



30 October 2019

Committee Chair: Alderman J McGrath

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor M Cooper

Committee Members: Aldermen – T Burns and M Girvan
Councillors – J Archibald, A Bennington, R Foster, J Gilmour,
N Kelly, R Kinnear, A Logue, N McClelland, J Montgomery,
S Ross and R Swann

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Monday 4 November 2019 at 6.30pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jacqui Dixon'.

Jacqui Dixon, BSc MBA
Chief Executive, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

For any queries please contact Member Services:

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REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2019

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 WM/WM/COMS/1 PROPOSALS TO REDUCE SINGLE USE PLASTICS ACROSS COUNCIL

Background

Members have been very keen that Council reduces the amount of Single Use Plastics (SUP) across the organisation in keeping with our Environmental Management System accreditation (ISO 14001).

In October 2018, an action plan setting out a number of proposals was approved and Officers have been progressing the actions. In a number of these Officers have worked in partnership with external organisations to achieve the desired results. These include Northern Ireland Water, Sustainable Northern Ireland and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

The versatility of plastic has led to multiple uses of the material and this has resulted in both environmental advantages and disadvantages. For example, the use of plastics rather than glass for holding drinks and other materials has resulted in reduced fuel costs and carbon emissions, while the recycling of these materials has been traditionally more difficult than glass and there is also the problem of being discarded and ending up as litter, rather than being binned. Therefore, it was important to keep the actions proportionate and focused on the primary objective of environmental improvement.

Summary of the Actions

Members had agreed on the following actions to reduce plastic waste, with particular focus on SUP:

1. Increase the use of biodegradable waste sacks;
2. Require all Council catering franchisees to stop the use of SUP such as cutlery, polystyrene food containers, straws, plates and cups when franchises are being renewed
3. Consider options to encourage those vendors providing catering at council events to reduce or stop use of plastic containers and utensils;
4. Provide advice and assistance to existing Council catering franchisees on phasing out of all unnecessary SUP;
5. Carry out a survey with members of the leisure centres to ascertain their views on the removal of the vending machines and paper cups in public areas and their replacement with promotional water bottles;
6. Assess the economic and environmental impact of removing all plastic bottles from Council and caterers' vending machines, including market testing at time of contract renewal;
7. Support the National Refill Campaign;

8. Assess options to effectively remove all SUP and cardboard cups from water fountains in Mossley Mill and Antrim Civic Centre e.g;
 - a. Staff provided with reusable plastic containers
 - b. Options for conferencing visitors to be assessed
9. A pilot for takeaways in the Threemilewater DEA to encourage these businesses to stop using plastics in favour of paper and wooden utensils.
10. Consider options to support Council franchisees, such as a subsidy to help with the cost difference, which may make the change more amenable to the businesses in the short term.

Over the last 12 months Council has been implementing these actions and the table below outlines progress to date:

	Proposed Action	Considerations	Outcome
1	Increase the use of biodegradable waste sacks through further trials of the sacks to identify a supply that would be an acceptable quality	While the cost of the biodegradable sacks is higher than the virgin plastic sacks, the price difference would not be material and required quality would be the critical factor in the continuing use.	<p>Different strengths of biodegradable waste sacks were trialled and it was found that the current quality of those sampled did not meet operational requirements.</p> <p>Council now purchases disposable sacks made from recyclable materials, which are stronger and have been made from materials that would normally have ended in landfill. The contractor which takes street litter waste can still process these bags.</p> <p>The use of plastic products containing recycled content is vital to stimulate the market for recycled materials and therefore create a circular economy.</p> <p>Action Completed and ongoing</p>
2	Require all catering contractors to stop the use of SUP as a contractual requirement in all new catering contracts from 1 April 2019	This proposal would prevent all catering contractors from using plastic cutlery, straws, plates, cups, and polystyrene food containers. This would be applicable to catering establishments in Council buildings and Council run events. This would have no cost implications for the Council although the catering contractors	<p>The contract for the new catering contract at Mossley Mill is currently being procured and the contract will require the contractor to stop the use of SUP. The other franchises are not due for renewal for 12 months.</p> <p>Officers have also consulted with franchisees regarding their use of single use plastics, proposing a move towards more sustainable packaging. The response was positive, and each franchisee has indicated that they are happy to</p>

