



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD
AT MOSSLEY MILL ON MONDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Mayor (Councillor J Montgomery)
- Members Present** : Aldermen – F Agnew, P Brett, T Burns, T Campbell, L Clarke
M Cosgrove, M Girvan, J McGrath, P Michael and J Smyth
- Councillors – J Archibald, A Bennington, M Cooper,
H Cushinan, P Dunlop, G Finlay, S Flanagan, R Foster,
M Goodman, P Hamill, L Irwin, N Kelly, R Kinnear, AM Logue,
R Lynch, V McAuley, N McClelland, T McGrann,
V McWilliam, M Magill, N Ramsay, V Robinson, S Ross, L
Smyth, M Stewart, R Swann, B Webb and R Wilson
- Officers Present** : Chief Executive - J Dixon
Director of Economic Development and Planning – M McAlister
Director of Operations – G Girvan
Director of Finance and Governance – S Cole
Director of Community Planning – N Harkness
Director of Organisation Development – A McCooke
Head of IT – G Smyth
Borough Lawyer and Head of Legal Services – P Casey
ICT Change Officer – A Cole
ICT Projects Officer – J Higginson
Member Services Manager – V Lisk

In order to protect public health during the current COVID-19 emergency it was not possible to allow the public or the press to attend the Council meeting. The Council minutes and audio recording would be published on the Council's website.

1 BIBLE READING, PRAYER AND WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all present to the meeting, and advised Members of the audio recording procedures.

Due to a technical issue, the Bible reading and prayer by the Mayor's Chaplain was unable to proceed and the Chaplain had asked that an apology be recorded.

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Norrie Ramsay to the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES

Councillor Gilmour

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 10.5 – Councillor Foster

Item 12.3 – Councillor Cooper

Item 12.10 – Alderman McGrath

Item 12.10 – Councillor Wilson – non-pecuniary interest

4 MINUTES OF THE ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING

Members noted that, in respect of Item 3 of the Minutes, the Chief Executive and Borough Lawyer had reviewed the decision and were of the opinion that the proper body to deal with this would be the Local Government Commissioner for Standards.

Moved by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Meeting of Monday, 24 August 2020 be taken as read and signed as correct.

5 MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Alderman Burns and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Operations Committee Meeting of Monday, 7 September 2020 be approved and adopted.

6 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Alderman Brett

Seconded by Councillor Ross and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy and Governance Committee Meeting of Tuesday, 8 September 2020 be approved and adopted.

7 MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor Cooper

Seconded by Councillor Goodman and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Community Planning Committee Meeting of Monday, 14 September 2020 be approved and adopted.

8(a) MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING, PART 1

Moved by Alderman Campbell
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee Meeting of Monday, 21 September 2020 Part 1 be approved and adopted.

8(b) MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING, PART 2

Moved by Alderman Campbell
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee Meeting of Monday, 21 September 2020 Part 2 be taken as read and signed as correct.

Alderman Brett's concern regarding the planning applications considered by the Committee was noted.

9 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

Moved by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Audit Committee Meeting of Tuesday, 22 September 2020 be approved and adopted.

10 ITEMS FOR DECISION

10.1 G/MSMO/007 VOL 5 ROADS PROGRAMME – AUTUMN CONSULTATION PRESENTATION REQUEST

Members were advised that Correspondence had been received from David Porter, Divisional Roads Manager, Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads, requesting attendance at a meeting of Council to give Members an overview of the work undertaken by DfI Roads and the future plans.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED – that DfI Roads be invited to present to a future meeting of Council.

ACTION BY: Member Services

10.2 G/MSMO/007 VOL 5 FIRMUS ENERGY – REQUEST TO BRIEF MEMBERS

Members were advised that correspondence had been received from Michael Scott, Managing Director of firmus energy, requesting an opportunity to brief Members on how firmus energy's natural gas network can deliver significant carbon savings for the Borough.

A copy of the correspondence was circulated for Members' information.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and

RESOLVED - that the correspondence be noted and that firmus energy be invited to present to a future meeting.

ACTION BY: Member Services

10.3 PT/CI/031 CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019-20

Members were reminded that Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the Act) Section 84(1) places a general duty on councils to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions".

Section 92(2)(a)(i) requires a Council to publish an assessment of its performance in discharging its duties under section 84.

The report should include an assessment of the effectiveness of the continuous improvement arrangements, giving details of any issues identified through its monitoring and review, as well as references to any planned / implemented improvements.

In addition, Section 92(2)(b)(i) & (ii) of the Act requires a Council to publish an assessment of its performance as compared with previous financial years; and so far as is reasonably practicable, the performance during that and previous financial years of other Councils.

This shall include a description of the benchmarking activities that a Council has undertaken and where possible the description shall include a comparison with the Council's previous performance (i.e. to help demonstrate trends).

Descriptions of benchmarking may also include a narrative outlining change in practice, process or activity that reflects learning from other organisations.

Members were advised that a final draft of the Corporate Improvement Plan Performance Report 2019-20 was reviewed by the Audit Committee on 22 September 2020 and was circulated for Members' attention.

The report also provided an overview on how we performed against:

- Our eight Corporate Improvement Objectives, as set out in the 2019-20 Corporate Improvement Plan which was approved by Council in June 2019;
- Statutory performance improvement indicators and standards for the functions of Economic Development, Planning and Waste for 2019-20, including comparison with the previous year, and;

- Our self-imposed indicators and standards.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington

Seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED - that the Corporate Improvement Plan Performance Report 2019-20 be approved.

ACTION BY: James Porter, Performance Improvement Officer

10.4 PK/PG/005, CD/GEN/001 PLAYPARK PROVISION – GLENGORMLEY DEA

Members were reminded that following the audit of play park provision in 2016 the Council agreed to improve a number of play parks in the Borough at a total cost of £533,745 as follows:

Rathcoole, People's Park
 Erskine & Rashee
 Jordanstown Lough Shore
 Kings Park
 Mossley
 Rathcoole, The Diamond
 Burns Memorial, Crumlin
 William Morrison, Mallusk
 Monkstown
 Muckamore

It was also agreed at that time that potential sites for a new play park should be investigated in Glengormley Urban DEA and further development should take place at Lilian Bland Park. The further development at Lilian Bland had recently been completed with a total investment of £452,400. As part of the Gateway project at Antrim Lough Shore Park, a new play park was also developed at a cost of £239,500.

Investment in inclusive equipment in a number of play parks was also subsequently approved following an audit of accessible equipment throughout the Borough. An investment of £386,000 was currently underway.

In November 2019 the Council also agreed to look for suitable sites for play parks at Parkgate and Mallusk.

A further review of play provision was due to be carried out in early spring of this year but was not progressed due to the impact of COVID-19. In the meantime, a meeting of Glengormley DEA members was requested and held in early September at which it was agreed that the Council should write to Edmund Rice College and St Enda's GAC to establish if either has any suitable land which could be utilised for a play park for the Hightown area.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Goodman and

RESOLVED - that the Council writes to Edmund Rice College and St Enda's GAC to establish whether there is any land which could be made available for a play park in the Hightown area, and that Airport DEA Councillors be included in any further discussions regarding play parks in the area.

ACTION BY: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

*Councillor Foster left the meeting having declared an interest in the next item.
Alderman Brett left the Chamber during this item.*

10.5 ED/GEN/006 ELECTRICAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PILOT

Members were reminded that the primary areas of focus for the Council's Economic Development Section are:

- Business Infrastructure: developing a sustainable smart economy;
- Business Development: helping SME's maximise their wide-ranging contribution to innovation;
- Business Start-up: Nurturing business start-up potential and helping new business grow;
- Business Skills: Improving labour efficiency and reducing social inequality; and
- Championing Tourism: Developing and marketing location centric, sustainable visitor experiences.

The continued development of the right type of business skills is a critical aspect of local recovery from the negative economic impacts of COVID-19. Economic forecasts predicted a local 35% GVA decline in the Borough, ranking Antrim and Newtownabbey the sixth most negatively impacted Council in NI. The last figures received from the Department for Communities (DfC) relating to Universal Credit reported an additional 3,750 persons claiming the support at 26 April giving a total caseload of 7,940 persons across the Borough. Research by Ulster University Economic Policy Centre identified young people aged 16-24 as being a most vulnerable group and recommended apprenticeships, additional education and digital skills as being key to providing alternative sustainable employment. Minister Dodds had recently launched two schemes in this arena to support employers and apprentices. They were the Apprenticeship Recovery Package and the Apprenticeship Recruitment Incentive Initiative. A further Apprenticeship Challenge Fund was being given consideration to launch at the end of September.

