The Head of Environmental Health addressed a Member's query regarding the procedure for enforcing the legislation.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

### 4.9 **EH/PHWB/012 POSITIVE AGEING MONTH**

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to remind Members that Environmental Health was actively involved in promoting Age-Friendly initiatives within our community. A key initiative was the promotion of 'Positive Ageing Month' during October.**

#### 2. Background

Positive Ageing Month celebrated the valuable contributions of older people to the Antrim and Newtownabbey community. A dedicated booklet would be available in print and online from 9 September 2024, outlining events and activities happening throughout October. The booklet would be shared via social media and emailed to groups and individuals on the Council's contact list.

A link to the booklet was below;

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/community-initiatives/age-friendly/positive-ageing-month/>

In addition to the event listings, the booklet would highlight year-round groups and activities, encouraging residents to stay active, learn new skills, and build connections. Contributions from various Council departments, Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey and Libraries NI would further support these goals.

### 3. Key Issues

During the month of October a series of Health and Wellbeing roadshows would be held in each District Electoral Area (DEA), focusing on the Public Health Agency's "Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing Model." These interactive and engaging events would offer practical activities on staying active, learning, mindfulness, giving, and connecting.

A list of the planned roadshows is provided below:

<b>DEA</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Macedon	Belfast City Mission	Rathcoole Hall, Innis Walk, Newtownabbey BT37 9EZ	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2024	10.30am-12pm
Ballyclare	Ballyclare Townhall	The Square, Ballyclare BT39 9BB	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	10.30am-12pm
Airport	Crumlin Leisure Centre	2 Main St, Crumlin BT29 4UP	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	10.30am-12pm
Antrim	Muckamore Parish Development Hub	1A Limetree Avenue, BT41 1NP	Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	12pm-1.30pm
Dunsilly	Neillsbrook Community Centre	Neillsbrook Rd, Randalstown, Antrim BT41 3AE	Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	10-12pm
Glengormley	Carnmoney Church	258 Carnmoney Road, Glengormley, Newtownabbey BT36 6JZ	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October	11-12.30pm
Threemilewater	Monkstown Village Centre	Monkstown Village Centre, Newtownabbey BT37 0HS	Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	2pm-3.30pm

The roadshows would provide residents with guidance and support on maintaining their physical and mental wellbeing. Attendees could participate in

engaging activities like Boccia, an interactive quiz, and explore age-friendly assets available in their community. Additionally, the event would encourage the development of new social connections to help reduce social isolation.

#### 4. Summary

In October during Positive Ageing Month, seven roadshows would run in each DEA to promote the Public Health Agency's – Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing model. A booklet had also been produced to detail other activities taking place across the Borough during the month and during the year.

Proposed by Councillor Logue

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

#### **4.10 EH/EHS/LR/006 THE SMOKE, HEAT AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS FOR PRIVATE TENANCIES REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2024**

##### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to inform Members that The Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations were enacted on 30 May 2024 and would come into force on 1 September 2024.**

##### 2. Background

Environmental Health had a statutory function in the regulation of the private rented sector. Council was also the enforcing authority for provisions to regulate landlord registration, security of tenancy deposits and licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The overarching objectives of the Private Tenancies Act were to make the private rented sector a safer and more secure housing option for a wider range of households, to ensure better regulation of the sector and offer greater protection to private renters.

##### 3. Key issues

The Regulations set the standards for the number and type of smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms to be installed in private rented properties and aim to reduce the risk of fire related incidents.

The standards had been set as:

- A smoke alarm to be installed in the main living room, and in every circulation space on each storey (hall, landing area).
- A heat alarm installed in every kitchen.

- A carbon monoxide alarm installed in any room or circulation space which contained a fixed combustion appliance or a flue.
- Smoke and heat alarms were to be interlinked to ensure the alarms could communicate with each other, therefore providing sufficient cover if one alarm defected, all alarms would go off to provide warning.
- A carbon monoxide alarm did not need to be linked to smoke and heat alarms however, if there was more than one carbon monoxide alarm, these must be interlinked to each other.

#### 4. Previous Decision of Council

In December 2023, Council agreed a response to the consultation on the Private Tenancies Act 2022 on Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms.

#### 5. Governance

The deadlines for compliance was as follows:

- New tenancies must be compliant from 1 September 2024.
- Existing tenancies must be compliant from 1 December 2024.
- A new tenancy means a tenancy granted on or after 1 September 2024; an existing tenancy means a private tenancy which is granted before 1 September 2024.