		would have additional equipment costs which they may pass onto the public.	work with the Council to provide options; however, franchisees had reservations regarding the cost implications and practicalities of some of the options available. A meeting has also been arranged with the new Gateway franchisee. Action Ongoing
3	Consider options to encourage those vendors providing catering at council events to reduce or stop the use of plastic containers and utensils	Options to be developed and discussed with Officers who procure such vendors and proposals reported to Committee.	Officers have consulted with vendors regarding their use of single use plastics, proposing a move towards more sustainable packaging. The response was positive, and they have indicated that they are happy to work with the Council to provide options; however, had reservations regarding the cost implications and practicalities of the options available. Options to be explored. Action Ongoing
4	Provide advice and assistance to existing Council catering contractors	Zero cost as the advice would be provide by existing waste management staff who would encourage existing Council catering contractors to phase out of all unnecessary SUPs before the end of their contracts.	Officers have provided advice and assistance to existing Council catering franchisees on phasing out of all unnecessary SUP. This will be done on a rolling basis as franchises are renewed Action Completed and ongoing
5	Assess the economic and environmental impact of removing all plastic bottles from Council and caterers' vending machines, including market testing at time of contract renewal	There are a number of studies that state that the use of plastic packaging for bottles is more sustainable than glass or metal packaging, if the plastic bottles are recycled. Council officers will seek further advice from WRAP to ascertain the environmental impact of each type of drinks packaging and then report back to Committee.	It has been confirmed (by WRAP) that using plastic packaging for bottles is more environmentally sustainable than glass or metals if the plastic containers are recycled. Officers have sought information from the vending suppliers, Coca-Cola HBC Ireland. This information sets out the environmental benefits of their products. The company has confirmed that the water bottles sold in the vending machines are made from 100% recycled product and the amount of plastic used has been reduced by 7.5%. this has an

			<p>impact on the weight of the bottles and therefore the carbon footprint. In addition, some of the previously coloured product bottles have been changed to clear bottles which is an improvement and plans are in place to have all plastic bottles used made from 100% recycled plastic. Currently there is not sufficient supply of the plastic recycle content in Northern Ireland to enable this to happen on the scale the supplier requires. This means it is increasingly important to ensure that the quality of recyclate is as good as it can be, that efforts to educate and create awareness about littering and recycling are sustained and that sufficient bins for recycling are in place at leisure centres and council facilities to ensure that empty bottles purchased are disposed of and recycled.</p> <p>Taking all of these factors into consideration,</p> <p>Action: See joint recommendation for items 5. and 6. below</p>
6	Carry out a survey with members of the leisure centres regarding the removal of vending machines in the leisure centres	Survey the Council's leisure membership to see whether they would support proposals to remove vending machines and paper cups in public areas and replace SUP with promotional water bottles. Alternative options to include sale of reusable water bottles with campaign branding for use at refill stations.	<p>Officers have produced surveys for leisure centres and other council facilities with vending on offer, however the responses have been few in number. As part of European Week for Waste Reduction in November, officers plan to carry out further surveys.</p> <p>Members may wish to note that reusable water bottles have been provided with sign up to the new More membership scheme in the last 2 years to encourage a reduction in SUPs.</p> <p>In the meantime however, the survey highlighted the opportunity to further promote reuse water</p>

			<p>bottles and Officers will be implementing a campaign to promote the refilling water bottles at Council sites.</p> <p>Recommendation: that a decision on vending in leisure centres is deferred pending further surveys being carried out</p>
7	Support the National Refill Campaign	<p>Zero cost proposal with the promotion of the Campaign app which identifies the location of refill stations and shops where the public are encouraged to refill their water bottles. Participate in the campaign by identifying those council facilities where the public can refill their water bottles.</p>	<p>Officers have actively promoted the Refillution Campaign in partnership with NI Water, throughout the summer with events at nine sites across the Borough. At the events the reuse and recycling of plastic bottles was promoted alongside litter prevention, water conservation, and NI Water's 3Ps campaign. Council premises are now Refillution sites, with Refill stickers in place, the public are welcome to refill their water bottles at any of these sites. Officers are promoting the scheme to local businesses with the aim of having one or more business signed up as a Refill station in each town and village.</p> <p>Action Completed and ongoing</p>
8	Consider options for the removal of SUP and cardboard cups from water fountains in the public and staff areas of Mossley Mill and Antrim Civic Centre	Options to be assessed and proposals reported to Committee.	<p>Officers have reviewed alternatives and at present the best environmental option is to continue the use of plastic cups in public areas and promote the recycling of the cups. Reusable glassware is used for all main meetings within the Council.</p> <p>Staff across all sites have been provided with reusable refillable bottles to use in place of plastic cups.</p> <p>Action: Recommendation: that approval is given to retain the use of plastic cups at this time with the matter kept under review</p>
9	Take -away pilot project in the	Pilot to be rolled out, evaluated and	Officers implemented the pilot in March 2019 and although it was