Horizon Engineering had developed a 5 day training course in relation to the Safe Operation of High Voltage Systems and a 1 day training course in relation to the Safe Operation of Low Voltage Systems. The course is delivered at a cost of £1200 +VAT per participant. This cost may be eligible for a 30% reduction should the participating business be an Invest NI Client with a Letter of Offer.

The bespoke courses provided the necessary underpinning Safety, Legal, Technical, Operational and Procedural background knowledge for persons wishing to further their electrical engineering careers.

Future employability and skills schemes were being developed by a range of interests including The Department for the Economy, The Department for Communities and Belfast Region City Deal. Officers were also liaising with colleagues in Northern Regional College to promote their extended skills provision to businesses and residents.

In the interim, Officers were considering a pilot project utilising the Horizon Engineering Programme. The proposal was to support employers to avail of the course by offering a grant of £500 per staff member completing the CPD accredited course. This represents an approximate 40% contribution to the total participant cost of £1,200. It was proposed that the Council promotes the offer to local businesses and works with Horizon Engineering to develop motivational case-studies for roll-out in future skills promotion. It was proposed that six local businesses will benefit from the grant at a total value of £3,000.

Proposed by Councillor Hamill
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the Council supports the delivery of a Pilot Electrical Engineering Programme in partnership with Horizon Engineering at a maximum cost of £3,000 for up to 6 local business participants.

ACTION BY: Craig Mullan, Strategic Business Investment & Engagement Officer

Councillor Foster returned to the meeting.

10.6 ED/REG/053, PK/BIO/019/VOL3 COVID-19 RECOVERY - REVITALISATION FUND

In June 2020 the Council approved the establishment of the Retail and Town Centre COVID-19 Recovery Mobilisation Team. The draft action plan associated with the working group was approved by Council in July 2020 and included budget allocations across the themes of Communications, Minor Capital Works, Infrastructure and Animation. The approved budget allocation includes funds across DfC (Tranche 1 - £215k), DAERA (£40k) and the Council (£35k) at a joint value of £290k for delivery of the Tranche 1 funding commitment. Further funding under Tranche 2 was committed in principle from DfC (£215k), DFI (£363k) and potentially DAERA (£40k) subject to budget availability.

A primary part of the action plan is a Town Centre Revitalisation grant primarily targeting independent town centre retailers. The value of the grant is up to £1,000. Minor capital works, equipment or other assets, technology or other innovative solutions and communication are all eligible areas of spend. The indicative budget for this support was £100,000 in Tranche 1 and £36,000 in Tranche 2.

Tranche 1 was initiated and Expressions of Interest forms were sent to eligible businesses in the retail centres of Antrim, Ballyclare, Crumlin, Glengormley and Randalstown with a closing date of 14 August 2020.

Following review of the 198 expression of interests submitted 156 had been deemed eligible to proceed to application stage. Those deemed ineligible were due to factors such as location, sector and not operating as a business in March 2020.

Because of the anticipated volume of applications the following would be applied:

- Funding will be awarded on a first come first served basis if the applications pass the eligibility check.
- Grant awards will be spread across the five towns based on the percentage of responses received at expression of interest stage which is calculated on Antrim (30%), Ballyclare (24%), Crumlin (10%), Glengormley (17%) and Randalstown (19%).
- Awnings and canopies will be subject to planning consent (unless otherwise indicated).
- Planning and Building Control fees are ineligible expenditure.
- Environmental considerations have been factored into eligibility criteria, for example, only environmentally friendly electric patio heaters are deemed eligible (no gas).

Awnings/Canopies

Because 83 of the expressions of interest received relate to awnings, Officers were considering a separate programme through which these businesses could be supported. This would encourage the colour, scale and locations of awnings to be design led with co-ordinated input from the Planning Section to consider matters such as conservation areas, etc. At this stage the Draft Action Plan infrastructure budget was being considered to support a town centre scheme of this type. Businesses who submitted an expression of interest for an awning/canopy were still eligible to apply for alternative equipment and will have the opportunity to participate in the awning programme if and when it goes live.

The application pack provided businesses with additional guidance on the points above. Applicants would be required to detail expenditure and to provide quotations in order to ensure value for money.

The next milestones are:

- Closing date for Stage 2 applications (Friday 2 October 2020 at 4pm)
- Retail and Town Centre COVID-19 Recovery Mobilisation Team (13 October 2020);
- Council Approval 26 October 2020 followed by issue of Letters of Offer to the approved businesses

Members were asked to note that, depending on the number of applications received there is scope to request re-allocation of funds across the other thematic spend areas in the draft retail action plan in order to meet the demand from businesses or alternatively to apply some of the Town Centre Budget approved at the August Council meeting. Options would be costed and presented to the Council in October for consideration.

A Section 75 Screening exercise had been completed in relation to this project and it was the recommendation of officers that an Equality Impact Assessment is not required. The screening form was circulated for Members' information.

Support from the Department for Infrastructure (DFI)

The Department for Infrastructure was proposing to partner with DfC and DAERA by offering a funding contribution towards COVID-19 recovery within DfC's Tranche 2 Letter of Offer (expected Oct 2020). Similarly, the indicative spend deadline for this fund is March 2021 (subject to review). The estimated amount of DfI funds to Council is £363,000 calculated on a weighted total population, deprivation and walking and cycling journeys as a percentage of overall journeys. This fund is not necessarily restricted to urban town centres. The Department is encouraging projects that support active travel, promote connectivity and access to services, create or enhance green and blue spaces and reduce emissions in town centres.

Consultation was ongoing with Central Government Partners and the types of schemes being given consideration within the Borough, subject to budget and funding were:

- Recreation, Cycleways and Walkways: Phase 1 of a cycle route between Mallusk, Glengormley, O'Neill Road and Gideon's Green and potential allotment schemes in Rathcoole and Crumlin;
- Waterways and Sustainable Drainage System Schemes (SUDS): Improvements in hydrology and repairs to three ponds in the vicinity of Rathfern Community Centre and Knockenagh Park and allotments; and
- Environmental Schemes: Enhancement of existing cycle routes and walkways by visually connecting the pathways through planting and directional assets such as planters and signage.

Proposed by Alderman Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Webb and

RESOLVED - that

- (i) as the Stage 2 grant application process is now live, the approach being adopted to the Revitalise £1k grant application process be approved;**
- (ii) costed options regarding grant awards be presented to the October Council meeting for consideration.**

ACTION BY: Craig Mullan, Strategic Business Investment & Engagement Officer

Alderman Brett returned to the Chamber.

10.7 ED/GEN/016 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Two new funding opportunities were available to support Tourism Recovery in the Borough. The first was an Experience Development Programme administered by Tourism NI (TNI) and the second was a pilot being administered by The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) aimed at supporting the development of experience tourism and product development clusters.

Experience Development Programme administered by Tourism NI (TNI)

This is a capital grant programme to develop new tourism experiences and enhance existing tourism experiences. It is available to private and public sector organisations. The amount of financial assistance available under this programme is between £5,000 and £200,000 and TNI financial assistance will not exceed 50% of eligible project costs for public sector applicants. The grant application process was a two stage process. It closed for expressions of interest on 14 September and for applications on 25 September 2020.

At the Council meeting on 24 August Members approved a draft specification for an interpretive display in The Gateway exhibition space. This procurement is advancing and will maximise the Tourism NI 'Giant Spirit' brand. The appointed contractor will engage with Members on the concept and content of the exhibition. The broader Antrim Lough Shore Park will echo the 'Giant Spirit' theme with the installation of the sculpture portraying the 'giant' folklore of Lough Neagh. To build upon the interpretive display already planned for The Gateway it was proposed, subject to funding, to create a Virtual Reality Experience within the interpretive space. This will bring the interpretive assets to life through virtual media content. The zone will contain the equipment and infrastructure for up to 10 persons to enjoy the experience. The circulated information provided an indication of how the experience will look. It will consist of motion chairs with the experience delivered by headsets. The experience will be available in a safe, controlled space discretely separated from the main interpretive display. It was intended that it will be a ticketed attraction with income generated being used to refresh the experience over time as to maximise repeat visits. The indicative budget for the creation and implementation of an experience of this type was £75,000.

Based on this cost, the advancement of such a project would require match funding from the Council of £37,500. Officers were exploring a pricing structure for the experience and will report back to the Council in due course.