Once the compliance dates for new tenancies and existing tenancies had been reached, it would be a prosecutable offence for landlords not to comply with the set minimum standards.

The Regulations and associated guidance notes (which includes an animation) can be accessed via the following links:

The Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2024/123/contents/made>)

The Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 guidance notes

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/smoke-heat-and-carbon-monoxide-alarms-private-tenancies-regulations-northern-ireland-2024-guidance>

To raise awareness among landlords about the new requirements and encourage compliance, Environmental Health had:

- Highlighted the changes on social media and Council website.

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/privatelyrentedhousing/>

- Incorporated compliance checks into our regular fitness inspections.
- Reached out to all local estate agents to inform them of the new obligations.

In response to a Member's comment, the Head of Environmental Health agreed to provide information to Members on the Regulations and how they will be communicated to the public.

Proposed by Councillor Logue  
Seconded by Alderman Bradley and agreed that

**the report be noted**

*NO ACTION*

#### **4.11 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT PERIOD 4 PARKS & LEISURE AND SUSTAINABILITY**

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

**The purpose of this report was to provide financial performance information at period 4 (April 2024 – July 2024) for Parks & Leisure and Sustainability.**

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

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

##### **3. Summary**

Budget reports for Parks & Leisure and Sustainability for Period 4 – April 2024 to July 2024 were circulated for Members' information. At present the Parks and Leisure budget was in a favourable position of £376,969 (9.9%).

The Sustainability budget was in an adverse position of £540,439 (7.2%) and this is due to:

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

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



In response to a Member's query regarding the adverse position, the Director of Sustainability reiterated that various measures were being implemented to seek in year savings.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

#### **4.12 L/GEN/070 NET PROMOTER SCORE – QUARTER 1 2024/25 RESULTS**

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

**The purpose of this report was to provide a quarter 1 update on the Net Promoter Score for Council's Leisure Centres.**

##### **2. Introduction**

To collect customer feedback and assess satisfaction, the Council's Leisure Section uses digital software to calculate a Net Promoter Score (NPS). This score was derived from randomly sampling customers who visit the leisure centres and asking them to rate the facilities on a scale of 1 to 10. Additionally, a follow-up question asks for the reasons behind their rating, providing valuable insights for management to consider and address.

##### **3. Quarter 1 Results**

Key results for the period from 1 April 2024, to 30 June 2024, were as follows:

- Total survey requests: 3,635
- Total responses: 784
- NPS: 63
- "Staff," "Facilities," and "Courtesy" consistently remained the top three areas mentioned by customers.
- "Staff" and "Courtesy" receive the most positive feedback scores.
- Ballyearl continued to be the highest-scoring leisure centre, with an NPS of 78.

Performance was monitored daily, monthly, and quarterly, with the current overall score at 63, slightly below the cumulative annual target of 65. The NPS performance was significantly higher than the UK leisure industry average of 34.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour  
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## 4.13 WM/WM/040 EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME CONSULTATION RESPONSE

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to advise Members of the response to the Emissions Trading Scheme Consultation Response.**

### 2. Background

The UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS) Authority (UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland) had sought input on a number of proposals to expand the ETS scheme to include energy from waste and waste incineration.

The purpose of the consultation was to provide more detail and consult on the implementation of how waste incineration and energy from waste would be included in the scheme from 2026 for the Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) only period, with full surrender obligations from 2028.

Views were sought on:

- the overall scope of the scheme, including which activities were covered, thresholds for inclusion and exemptions;
- participating in the scheme, including requirements for operators, monitoring, reporting and verification, and guidance;
- impacts of the scheme and risks, including diversion of waste to landfill and waste export, decarbonisation pathways for customers, cost pass through to customers and equality considerations;
- how to adjust the UK ETS cap for waste; and
- how the UK ETS could potentially incentivise investment in heat networks.

### 3. Key Issues

Officers drafted a response in line with both the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee policy team, who represented local authorities in all four devolved administrations, NILGA and arc21. A copy of the response (circulated) was included for Members information and had been submitted in order to meet the consultation deadline.

In the response, it was proposed that Council was broadly supportive of the inclusion of the waste sector within the ETS, however the challenges must be mitigated to ensure the best possible outcomes and avoid it becoming an unavoidable expense passed down through gate fees to local authorities.