To allow drawdown of the grant, expenditure must be incurred by 31 March 2021 which would require the procurement of the Virtual Reality Experience to proceed as soon as possible. Officers were engaging with other tourism

businesses/experiences that may wish to apply to the fund and where they are strategically aligned to the Council's strategy it was proposed to express support for their application to improve their chances of success.

Development of experience tourism and product development clusters (DAERA)

Further details about this funding call were awaited from DAERA. It was anticipated that applications would be invited from Councils across NI for projects with a maximum fund of £50k available to each Council. The indicative project funding rate was 75% and consideration was being given to Council in-kind costs being eligible.

The fund was intended to support rural businesses centred on a theme or cluster. The theme can be activity based, a key market segment or a geography. DAERA was proposing to launch the scheme at the end of September/beginning of October. Councils would have approximately 18 months for delivery through to 31 March 2022 with the potential for match funding to be split across two financial years. The funding was entirely for revenue expenditure to be spent on services such as marketing, promotion, print and facilitation.

Officers were exploring the option to partner with Mid and East Antrim Council and Mid Ulster Council on a collaborative project for greater impact. Common themes across the three Councils against which the collective £150,000 budget could be considered were:

- Living Loughs: The promotion of activities and experiences centred around Lough Neagh and Belfast Lough; and
- Castles and Gardens: A cross-Council trail and self-service itinerary of unique sites and attractions across the area under this theme.

Based on the proposed approach to administer the funding the minimum project budget is £66,666 per Council with 75% grant and a match funding contribution and/or in-kind contribution at a value of £16,666 (25%). Further definition of the proposed themes would be tested with other Council Partners prior to submission of a bid.

Proposed by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that

- i. the Gateway Virtual Reality Experience application be submitted to Tourism NI at an estimated project cost of £75,000 with a total of £37,500 match-funding to be provided by the Council. A business-case for the project will be presented to the Council in due course;**
- ii. an application is made to DAERA for the development of experience tourism and product development clusters with a maximum match funding contribution of £16,666 from the Council. Opportunities to**

develop a collaborative project with neighbouring Councils under the themes of 'Living Loughs' and 'Castles and Gardens' be explored.

ACTION BY: Colin McCabrey, Head of Economic Development

10.8 ED/ED/176 ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY BOROUGH COUNCIL ILLUMINATION STUDY

Officers had been liaising with the Department for Communities (DfC) regarding the advancement of a number of local regeneration schemes which were programmed to receive financial support.

Pre-COVID-19, the Department for Communities provided Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council with a Letter of Offer to complete a feasibility study and draft concept designs for the illumination of key buildings and built assets across the Borough.

Members were reminded that the Department had provided funding to the Council to support Town Centre recovery efforts alongside business operators, to build confidence and generate footfall within the key retail centres. The illumination scheme proposed would seek to compliment this support, creating unique features which would enhance the visual experience for customers and visitors.

The feasibility study and concept proposals were originally to be completed by the end of March 2020 and DfC profiled an estimated budget of £350,000 in the 2020/2021 financial year to implement the recommended schemes. Due to COVID-19 the Letter of Offer for the feasibility study was extended and this piece of work was now to be completed by the end of March 2021. The implementation budget of £350,000 also remained available within this timeframe and was very unlikely to be rolled forward by DfC into 2021/2022 financial year.

The feasibility study and draft concept designs would help articulate well defined projects which can then proceed to tender. AJC Electrical was the appointed contractor for the feasibility study and draft concept design phase. Draft designs which would be developed further were circulated for Members' consideration. These included:-

Antrim Town

- illumination of underpass that links Castle Gardens and Town Centre
- illumination of Barbican Gate and uplighting of the Old Castle Wall
- illumination of the Old Court House

Ballyclare

- illumination of Town Hall
- illumination of trees around the Town Hall
- illumination of pathway to north east and southwest of Main Street bridge
- illumination of Main Street Bridge underpass

Crumlin Town

- illumination of the clock face and clock tower
- Crumlin Leisure Centre sign illumination

Glengormley Town

- illumination of the trees along the park at Lilian Bland Park
- illumination of the sculpture at Lilian Bland Park

Randalstown

- upgrade existing lighting to Viaduct Walkway
- illuminate viaduct with RGB colour changing lights

The total cost of the schemes as detailed in the draft feasibility study was £473,500.

For a project of this type, typically the indicative minimum match-funding budget required by DfC would be in the region of 10% (£47,350) however in the current circumstances DfC was giving the Council's match-funding requirement further consideration. Officers were hopeful that a Council match funding commitment of £35,000 can be negotiated. The costs associated with the indicative schemes required further definition and Officers were also liaising with DfC and CPD to expedite the procurement in light of the tight funding timescales (March 2021).

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

RESOLVED - that the Council approves the Boroughwide Illumination Scheme at a maximum contribution of £47,350.

ACTION BY: Colin McCabrey, Head of Economic Development

10.9 PK/BIO/023 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ACCREDITATION

Members were reminded that Council operates an accredited Environmental Management System (EMS) for all facilities and operations, first achieved 2015 and retained successfully since. The ISO 14001 Environment Management System provides both a framework which helps to reduce Council's impact on the environment and the opportunity for continuous improvement on the environmental performance of services. As a result, the EMS assists Council in meeting any climate change objectives.

Council is one of the only local authorities in Northern Ireland to hold the ISO 14001:2015 standard for all its functions. Each year Council a surveillance audit is carried out by the accrediting body and, while accreditation is not required to operate an EMS, it does provide independent verification that the system is operating well, provides advice and makes recommendations. The EMS was due for an external verification in November and would normally proceed each year as budgetary provision is made each year, however, due to the financial situation and the potential implications arising from COVID-19,

Officers considered the options available to Council in preparation for seeking approval on the way forward.

Having considered the implications of COVID-19, it was felt that officers can provide the relevant evidence of the EMS system to meet the requirements of the accreditation audit in October. The staffing resources to support the Environmental Management System, were in place as was the Environmental Policy and the relevant procedures were integrated into the operation of Council business.

The normal cost of the annual verification was £5,160 for the six-day audit which commits Council to 3 further annual audits at approximately £6,000 per annum.

To cancel at this stage would incur a cancellation fee of £4,644. This would mean that there would be no formal accreditation for Council's EMS and the system would need to be re-established from a baseline in the future; Finally, Council's score (currently Platinum) in the annual NI Environmental Benchmarking Survey would reduce.

The only other alternative was to partially delay the external audit using a temporary certificate extension which would provide savings in year but will be incurred in the next financial year.

If Council agreed to proceed with the audit, review of the Environmental Policy was required. For this reason, Officers had reviewed the Policy and were recommending one change – the addition of reference to the Climate Change Working Group. A copy of the revised Policy and the associated Equality Screening form was circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and

RESOLVED - that Council

(i) continues with the external audit of the EMS in October 2020 at a cost of £5,160 in order to maintain ISO 14001 accreditation;

(ii) approves the amended Environmental Policy and screening form.

ACTION BY: Lynsey Daly, Waste Strategy and Contracts Manager

10.10 AC/GEN/18 LIGHT UP REQUESTS

Members were reminded that a "Light Up" Policy was approved by the Council in November 2016. There had been an annual policy review since this time and the existing policy was circulated for Members' information.

Members were also reminded that it was agreed at the Council meeting in July 2019 that the Council form an all-party working group to decide a policy of lighting the main Council Civic buildings at Mossley Mill and Antrim Civic

Centre on days of celebratory occasions for the many diverse sections of our community. The work of this group was suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic however resumed in early July and the minutes of the meetings held to date were circulated for Members' approval. The work of the group is nearing completion with a revised policy to be brought to the Community Planning Committee in the near future.

Proposed by Councillor McClelland
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED – that the minutes of meetings held on 1 and 28 July and 14 September be approved.

ACTION BY: Ursula Fay Head of Arts and Culture

10.11 ED/GEN/015 WORKING GROUP MINUTES

Members were advised that The Retail and Town Centre Re-opening Mobilisation Team met on Thursday 17 September 2020. This forum facilitates collaborative working between local businesses from across the Borough, the Council and Central Government Partners.

The forum informs joint recovery plans aimed at building consumer confidence, driving footfall and delivering best practice in accordance with Central Government guidance. An Action Plan informs the collective activities of the forum and is updated following each meeting and referred back to the Council for consideration as an enclosure to the minutes which were circulated.