Local authorities had a duty to collect waste from households but had limited enforcement powers to ensure correct resident behaviours when it came to household waste and recycling. Combined with the additional burdens that required increased volumes of household waste, most notably those containing persistent organic pollutants (POPs), to go for high temperature incineration, this

limited what local authorities could do to change the composition of residual waste being sent for incineration. Ineffective roll-out of the scheme expansion could also carry unintended consequences, such as a greater use of domestic landfill or Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) export.

Whilst some of the questions were Technical, a focus was mainly on the points summarised below:

### **1. Relevant ETS costs were covered by Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (PEPR)**

As the primary influencer on the recyclability and/or carbon emissions of packaging at its end of life, producers should bear the increased incineration cost. This would help to support decarbonisation by incentivising producers to reduce the plastic content of their packaging.

### **2. Funding**

Local authorities must receive funding to cover the increased costs for the management of waste as a result of the expansion of ETS, which would significantly increase financial pressures on local authorities in the short term and, prior to the full implementation of EPR, would create a financial shortfall for councils.

### **3. Successful implementation of the Collection and Packaging Reforms (CPR)**

UK Government must ensure that, if the expansion of ETS was to happen by 2028, the implementation of all aspects of the CPR would take place to current timelines. Council's proposed harmonised kerbside recycling collection would help to capture more materials, particularly plastics and food waste, in the recycling and recovery streams and divert it away from incineration.

### **4. Expansion of EPR to non-packaging items**

The cost of collection and disposal for a significant portion of the municipal waste stream would not be covered by EPR. As such, Council would like to see the EPR scheme expanded to cover a number of additional items, including (but not limited to) textiles and absorbent hygiene products (AHP), to ensure these sectors paid for the management of their products at the end of life, and were also incentivised to increase their products recyclability, reusability and ultimately to decarbonise.

### **5. Clarification on the use of funding**

It was understood that the funds generated through the inclusion of the waste sector in ETS would go to HM Treasury and not be ringfenced or directly reinvested in the sector unlike in the EU. Money reinvested, could help local authorities directly but also develop the costly carbon capture technologies required for Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities.

Proposed by Councillor Logue

Seconded by Alderman Bradley and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

NO ACTION

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

Proposed by Councillor Logue  
Seconded by Ní Chonghaile and agreed

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

## **5 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE**

### **5.1 IN CONFIDENCE L/LEI/AP/1 and L/LEI/855 ANTRIM GOLF CLUB LICENCE AGREEMENT OLD BLEACH GREEN BOWLING CLUB LEASE**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek approval for a new licence agreement for Antrim Golf Club at Allen Park and a new lease for Old Bleach Bowling Club at Council-owned facilities in Randalstown.**

#### **2. Antrim Golf Club**

Established in 1997, Antrim Golf Club had been operating under a licence agreement with the former Antrim Borough Council. This agreement was designed to offer the club flexibility and to meet the requirements of the Golfing Union of Ireland and the Irish Ladies Golf Union for providing official handicaps. It also granted the club exclusive tee times, club event days, and internal club competitions. The Council extended the agreement in 2011 for an additional five years, and again in 2016 for the same duration. The club had been paying an annual service fee of £[REDACTED].

Due to pandemic-related disruptions and subsequent delays, Council Officers had been working with the club and were now ready to formalise new terms for a 5-year agreement, with key amendments as follows:

- The annual service fee would be £[REDACTED] (including VAT), payable from 1 April 2024, and each subsequent year. An annual increment would be applied in line with the Consumer Price Index as of October 1 each year.
- Changes to the exclusive tee-off periods for club members: Saturdays from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. would now be Saturdays from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

#### **3. Old Bleach Green Bowling Club**

Old Bleach Green Bowling Club, located in Randalstown, held a lease for the exclusive use of Council facilities, including an outdoor bowling green and pavilion. The current lease had an annual fee of £■■■■ with nine years remaining. The club recently approached Council Officers to request a lease extension, which would enable them to make longer-term plans and access potential funding that was unavailable under the remaining term of the current lease. A valuation conducted by Land and Property Services assessed the lease at £■■■■ per annum. As with the current lease, the agreement would be subject to a rent review every five years.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke  
 Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

- a) a licence agreement with Antrim Golf Club for period 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2029 with an annual service fee of £■■■■ and an annual increment in line with the CPI be approved.
- b) a lease for Old Bleach Bowling Club for period 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2060 with an annual fee commencing 01 April 2024 of £■■■■ and a rent review every 5 years be approved.

**5.2 IN CONFIDENCE PK/REG/013 & PK/GEN/197 CEMETERY BURIAL CAPACITY UPDATE**

**1. Purpose**

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

**2. Background**

Members would be aware that quarterly updates were provided to the Operations Committee relating to the current burial capacity within Council owned cemeteries. Up to January 2024, the burial capacity for the Borough was estimated at 12 years. However, this calculation used the three-year average of plots sold per year which included Carnmoney Cemetery. Carnmoney reached capacity over three years ago, and therefore, to ensure accuracy, it was not included in future calculations.

**3. Current Position**

The capacity as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024, for Council's Cemeteries was as follows:

<b>Cemetery</b>	<b>No. of plots remaining</b>	<b>Current Average no. of plots sold PER YEAR (based on 3yr average)</b>	<b>Estimated remaining burial capacity (years)</b>
Carnmoney	0	0	0
Ballyclare	563	100	5.6

Rashee	359	10	35.7
Sixmile	2097	80	26.2
Crumlin	410	15	27.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	3434	205	16.8

<b>Garden of Remembrance Plots</b> <i>(for burial of ashes only)</i>	<b>No. of plots remaining</b>	<b>Average no. of plots sold (based on 3 year average)</b>	<b>Estimated remaining burial capacity (years)</b>
Carnmoney	70	55	1.2
Ballyclare	127	2	63
Mallusk	15	0	15

Concerns had been raised by Members regarding the burial capacity of cemeteries in the legacy area of Newtownabbey Borough Council. Carnmoney Cemetery had no remaining plots, and with demand now shifting to Ballyclare Cemetery, there were less than six years of capacity left. Additionally, issues had been identified in certain sections in Rashee cemetery due to a souterrain, which would further decrease available capacity.

In addition to initiating a mapping review of the remaining capacity in all Council cemeteries, Officers were revisiting the feasibility studies previously conducted for establishing a new burial ground in the Newtownabbey area. A comprehensive update would be presented at a future Committee meeting.

In response to a Member's query regarding the piece of land beside the Rashee Cemetery and whether there were any further developments on this, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations confirmed that Council were working with the Historic Environment Division in respect of the issues in Rashee and confirmed that he would include Rashee in the forthcoming review of burial space.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
 Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

*Alderman Bradley left the Chamber during Item 5.3.*

**5.3 IN CONFIDENCE WM/arc21/4/VOL 11 ARC21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS**

**1. Purpose**

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

2. Introduction

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

3. Previous Decisions of Council

All previous papers had been noted.

4. Main Report

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

- Special Meeting 23 July 2024
- 29 August 2024

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

5. Summary

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

NO ACTION

*Alderman Bradley returned to the Chamber at Item 5.4.*

#### **5.4 IN CONFIDENCE PK/GEN/035/VOL4 GRASS CUTTING**

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

**The purpose of this report was to seek approval to enter into new arrangements with the Department for Infrastructure regarding grass cutting on non-Council land within the Borough.**

##### **2. Introduction**

During the June Operations Committee meeting, a report outlined the various arrangements and responsibilities for grass cutting on road verges, roundabouts, and other public spaces across the Borough. The report highlighted the reduction in grass cutting by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) due to budget cuts and the adoption of a biodiversity policy, which limits cuts to sight lines, with a 1.1m swathe cut twice a year, leaving the remainder to grow. Since 2015, the Council had significantly increased grass cutting on land it neither owned, nor was responsible for, including an annual payment of £80,000 to DfI for additional urban area cuts and an estimated £60,000 per annum for the Council to maintain roundabouts and verges at 51 additional locations. A detailed list of locations, land ownership, and the organisation responsible for cutting grass in these areas was circulated for Members' reference.

As a result of the report to June Committee, approval was granted for the Council's Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group to conduct a review of current grass cutting arrangements and report recommendations to a future Operations Committee.

##### **3. Proposed Criteria**

Officers had developed a proposed set of criteria for the existing 51 locations owned by the Department that the Council maintained, which would reduce the number to 34. The proposed criteria for cutting grass on non-Council land were as follows:

- No increase in the area and/or additional non-Council-owned land to be included.
- The location must be of significance, for example, featuring Council flowerbeds, sculptures, tree planting, etc.
- Where traffic regulations allowed, a 10m area on either side of town and village signage.
- The location must have an agreed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department.