Representation on each Team consists of Party Group Leaders and representatives from businesses, shopping centres, central government and stakeholder organisations. The Team was supported by Council Officials from Economic Development, Environmental Health and Health and Safety.

A copy of the minutes of the Retail and Town Centre Re-Opening Mobilisation Group meeting and associated Action Plan held on 17 September 2020 were circulated for Members' consideration.

Proposed by Councillor Logue
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Retail and Town Centre Re-Opening Mobilisation Team and associated Action Plan dated 17 September 2020 be approved.

ACTION BY: Colin McCabrey, Head of Economic Development

11. ITEMS FOR NOTING

11.1 G/MSMO/2 CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES, EXTERNAL BODIES, WORKING GROUPS AND ALDERMAN STATUS BY THE ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY

Following the resignation of Danny Kinahan and confirmation by the Electoral Office that Norman Ramsay had been returned to the Ballyclare District Electoral Area Vacancy for the Ulster Unionist Party, the Nominating Officer advised of the following changes in Memberships to Committees, External Bodies, Working Groups and Alderman:

Standing Committees	
Policy & Governance Committee	Cllr Norman Ramsay
Community Planning Committee	Cllr Norman Ramsay
External Bodies and Working Groups	
Northern Ireland Veterans Services Advisory Committee/Champion	Cllr Paul Michael
PCSP	Cllr Norman Ramsay
Sixmilewater Trust	Cllr Norman Ramsay
Ballyclare Place Shaping Forum (Ballyclare DEA)	Cllr Norman Ramsay
Grange Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (Ballyclare DEA)	Cllr Norman Ramsay
Alderman	
Alderman	Cllr Paul Michael

The changes were with effect from 10 September 2020.

A number of Councillors welcomed Councillor Ramsay, conveyed best wishes to former Alderman Kinahan and congratulated Alderman Michael.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Robinson and

RESOLVED - that changes in membership of Committees, External Bodies, Working Groups and Alderman status be noted.

ACTION BY: Member Services

11.2 CE/OA/013 NORTHERN IRELAND HOUSING COUNCIL

As agreed at the August 2019 meeting of the Council, the Northern Ireland Housing Council's September 2020 monthly bulletin was circulated for Members' information. A copy of the minutes of the Housing Council meeting on 13 August 2020 was also circulated.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Member Services

11.3 HR/HR/10 NJC PAY AWARD 2020/21

Members were advised that the circulated correspondence was received from NILGA in relation to the Pay Agreement reached for Local Government employees 2020-2021.

It confirmed that new pay rates will increase by 2.75%, effective from 1 April 2020.

It also confirmed that from 1 April 2020 the minimum level of annual leave would increase from 21 to 22 days for employees with less than five years' service.

Provision had been made in the 2020/21 budgets for this increase.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

11.4 G/GEN/001 CORRESPONDENCE FROM GLENGORMLEY METHODIST CHURCH

Members were advised that correspondence had been received and circulated from Glengormley Methodist Church to express appreciation and support to Members and Officers for the efforts taken to respond to the challenges presented by the global pandemic.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

11.5 ED/ED/020 VOL 2 SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NI – 'LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT 2020 AND BEYOND'

Members were advised that Social Enterprise NI has issued a paper entitled "Local Government Engagement 2020 and Beyond", which provided an outline of how the organisation, as the representative body of Social Enterprises in Northern Ireland seeks to build stronger working relationships with local Councils. A copy of the paper was circulated.

Two of the key recommendations include having a Social Enterprise Champion in each of the 11 Councils and for each local authority to become a Social Enterprise Place. Social Enterprise Places are areas where social enterprise activity is thriving; from quarters, towns, cities and zones, areas around the UK are declaring themselves as social enterprise places committed to investing in this sector.

The paper outlined a number of additional 'asks' from the Council including: Engagement on a regular basis with Social Enterprise NI; Supporting and involving Social Enterprises in Council delivered events; Promoting Social Enterprise Day as part of Global Entrepreneurship Week; Signposting new start social enterprises to them; as a Council holding corporate membership; and supporting their annual conference and awards ceremony.

Members were reminded that the Council hosted the Social Enterprise NI Annual Conference at Theatre At the Mill in January 2019 and currently holds corporate membership. Officers are engaging with Social Enterprise NI on a number of points raised within the paper and are committed to the development of future working relationships. Continuing our existing partnership with SENI will be at no additional cost to Council.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

11.6 ED/ED/141 INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS – MIPIM CONFERENCE UPDATE

Members were reminded that approval was granted in August 2019 as part of the Council's Economic Development Work Plan for a delegation to attend the MIPIM Conference in March 2020. Each of the Belfast Region City Deal Council Partners contributed £15,000 sponsorship to the event which also attracted significant private sector sponsorship. The objective of participating in MIPIM was to promote the Belfast Region City Deal area as an investment location and to create and enhance relationships with investors and key stakeholders.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Conference was initially postponed until June 2020 and then ultimately cancelled. Officers maintained contact with the event organisers and officials in Belfast City Council to discuss next steps and the approach to sponsorship funding.

The MIPIM Taskforce had proposed utilising the collective funds to deliver a "Renewed Ambition" programme of activity for the Belfast City Region. The intent behind this was to profile the area as remaining open and ready for investment. The "Renewed Ambition" programme would include the following:

- Stakeholder mapping;
- Development of new messaging framework including key themes for the city and city region's real estate proposition;
- Development of new positioning and messaging for a new and sustained PR/Comms strategy;
- Development of a real estate investment social impact tool for the city and region [Real Social Impact];
- A new independent piece of market research on real estate/market outlook for Belfast/Nl.
- Webinars with global real estate Investment Thought Leaders and on key themes including technology, sustainability and new workspace requirements;
- Webinar/Podcasts focusing on occupier attractiveness and criteria;
- Investor Showcases
- Support to Team Belfast if attending MIPIM 2021, for example, attending in partnership with DIT;
- Delivery of a sustained PR campaign targeting national, global and trade media;
- Delivery of a new digital engagement campaign targeting key stakeholders;
- Ongoing development of content for InvestinBelfast.com website portal.

It was expected that collective funds would support attendance at MIPIM in March 2021 in some format, potentially participating on the DTI stand. Officers would update Members on developments regarding MIPIM 2021 as the situation developed.

Key stakeholders including property developers, Queen's University Belfast, Invest Northern Ireland and all Belfast City Region Deal Councils had confirmed participation in the Renewed Ambition Programme.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

11.7 P/FP/LDP/001/VOL4 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

Preparation of the Local Development Plan was now at an advanced stage of development, albeit progress had been impacted since March by COVID-19. Despite this, preparations were being made for Independent Examination of the draft Plan Strategy which would be conducted by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) in due course. In light of the delays which had been experienced, the Council sought and was granted approval of an amended timetable, as confirmed in the letter circulated from the Department for Infrastructure.

Preparation for Independent Examination

In preparation for this next key stage of the process, Officers were continuing to prepare the following documentation:-

1. Collation of electronic and hard copies of LDP documentation (from publication of the Statement of Community Involvement through to publication of the draft Plan Strategy);
2. Draft Plan Strategy Public Consultation Spreadsheet and Main Issues Report: A detailed summary of all the issues identified as a result of representations to the draft Plan Strategy public consultation (including counter representations, assessments such as the Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environment Assessment, draft Habitats Regulations Assessment, Equality (Section 75) and Rural Needs Assessment) has been captured in a spreadsheet. This document provides a draft response by Officers to all the issues raised. Members are reminded that a total of 122 written representations were made in response to the formal public consultation (undertaken from 26 July to 30 September 2019) on the Council's Local Development Plan draft Plan Strategy and 26 submissions during the counter-representation period. In addition, a summary of the main issues raised was being prepared in a separate Main Issues Report.
3. Soundness Report: In compliance with DfL's Development Plan Practice Note 6 'Soundness' (May 2017) Officers and the legislative requirement to provide evidence that the Council has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement, following liaison with the Council's Legal Services team, were finalising work on a comprehensive Soundness Report relating to the draft Plan Strategy; and
4. Position Papers: A number of position papers are being finalised in relation to matters raised in consultation responses relating to the Council's approach to housing in the draft Plan Strategy with a particular focus on the implications of the refreshed Housing Growth Indicators published by the Department for Infrastructure and affordable housing. In addition, a position paper is being prepared to consider the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's evidence base for the economy.