The proposed list of 34 locations, including maps, pictures, and areas to be cut, was circulated for Members' reference.

Due to the Biodiversity Policy approved in 2023, there had been a significant reduction in the amount of grass the Department permits to be cut. It was proposed that the Council discontinue the current urban grass-cutting arrangements, resulting in these areas being maintained by the Department with a reduced frequency from 7 to 2 times per grass cutting season.

#### 4. Financial Implications

If approved, the proposed changes were expected to save the Council approximately £120,000 per annum, comprising £80,000 from the cessation of the urban grass-cutting arrangement and £40,000 from the reduction in non-Council land being maintained.

#### 5. Next Steps

If approved, Officers would establish an MOU with DfI for each location, with the new arrangements starting in March 2025.

The Director of Parks and Leisure Operations provided a short presentation, following which he responded to Members' queries.

Following discussion regarding the Department for Infrastructure's Biodiversity Policy and the current arrangement with the Department for Infrastructure on grass cutting, a Member suggested that Council write to the Department to request a refund.

After a short recess, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations set out the current position.

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that:

**Recommendations a) and b) be deferred to a future Committee Meeting and that:**

**c) the discontinuation of the urban grass-cutting arrangements with the Department for Infrastructure be approved.**

**It was further agreed that:**

**d) a letter be sent to the Department for Infrastructure requesting a refund or partial refund of expenditure incurred by Council to date.**

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

## 5.5 **IN CONFIDENCE** WM/RC/001 PROPOSED BOOKING SYSTEM FOR VANS AT HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRES

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members the introduction of a booking system for medium and large vans at Household Recycling Centres

### 2. Background

Household Recycling Centres were extensively used by residents with almost 50% of the waste collected by Council (~ 50,000 tonnes) generated through the Centres. Waste was brought to the Centres by residents predominantly in cars and vans, with approximately 680,000 users per annum.

There were restrictions in place for use of the Centres, with waste only accepted from residents of the Borough and from domestic premises.

The table below shows the usage and tonnes delivered to each of the Recycling Centres:

<b>Recycling Centre</b>	<b>Annual Tonnage 2023/24 (tonnes)</b>	<b>Approx number of Vehicle Users per annum</b>
Bruslee	11,766	152,474
Craigmore	6,082	47,884
Crumlin	3,427	83,154
O'Neill Road	12,486	217,604
Newpark	15,990	178,272
	<b>49,751</b>	<b>679,388</b>

### 3. Key Issues

While Council was keen to keep the Recycling Centres accessible to all residents, recent site surveys had indicated high levels of van usage which affect the service provided to the other site users.

The table below showed the levels of van usage surveyed between 9am and 5pm on random weekdays at each of the Recycling Centres:

<b>Recycling Centre (survey day)</b>	<b>No of vans surveyed</b>	<b>Total Vehicles Surveyed</b>	<b>% of van usage</b>
Bruslee (Thursday)	63	244	26%
Craigmore (Tuesday)	28	80	35%
Crumlin (Monday)	29	183	16%
O'Neill Road (Monday)	159	712	22%

Newpark (Monday)	77	314	25%
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The survey highlighted the number of vans using the Recycling Centres and as van users frequently spend much longer on site due to the amount of waste they were carrying, especially in medium to large vehicles, this was resulting in significant traffic congestion where other users were unable to find vacant parking bays. Traffic congestion reduced the efficiency and effectiveness of the Recycling Centres and can increase health and safety risks onsite. Therefore Officers had been considering what measures could be installed to control the number of van users on site.

During the period of COVID restrictions, Council implemented controls at the Recycling Centres to allow only Antrim and Newtownabbey residents access and a residents booking system was introduced to maintain social distancing in order to protect staff and the public. A number of other Councils had already introduced controls of van usage at recycling centres, including Ards and North Down where all users, car and van, need to use their Household Recycling Centre booking system.

In order to improve the service for all Recycling Centre users, three options were considered:

1. Maintain the existing measures at the Recycling Centres;
2. Introduce a booking system for van users only, similar to the system used during the COVID restrictions;
3. A booking system for all Recycling Centre users, van and car, with van visits restricted to six per annum as per Ards and North Down Borough Council.

The three options were outlined below with the costs of introducing the options and the advantages and disadvantages for each:

	<b>Cost of implementation</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<b>Maintain the existing measures at the Recycling Centres</b>	No Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change or restrictions for van users;</li> <li>• No adverse publicity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current levels of usage and congestion would continue;</li> <li>• Potential resulting H&amp;S risks;</li> <li>• Extended waits for some site users.</li> </ul>
<b>Introduce a booking system for van users only</b>	Approx £ [REDACTED] for the reintroduction of the previous booking system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved service for car users;</li> <li>• Less congestion on site;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to be period of disruption as the controls were introduced;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater control of the waste entering the Centres;</li> <li>Potential reduction in the amount of waste entering the sites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Van users would be required to book online for entry on site.</li> </ul>
<b>A booking system for all Recycling Centre users, van and car, with van visits restricted to six per annum</b>	Approx £ [REDACTED] in year one and £ [REDACTED] thereafter (based on ANDBC data)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater control of the waste entering the Centres;</li> <li>No congestion on site;</li> <li>Likely reduction in the amount of waste entering the sites;</li> <li>Improved H&amp;S conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant change to the operating arrangements at the Centres;</li> <li>Likely to lead to adverse publicity.</li> </ul>

It was proposed to introduce the booking system for van users only, option 2, which would control the times of use but not exclude vans, for the following reasons:

- It would control the number of vans on site at any one time and improved service for the vast majority of other users in cars;
- A booking programme was available on our customer service system and could be activated at low cost;
- Less congestion on site leading to improved Health and Safety conditions;
- There would be less disruption than with Option 3 with the majority of users unaffected by the changes;
- It may lead to a reduction of waste entering the Recycling Centres and lead to cost savings for Council.

#### Implementation of van only booking system

Officers were aware that the introduction of this control, if approved, would need to be carefully managed and propose a number of actions to limit disruption to residents. The number of van booking slots would vary per site, as shown on the table below, due to the specific size and conditions at each of the Recycling Centres. There would be slots available for every 15 minutes during the operating day.

<b>Recycling Centre</b>	<b>No of vehicles parking bays available</b>	<b>Proposed number of booking slots for vans per 15 mins</b>
Bruslee	16	5
Craigmore	7	3

Crumlin	6	3
O'Neill Road	13	4
Newpark	11	4

Van users would be able to book a slot through an online system or by calling the Waste team and it was envisaged that the booking process would take 1-2 minutes to complete. Van users would be asked to submit their address, vehicle registration and the type of waste they were disposing of as part of the process. Staff on site would only allow access to the site for vans that had been pre booked through a check of the vehicle registration against the booking system.

The control on vans would only apply to medium and large commercial models and small car type vans users would not have to pre book before using the Centres. Staff would engage with centre users throughout October for commencement on 1 November 2024 if approved by Council and the change would also be highlighted through our social media channels.

It would be proposed to trial the control on vans for a period of six months with a report brought back to Council in May 2025 to advise Members of its impact and whether it should be retained.

#### 4. Budgetary Implications

There would be a small cost, approx. £[REDACTED] for the implementation of this control due to the requirement to update and activate of the booking system used during COVID. The introduction of the controls may lead to a reduction in waste at the Centres, this would have a positive impact on Council budgets. In addition, the control was in accordance with the Waste Operations' business plan.

#### 5. Summary

The high number of van users at Council's Recycling Centres was affecting the operation of the facilities leading to significant congestion. Following consideration of a number of options to reduce the impact of the issue, it was proposed to introduce a booking system for medium to large vans. Car type vans would be excluded, and entry would be restricted to pre booked vehicles. A number of time slots would be available every 15 minutes for van users to book and these would vary by Recycling Centre due to their specific site conditions.

It was recommended that this control of vans is trialled for a period of six months to assess its impact on all Recycling Centre users and staff. Prior to the implementation date, Centre staff would engage with vans users to advise them of the proposed changes and assist them with the new process booking.

The Director of Sustainability addressed concerns regarding fly tipping, the proposed booking system and potential methods of identification for vans entering the recycling centres.

Proposed by Councillor Foster  
Seconded by Alderman Bradley and agreed that

**a booking system, as outlined, for medium to large vans using the Household Recycling Centres for a trial period of six months from 1 November 2024 be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Darren Purdy, Head of Waste Operations & Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability*

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

Proposed by Alderman Bradley  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke 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 8.08 pm.

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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.***