Once complete and approved internally the documents noted above (1 to 4) would be uploaded to Members' iPads for review however they will remain as confidential documents until approved by Council and therefore must not be shared.

Update Workshops

In order to update Members on the representations made to the draft Plan Strategy public consultation (including counter representations) and to present the recommendations being made by the Planning Section in response, a number of update workshops would be scheduled for Members in October and a calendar invite issued.

The workshops would focus on the key points of feedback received, for example where an amendment to a draft policy had been requested as well as providing a summary of more general issues such as typographical errors which had been highlighted.

A comprehensive report would then be presented to the Council in November/December for approval, prior to submission to the Department for Infrastructure by the end of December requesting that an Independent Examination be requested.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

11.8 G/GEN/001 CORRESPONDENCE FROM ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Members were advised that correspondence had been received from Stephen Reid, Chief Executive, Ards and North Down Borough Council, in relation to the Royal British Legion's decision to close Bennet House, Portrush.

A copy of the correspondence and the letter sent to the Royal British Legion, was circulated for Members' information.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED – that the correspondence be noted.

NO ACTION

11.9 PK/GEN/179 PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY ENQUIRY: TRENCH LANE (MALLUSK)

In 2013, Newtownabbey Borough Council asserted Trench Lane, Mallusk, as a Public Right of Way, under the Access to the Countryside (NI) Order, 1983. The decision was based on the evidence provided by members of the public as users, and extends from A to B, and C to D of the laneway, totalling 731 metres in length, as marked on the map circulated.

Council has a legal duty to ensure that this laneway remains free from obstruction, and that it remains accessible to the general public at all times.

Following a recent inspection of the lane, Officers had noted that it has been partially closed off at point C, thus rendering it impassable. Also, a diversion sign has been placed at the entrance to the laneway, which suggests that the closure will remain in place while the new Hydepark Mews development is under construction.

A letter was being sent to the developer, requesting that this sign, along with all barriers erected, which prevent ease of access for the public along the laneway, are removed with immediate effect. The developer must then ensure that sufficient measures are put in place to protect the public's safety, during the remainder of the construction works.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

11.10 CD/PM/111 VOL 2, ED/REG/035 ANTRIM PUBLIC REALM SCHEME, FOUNTAIN STREET

Officers had been liaising with The Department for Communities (DfC) regarding the advancement of a number of local regeneration schemes which were programmed to receive financial support.

In June 2019 Members approved an extension of the Fountain Street Public Realm Scheme to include paving from the former Dunnes entrance at Castle Mall to Winemark/Danske Bank.

Complications in obtaining a commitment from Castle Mall to advance the works had delayed starting this part of the scheme. The original Letter of Offer for funding from The Department for Communities (DfC) expired in December 2019. A letter of variation was anticipated from DfC which would extend the timeframe for completion to the end of March 2021. Officers had been liaising with the contractor who delivered the scheme, John McQuillan (Contracts) Limited as the Council's original contract with this company remained in place. Through negotiation with the contractor and a commitment of additional funding from DfC (in the region of £12,000) the works could now proceed with no additional funding required from the Council.

The noted works were still dependent on acceptance of the licence between Castle Mall and the Council regarding the land.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the advancement of the Environmental Improvement Scheme in Antrim on lands owned by Castle Mall with no match funding cost implication for the Council (subject to agreement of the licence between both parties) be noted.

ACTION BY: Colin McCabrey, Head of Economic Development

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Magill and

RESOLVED - that the Council proceeds to conduct the following business 'In Committee'.

Members were advised that the livestream and audio recording would cease at this point.

12. ITEMS IN COMMITTEE

12.1 IN CONFIDENCE WM/arc21/008 RESIDUAL WASTE TREATMENT PROJECT – CORRESPONDENCE

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Alderman Cosgrove
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and

RESOLVED – that the correspondence be noted.

NO ACTION

12.2 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/353 CCS FRAMEWORK RM6017 POSTAL GOODS, SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS LOT 3: COLLECTION AND DELIVERY OF LETTERS, LARGE LETTERS AND PARCELS

CONTRACT PERIOD: 1 October 2020 – 30 November 2022 (with an option to extend for up to a maximum of 12 months, subject to review and performance)

The Council had utilised the CCS Framework for the provision of postal services for the past 4 years at an average annual cost of £[REDACTED] (excl. VAT).

There were 8 suppliers on Lot 3 of the CCS Framework RM 6017 Postal Goods, Services and solutions. The suppliers were evaluated on a two stage basis as follows:

STAGE 1 – CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

The suppliers were evaluated on a pass/fail basis for ability to provide the required services in Northern Ireland. Five suppliers did not respond. One supplier declined to provide the service and did not proceed further in the

evaluation. Two suppliers confirmed they could supply the service and proceeded to Stage 2 of the evaluation process.

STAGE 2 – AWARD STAGE

Stage 2 – Commercial Assessment (100%)

Prices are provided by CCS and suppliers were evaluated on the basis of cost (100%) and the recommendation is as follows:

Rank	Supplier	Cost Assessment (out of 100%)	Total % Score	Total Estimated Annual Cost (£) (Excl. VAT)
1	PostalSort Ltd	100%	100%	£ [REDACTED]

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and

RESOLVED - that having achieved the higher score of 100%, PostalSort Ltd be appointed for the period 1 October 2020 – 30 November 2022 (with an option to extend for up to a maximum of 12 months, subject to review and performance)

ACTION BY: Melissa Kenning, Procurement Officer

Councillor Cooper left the meeting having declared an interest in the next item.

12.3 IN CONFIDENCE PK/GEN/155 MONKSTOWN JUBILEE CENTRE

Monkstown Community Association had developed a 'grow and eat it' project proposal and had carried out local consultation and applied to Whitemountain Landfill Communities Fund (formerly Alpha) for the scheme.

The total estimated cost of the scheme was £30,000 and included site clearance/levelling works, perimeter fencing and gates, hedging, internal pathways, raised beds, benches, and small pieces of equipment.

The Association had confirmed that the application had been successful with £27,000 had been offered. The Landfill Communities fund operates under regulations whereby applications are made for 100% of project costs but only a maximum of 90% of these costs could be provided for successful applications. In this case a total of £3000 was requested from the Council to meet this requirement.

A local working group would be set up to oversee the management of the site and in the future the Association also intended to seek funding for the installation of a 30ft polytunnel.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Alderman Agnew and

RESOLVED - that the Council provides £3,000 to Monkstown Community Association towards the 'community growing project' at the front of Monkstown Jubilee Centre.

ACTION BY: Elaine Upton, Countryside Officer

Councillor Cooper returned to the meeting.

12.4 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/350 CREMATORIUM, MEMORIAL GARDEN AND COLUMBARIUM DEVELOPMENT, DOAGH ROAD, NEWTOWNABBEY

TENDER FOR SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CREMATOR

At the Council Meeting held in March 2020 Members were reminded of the estimated future cost of £[REDACTED] for the development of the Crematorium.

Within the above cost, £[REDACTED] was included for the supply and installation of the cremator element (excluding maintenance costs) which Council approved to be procured separately from the main construction contract.

PROJECT SCOPE

The scope of the proposed contract included a design review of the Crematorium Facility and the design, supply, installation, testing, commissioning and 10 year maintenance of the cremator.

PROCUREMENT

Invitation to Tender (ITT) documents for the cremator were made available on eSourcingNI on 3 July 2020. One tender was received by the submission deadline on 14 August 2020 and referred to the evaluation panel for assessment.

TENDER ANALYSIS

The tender from Facultatieve Technologies Limited was evaluated on the basis of quality and price. The quality assessment included an initial selection criteria check prior to assessing the detailed quality and price submissions.

The selection criteria included Economic and Financial Standing and Professional Conduct, Health and Safety Requirements and Environmental Management Systems and Technical and/or Professional Ability. A 'Pass' in the selection criteria was necessary for the quality award criteria and price to be evaluated.

Facultatieve Technologies Limited passed the selection criteria and their detailed quality and price submissions were evaluated using the following criteria on a 40/60 quality/price basis as detailed below:

Contractor	Quality Award Criteria	Marks Awarded	Weighting	Weighted Score	Total Quality Score (40%)
Facultatieve Technologies Limited	Installation Methodology	■	40%	■	36.8
	Maintenance Methodology	■	60%	■	

Contractor	Total of the Prices	Total Price Score (60%)	Total Score (Quality & Price)
Facultatieve Technologies Limited	Supply & Installation £■■■■■	60	96.8
	10 years Maintenance £■■■■■		

No errors had been found in the tender submission from Facultatieve Technologies Limited. Facultatieve Technologies Limited tender was competitive and met the scope of the design, installation and maintenance requirements prescribed by the Council.

The supply and installation costs submitted by Facultatieve Technologies Limited were within the estimated budget of £■■■■■. The maintenance costs were as expected and would be included in revenue budgets going forward.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove and

RESOLVED - that the tendered total of the prices of £■■■■■ (excl. VAT) from Facultatieve Technologies Limited be approved as follows:

- **the design, supply, installation, testing and commissioning of the cremator at £■■■■■**
- **10 year maintenance costs at £■■■■■**

ACTION BY: Andrew McKeown, Capital Projects Officer/ Sharon Logue, Procurement Manager

12.5 **IN CONFIDENCE** ED,ED/165, ED/ED/166, ED/TOU/050, ED/ED/142, ED/ED/170 BELFAST REGION CITY DEAL UPDATE

Members were advised that progress continues on the business cases for proposed City Deal projects.

- (i) The Innovation pillar is one of the most advanced elements of the City Deal and includes the AMIC Scheme promoted by Queens's University to be located at Global Point. The Outline Business Case (OBC) for AMIC as well as the Global Innovation Institute (GII) and Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare (iReach) were submitted to the UK and NI Governments to review in February 2020 with feedback received and revised OBC's due in September.
- (ii) The other key project which will benefit the Borough is the Glider extension which is included under the Infrastructure pillar. A draft OBC for this scheme as well as the Newry Southern Relief Road and Lagan Bridge project had been completed and were presented to the Infrastructure Advisory Board in August for consideration. Department for Infrastructure officials would make a presentation to Members from the Macedon and Glengormley Urban DEAs on 23 September 2020 including consideration of the potential routes for the new Glider Scheme.
- (iii) The Tourism & Regeneration pillar, which includes the Game of Thrones – Moneyglass experience, had been significantly delayed due to the detailed considerations required as a result of COVID.
- (iv) Employability & Skills (E&S)

This pillar is focused on developing specific interventions under the thematic areas of Careers, Employability and Skills. Further refinement of the proposals was underway alongside which consideration was being given to the governance model required.

Work in relation to Digital Engagement and Skills had been fast tracked as a result of COVID with a small number of key recommendations now identified to help strengthen digital literacy, skills and business capability. These actions would complement other NI Government strategies for economic recovery.

- (v) Digital – the work undertaken by the Fraunhofer Institute/BABLE had now been completed and had informed the business case advanced by PWC for the Belfast Smart District and Regional programmes. The programme aimed to ensure the use of regional challenge funds and an infrastructure fund to support digital capability development. The Strategic case and options were presented to the Digital Advisory Board in August. Engagement with the Department for Economy and UK Government was ongoing.

An opportunity had also arisen for the Councils to work collaboratively to secure approximately £1.1 million of funding from Invest NI which has become

available as underspend from the Local Economic Development ERDF measure. A task and finish group of relevant officers had been established to formulate an application to Invest which will seek to complement the Digital pillar of the City Deal by providing expert guidance and mentoring for businesses to transition to digital or significantly enhance their digital capability. Those that progress through this programme could then be considered for a capital grant through the City Deal complementary fund, subject to approval. The Complementary Fund of approximately £100 million was announced by the Finance Minister earlier this year and work was underway across the City and Growth Deals to identify areas of common focus and benefit.

The next meeting of the Council Panel would be held on 30 September 2020 via Microsoft Teams and would be hosted by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

Proposed by Alderman Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

12.6 IN CONFIDENCE ED/REG/052 DISPOSAL OF CENTRAL SERVICES DEPOT

In October 2019 Members agreed to proceed to test the market for disposal of the Central Services Depot on the Doagh Road via initial Expressions of Interest. OKT the Council's agent undertook a marketing campaign and circulated a brochure setting out the relevant details of the property.

The property was marketed for 6 weeks and 14 Expressions of Interest were received. The second stage of the process asked interested bidders to complete a detailed development proposal with a closing date of 19 August. Nine formal proposals to purchase the site were received and are summarised in the table circulated at Appendix 1.

Officers subsequently assessed the proposals received and the final scores are provided in the assessment summary circulated at Appendix 2. Ashers Baking Company Limited achieved the highest score at assessment of 97/100 and submitted a bid of £[REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The development as outlined would require an investment of approximately £[REDACTED] in addition to the purchase cost and will see the creation of 45 new jobs during construction, 47 once operational and the retention of the existing staff numbers across the Borough.

Members were reminded that the Depot site lies adjacent to the site for the new Crematorium development which is zoned as employment land and

extends to 13.6 acres. A review of the land required for the crematorium has indicated that it will be possible to release part of this site for sale without impacting on the overall scheme. The map circulated at Appendix 3 showed the area of land which is approximately 2.4 acres and is valued at £[REDACTED]. The land is separated from the Depot site by a small watercourse on the East side and it was anticipated that access to this additional land would be via the Depot site. It was therefore proposed that OKT be instructed to offer this land for sale to Ashers Baking Company Limited.

Proposed by Alderman Cosgrove
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and

RESOLVED - that

- (a) the Council accepts the bid offered by Ashers Baking Company Limited of £[REDACTED] having achieved the highest score at assessment of 97/100;**
- (b) the additional land as outlined in Appendix 3 be offered for sale to Ashers Baking Company Limited and the Council's agent OKT be instructed to negotiate the sale.**

ACTION BY: Majella McAlister, Director of Economic Development and Planning

12.7 IN CONFIDENCE CD/PM/119 GLENGORMLEY PUBLIC REALM SCHEME

Officers had been liaising with The Department for Communities (DfC) regarding the advancement of a number of local regeneration schemes which were programmed to receive financial support from both themselves and the Council.

Members were reminded that the Council is in the process of appointing the multi-disciplinary team to complete the business case and take forward the design and build of the Glengormley Public Realm Scheme. Upon appointment, clear direction will need to be provided to the team regarding whether or not the car wash site at the junction of Antrim Road and Ballyclare Road is to be included in the design options.

Increasing and improving public space in Glengormley was considered in the early draft design concepts. One draft option included integrating the current car wash site into the public realm, to create a small 'town square' type space and realigning the Ballyclare Road to run through the site to achieve improved traffic management in the town. The current car wash site is not owned by the Council and a planning application was recently submitted to the Planning Section to develop the site as a petrol station. LPS valued the site at £[REDACTED] in September 2019. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The car wash site would be required to create a 'town square' type space on part of the overall public realm scheme. If this cannot be included then a 'traditional' scheme including new footpaths, street furniture, underground cables and creating a number of small green spaces would be acceptable

to the Department for funding purposes and could be delivered within the indicative timescale.

Members were reminded that the Council can vest land/property with the support of Central Government, however this option has not been proposed to date for the car wash site because previous experience has been that this process can be cumbersome and lengthy. Moving forward to design stage, it should be noted that the greater the number of design options progressed, the greater the fee, therefore it is important that direction is provided to the appointed consultants indicating whether or not to progress a design option which includes the car wash site.

It was noted that the route for the proposed glider project should be taken into account by the design team.

Proposed by Alderman Cosgrove
Seconded by Alderman McGrath and

RESOLVED - that the design proposals for the Glengormley Public Realm Scheme do not include the car wash site.

ACTION BY: Reggie Hillen, Head of Capital Development/Colin McCabrey, Head of Economic Development

Councillor Smyth had technical difficulties at this point and was not able to re-join the meeting.

12.8 IN CONFIDENCE G-LEG-12-300 & PBS/PS/012 SALE OF LAND AT HOLLYBUSH GARDENS, BALLYCLARE

Members were reminded that following a review of assets it was agreed in June 2020 that the land shown on the circulated brochure at Hollybush Gardens, Ballyclare should be sold via an agent.

OKT had marketed the land on behalf of the Council and received a top offer of £[REDACTED] from Kenny Developments Limited, which was well in excess of the offer price of £[REDACTED].

Members were advised that the site extends to 0.5 hectares and is zoned for housing, in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan. It was also stated that the housing development should be a minimum gross density of 25 dwellings per hectare and access shall be from Collinview Drive, subject to planning permission.

Outline Planning Permission was granted to legacy Newtownabbey Borough Council in April 2009 for a residential development comprising of 12 bungalows on the site by the then Department of the Environment with access taken from Collinview Drive. This permission had now expired therefore any future development would entail the submission of a new planning application.

Since the land was advertised for sale, 2 complaints had been received from [REDACTED], expressing concerns regarding the potential development. These will be dealt with in the normal planning process.

The agent had recommended that the Council accepts the offer and proceeds to complete the sale.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth
Seconded by Councillor Flanagan and

RESOLVED – that the Council sells the land as outlined to Kenny Developments Limited for £[REDACTED].

ACTION BY: Majella McAlister, Director of Economic Development and Planning

12.9 IN CONFIDENCE ED/ED/130 FULL FIBRE NI STATUS UPDATE

Members were reminded that in May 2020 the Council granted delegated powers to the Chief Executive to sign a contract in order to meet the programme funding timeline for the Full Fibre NI Project.

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council is a key partner in the Full Fibre NI (FFNI) consortium, which aims to utilise available funding (approx. £[REDACTED]) through the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), to address the issue of fibre provision in Northern Ireland, and specifically in respect of upgrading public sector connectivity (i.e. the corporate estate). A secondary impact of the initiative is that it was expected to stimulate a private sector intervention to advance the deployment of full fibre into nearby business and domestic/residential premises.

Officer representation was active at both strategic and operational Steering Group level, and an internal Officers working group has been set up to oversee project management issues going forward.

Fibre broadband is a major driver for economic growth, and for the development of an inclusive society for our citizens. It enables the public sector to deliver better services and allows citizens to avail of those services more effectively.

FFNI is one of the key connectivity initiatives in Northern Ireland at present, and following a recent collaborative public procurement exercise led by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council on behalf of all ten partner Councils, Fibrus had been identified as the preferred bidder.

The contract award was imminent and aligned to the funding package of £[REDACTED]. It would provide connectivity to 969 individual sites across Northern Ireland. The contract was for a 35 year term under the indefeasible right of use (IRU) model which is a type of telecommunications lease agreement. Each individual Council would contract with Fibrus for the infrastructure/ services to be delivered within their specific area. The 30th September 2021 is

the intended date for all construction works to be completed although the funder is permitting an extension to 31 December 2021 if required to mitigate against any impacts arising from COVID-19.

DCMS had confirmed 100% grant funding for the project (comprised of £15m through the Local Full Fibre Network programmes and £9m through the Rural Gigabit Connectivity fund) and authorised FFNI partners to contract with Fibrus. Local sites would ultimately benefit from an improved gigabit-capable, fibre connection including civic centres, leisure and tourist facilities and community centres across the Borough.

The business case for Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council had determined the following:

- *The Council's FFNI project will provide gigabit capable fibre to 35 corporate sites, and enable fibre broadband for an estimated 24,905 homes and businesses (this will be supplemented by an additional 25 Business Service Organisation sites, including local GP surgeries, ambulance/fire stations and Whiteabbey Hospital);*
- *It will support the economic growth of our region and help to ensure our citizens are included in society;*
- *It will deliver an estimated £4,029,474 of GVA increase over 15 years;*
- *It will migrate the great majority of the Council's network connections on to fibre connection; and,*
- *It will deliver network savings of approximately £53,028 over 5 years.*

The value of works programmed by Fibrus in Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council area for the achievement of the outputs above was £[REDACTED]. The project would deliver all of the 35 sites identified by Council and a further 25 Health and Social Care, Business Services Organisation sites. The full list of sites was summarised within the circulated document. Through connecting these sites the project would deliver positive economic development benefits and cost savings.

In addition to the FFNI initiative, other initiatives (such as DFE's Project Stratum) and ongoing works in the area by a range of key commercial suppliers will, over the next 18-24 months, ensure that the Borough establishes itself at the very highest echelons of connectivity across the United Kingdom. The implementation of the digital projects proposed as part of the Belfast Region City Deal would further enhance the Borough's digital capability and improve the skills of both residents and those who work here.

Members would be briefed regarding the scheduling of works being undertaken by Fibrus and disruption would be kept to a minimum.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

Alderman McGrath left the meeting having declared an interest in the next item.

Councillor Logue had technical difficulties during the next item.

12.10 IN CONFIDENCE SEVERANCE UPDATE

To realise the required level of staff cost reductions, Members were reminded that in July 2020 the Council considered the review of resources and agreed its implementation.

The review of resources includes a reduction across the current workforce by approximately 100 FTE posts (32 vacant posts were not essential to fill leaving a remaining reduction of 68 FTE posts). This reduction will achieve an annual saving of approximately £3.3M.

Members were reminded that in August 2020 the Council agreed that:

- a) the Redundancy Procedure be approved and that the Council's Discretion Policy Statement be updated accordingly;**
- b) the wording in the conciliation agreement be amended to exclude any staff who currently have a claim, as at 1 July 2020;**
- c) redundancy payments be extended, if relevant, to those employees with less than 2 years' service;**
- d) a multiplier of 1.7 be used for enhanced redundancy payment.**

Following the Council's decision in relation to applying a multiplier of 1.7 for enhanced redundancy payments, further invitations for voluntary severance had been sought from across the Council.

In total the Council received 65 (ie 54.54FTE) formal voluntary severance applications and of these, 17.59 (FTE) were employed in directly affected roles potentially at risk of redundancy.

The total approximate cost of these voluntary severance applications was £708K and the total annual salary saving was approximately £621K, with an estimated payback period of 1.14 years.

Therefore, it was proposed that these severance applications be approved, as the related business cases met the terms of the redundancy procedure.

Applications for voluntary severance had also been received from 11.14 FTE employees working in roles not directly affected by being potentially at risk of redundancy, but which could reasonably be viewed as being suitable alternative employment opportunities for employees who are at risk, following individual consultation with affected employees.

The approximate total cost of these voluntary severance applications was £380K and the total annual salary saving was approximately £367K, with an estimated payback period being 1.03years.

Engagement was ongoing with the DfC, requesting permission to capitalise severance costs over four financial years starting in 2020/21.

Members were also advised that the Council currently has 33 vacant posts that were being held as potential suitable alternative employment options.

Having reviewed the nature of the posts where a reduction is required, and the nature of the vacant posts, it was anticipated that up to 14 full time equivalent staff could be offered suitable alternative employment. To meaningfully support all redeployed employees, thorough induction and training programmes would be developed.

The table below summarises implementation measures to realise the required workforce reduction, along with the associated cost savings, based on the information currently available.

Implementation Measure	Workforce Reduction (FTE) Note: Agreed to reduce by 100 FTE and with 32 vacant posts not being filled, the remaining reduction is 68FTE	Associated Cost (Est.) Note: Costs to be capitalised over 4 years	Associated Cost Saving (Est.) Note: agreed to be £3.3M
Non Essential Vacant Posts	32		£1.02M
Voluntary Severance Applications (from staff directly affected by job reductions)	17.59	£708K	£621K
Voluntary Severance Applications (from staff not directly affected by job reductions, but that may be reasonable suitable alternative employment opportunities , following completion of individual consultations with affected staff)	*11.14	£380K	£367K
Redeployment to vacant posts , following the completion of individual consultation with affected staff.	*14.11	N/A	£461K
Remaining workforce reductions required (estimated)	25.16	TBC	£831K
TOTAL	100	£1.08M	£3.3M

*Note: indicative because redeployment can only be confirmed following thorough and meaningful individual consultation, which will be undertaken with each affected employee.

Officers would fully explore and exhaust all reasonable steps so as to avoid any redundancies, and the anticipated timeline for individual consultation was mid-November.

Proposed by Alderman Brett
Seconded by Alderman Cosgrove that

- a) the 17.59 (FTE) voluntary severance applications from staff directly affected, be approved, as these meet the business case with a total approximate cost of £708K and an estimated saving of £621K p.a. resulting in a payback period of 1.14 years;
- b) individual consultation now commences in relation to the remaining reduction of posts, required to realise the necessary salary cost reduction, previously agreed by the Council;
- c) following individual consultation, a further report be brought to the Council in November 2020.

On the Motion being put to the meeting 28 Members voted in favour, 8 against and 0 abstentions. The Motion was declared carried and it was

RESOLVED - that

- a) the 17.59 (FTE) voluntary severance applications from staff directly affected, be approved, as these meet the business case with a total approximate cost of £708K and an estimated saving of £621K p.a. resulting in a payback period of 1.14 years;**
- b) individual consultation now commences in relation to the remaining reduction of posts, required to realise the necessary salary cost reduction, previously agreed by the Council;**
- c) following individual consultation, a further report be brought to the Council in November 2020.**

ACTION BY: Andrea McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

Alderman McGrath returned to the meeting.

12.11 IN CONFIDENCE FI/FIN/043 EMERGENCY FINANCIAL PLAN

Members were reminded that it had been agreed to keep the current financial position under review.

This report sought to update Members on the current financial position along with the factors affecting the predicted position at year-end.

Introduction

Council is in the process of recovering services. Each recovery plan has impacted on the financial projections for the year and provisional forecast assumptions had been updated to reflect actual experience and Council decisions to date.

Original 2020/21 Annual Budget – Appendix A

In line with the estimates process for 2020/21, at a Special Meeting on 10 February 2020 Council struck the Non-Domestic and Domestic Rates for the 2020/21 financial year. The annual budgets for expenditure of £66.1m and income of £13.9m were set, giving in a net cost of services of £52.2m. This was to be funded by District Rates of £48.8m, De-Rating Grant of £2.6m and a Credit Balance from the Council's General Fund Reserves of £0.7m. A copy of the original 2020/21 Annual Budget was circulated.

Current Financial Position Month 5 Budget Year to Date v Actual – Appendix B

A budget report for August 2020 – Period 5 was circulated for Members' information.

Variances within the report include:

- **Arts and Culture** - Reduction in income of £447k, savings on employee costs of £181k and overheads £270k due to facility closures.
- **Community Planning** – Savings on employee costs due to unfilled vacancies and savings in programmes costs. Grant income is lower than anticipated due to lower spend on programmes while Community Centre income is lower due to closures.
- **Capital Development** - Savings in project consultancy due to a reduced number of projects proceeding.
- **Property and Building Services** - Reduction in Building Control income of £91k for the period, savings on employee costs due to unfilled vacancies and savings on premises costs due to essential maintenance only being progressed. This has potentially led to a backlog in property maintenance needing to be addressed as funding becomes available.
- **Planning** - £684k income has been received comprising; £381k Transferred Functions Grant and £303k from Planning Applications and Property Certificates fees. The budget to date for fees is £412k meaning that income is 26% lower than expected for the period.
- **Economic Development** - Savings to date on programme costs.
- **Finance and Governance** - Savings in: employee costs due to unfilled vacancies; Members' Allowances and; meetings hospitality.
- **Leisure** - Loss of income to date of £1.81m, savings in staff and overheads costs due to facility closures.
- **Waste Management** – Expenditure is £52k greater than budget for the period with landfill tonnages being approx. 1,400 tonnes higher than expected. Loss of Trade Waste income of £190k.

- **Environmental Health** – Savings due to staff vacancies.
- **Parks** - Loss of caravan parks, car parks and pavilions income of £136k, and savings on seasonal staff costs.
- **Human Resources/Communication & Customer Services** – Savings due to vacant posts, reduced staff training costs; income from Registration Services is lower than budgeted for the period.

The overall position of the Council, before exceptional costs and intervention income, was an adverse variance of £2.4m.

This included a provision for the non-collection of District Rates and De-rating Grant income of £2.3m up to period 5.

COVID-19 specific costs of £807k had been incurred for the period to date, while government intervention grants £2.89m had been received, giving a net intervention of £2.1m.

Taking these elements into account, the overall position of the Council was an adverse variance of £316k at the end of August 2020.

Predicted Outturn 2020/21 – Appendix C

Council had now agreed recovery plans for a number of services, this had impacted on predicted costs and incomes.

The predicted out-turn for 2020/21 based on the operational recovery plans that had been approved to date was circulated. This shows **a shortfall of £4.5m** after exceptional spend and intervention funding.

Reserves

Council's Total Reserves are made up of a number of Balances and Reserves. The reserve which is directly affected by the Council's financial performance is the General Fund. The audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2019/20 was largely complete, with the balance (subject to any audit adjustments) of the General Fund at 31 March 2020 being £5.96m.

As part of the audit of the Statement of Accounts, the Northern Ireland Audit Office had identified as a significant risk that the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to impact Council finances significantly and may do for some time in the future, and that councils may be unable to continue as financially resilient entities.

Members were asked to note that the current predicted out-turn for 20/21 including the provision for rates clawback will deplete the General Fund Reserve from £5.96m to £1.50m. This level was substantially less than the recommended level of reserves, set out in the Council Reserves Policy of £5.9m based on 9% of Gross Revenue spend of £66m.

The use of Reserves beyond the level of 9% would require a change to the Reserves Policy of Council. Members were aware that it is prudent to hold a minimum of one month's expenditure in reserves (£5.5m).

Government Engagement

As can be seen in Appendices B and C, the Council had received income from a number of Government sources, including DfC and HMRC. Apart from the income received as at Month 5 of £2.9m, it was anticipated that there would be a further £1.1m received during the remainder of the financial year.

Officers continued to engage with Central Government Departments, SOLACE and NILGA to ensure that the Council is represented in discussions around future funding for Local Government.

Land and Property Services (LPS) collect domestic and non-domestic rates on behalf of Council. Rates income for 2020/21 would continue to be paid monthly to Council according to the Estimated Penny Product (EPP) agreed as part of the 2020/21 rates setting process.

Any rates not collected would be deducted from Council in November 2021 after the year end reconciliation is complete. Council had requested a meeting with LPS to understand various impacts, including:

- Impact in 2020/21 of non-domestic rate relief – impact on collection and forecasted impact when the relief ceases
- Predicted rates income for 2021/22 in the absence of further interventions
- Forecasting of rates for future years and sharing of information to enhance the accuracy and timeliness of this information
- The impact of Reval 2020 on the non-domestic list.

Clarity in relation to these items would allow Council to plan service delivery with more certainty in year and into the rates setting process for 2021/22.

Due to the uncertainty in relation to potential loss of rates income, the sector had requested a delay in the setting of rates beyond the prescribed statutory date of 15 February to allow for more time to understand the implications of the impacts detailed above.

Severance/Outlook for 2021/22

Members were reminded that a review of resources was carried out by officers, the result of which was presented to Council in July.

Efficiencies identified included; staffing reductions; revenue spending savings; reductions in capital charges due to a reduced capital programme; while it was anticipated that income reductions in, eg Theatres, Leisure Centres, would continue into 2021/22.

To avoid significant rates increases next year and to help redress this expected fall in the level of reserves and ongoing reduced rate base a severance scheme was currently being implemented to reduce annual revenue costs by approximately £3.3m in 2021/22.

Council approved a redundancy procedure in August 2020 accompanied by a revised pensions discretions policy statement to facilitate severance. Officers were currently progressing formal voluntary severance applications and will provide an update on the outcomes to Council when this was complete.

Should the severance programme be finalised prior to 31 March 2021, the total cost would be charged to the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts. However, part of the ongoing engagement with DfC was a request from Councils to be permitted to capitalise severance costs over four financial years starting in 2021/22. For the purposes of 2020/21 out-turn it had been assumed that Council will be able to capitalise this cost and therefore there would be no net impact for 2020/21. However the timing of the payment of severance costs may generate cash flow pressures depending on cash balances held at that time.

Summary

The in year financial position has stabilised through the early implementation of strict expenditure and vacancy controls. Government funding intervention and the reduction in capital programme had also contributed to this. These measures also impact positively on Council's cash requirements.

The 2020/21 Predicted Out-Turn showed a short-fall of £7.5m on service delivery. When exceptional costs and incomes in respect of COVID-19 (£3.0m) were taken into account, this results in a predicted decrease to the General Fund of £4.5m, reducing the General Fund Reserve to £1.5m. Therefore the Council would be required to review the Council Reserves Policy.

The future financial position remained highly uncertain especially with regard to future rate income and the economic impact on businesses within the Borough following the end of the 'furlough' scheme. The impact of further periods of service restrictions resulting in further lost income and additional costs in relation to social distancing, PPE and additional cleansing could impact assumptions that had been used for the predicted out-turn.

Despite the efficiencies proposed, due to the Economic downturn, the Council could face an increase in Rates of between 15% and 23% depending on the severity of the downturn.

Officers would continue to bring regular updates to Council in relation to the Emergency Financial Plan as more information becomes available.

Proposed by Alderman Cosgrove
Seconded by Alderman Brett and

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

MOTION TO PROCEED 'OUT OF COMMITTEE'

Moved by Councillor Hamill
Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and

RESOLVED - that the Council proceeds to conduct any remaining business 'In Public'.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded at 7.41 pm.

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.

MAYOR