	Threemilewater DEA to encourage use of sustainable packaging instead of single use plastics.	proposals to be brought to Committee on the potential to roll out across the Borough.	<p>successful, the majority of the participating businesses were constrained from making long-term changes by the increased cost of sustainable packaging.</p> <p>One of the pilot businesses has committed to reducing their single-use plastics and using more sustainable packaging long-term. Officers are considering options to support the businesses through external funding opportunities.</p> <p>Procurement in partnership with Waste Management, have started to implement the use of sustainable packaging as part of Council franchisee contracts.</p> <p>Action ongoing.</p>
10	Consider options to support Council franchisees, such as a subsidy to help with the cost difference, which may make the change more amenable to the businesses in the short term.		<p>As above, Officers are considering options to support the franchisees through external funding opportunities.</p> <p>Action ongoing.</p>

The proposals and progress above demonstrate Council's ongoing commitment to environmental best practice. Officers will continue to work and promote best practice with Sustainable NI and Keep Northern Ireland to ensure that it is leading the way in reducing plastics.

Legislative Changes

In March 2019, the EU passed a Directive, which the UK will be obliged to comply with, to ban the use of the following products, including single use plastic cutlery, plates, straws, cotton buds, and polystyrene cups and containers by 2021. In addition, there will be a target to collect 90% of plastic bottles by 2029.

As recently reported to the Operations Committee, the UK consulted on the introduction of Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging waste. DRS will place a deposit on a plastic bottle that will be paid when the bottle is purchased but can be redeemed when the drink is finished and EPR aims to pass the cost of the collection and

reprocessing of packaging waste onto the business that place it on the market. Scotland is likely to introduce a DRS by April 2021 with EPR in the UK proposed for January 2023. Further consultations on DRS and EPR are expected in 2020.

Future Proposals

While significant legislative changes are coming in the near future, Officers are proposing the following initiatives to further reduce the impact of plastic waste in the Borough. The proposals are aimed at increasing the amount of plastic waste that is recycled:

- Provision of Bathroom Recyclables Bag to residents to help collect and recycle plastic containers used in this area of the house but often get disposed of in the black bin;
- Development of a new social media campaign, using local influencers, to encourage greater recycling of plastic containers using the existing collection methods, wheelie box and blue bin.

Following the success of the funding application for the irecyclerright campaign, Officers are currently exploring options with DAERA for both proposals and will report progress by March 2020.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Action Plan Update be approved.

Prepared by: Michael Laverty, Head of Waste Management

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

3.2 WM/WM/37/VOL2 REVIEW OF CLEANSING CHARGES 2020-2021

A review of cleansing charges is carried out annually for:

1. Trade Waste Collection Service;
2. Waste Collection Containers;
3. Re-Chargeable Cleansing Work.

The Waste & Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 places a duty on each district council to arrange for the collection of commercial waste from premises within its district if requested by the occupier of such premises to do so.

Anyone who requests Council to provide a commercial waste collection service is liable to pay a reasonable charge for the collection and disposal of such waste. Council charges commercial waste customers on a volumetric basis for the collection of their commercial waste (i.e. per bin size).

A schedule of Proposed Charges is **enclosed** for Members' consideration.

1. Trade Waste Collection Service

Despite increases in the Landfill Tax Rate and operating costs, it is proposed to maintain waste charges at their current levels by achieving service efficiencies.

Under current waste legislation, all movements of waste must be controlled through a Waste Transfer Note (WTN), which is provided by the Council on behalf of the trade customer. As previously, the cost of the WTN will be included in the collection rate. There is no increase in the cost of the WTN.

2. Waste Collection Containers

Council purchases waste collection containers through an arc21 contract and as there has been no increase in these rates, the current charges for new bins, boxes, and composters, it is proposed that these prices will be maintained at current levels.

3. Re-Chargeable Cleansing Work

If a request is made to clear waste which is deemed to be outside the normal bulky waste items, that are collected free of charge, a Waste Supervisor will visit the customer and assess the collection requirements and what equipment is required. In line with the other charges it is proposed to maintain re-chargeable fees at 2019-2020 rates.

RECOMMENDATION: that Committee approves the Review of Cleansing Charges for 2020-2021.

Prepared by: Michael Lavery, Head of Waste Management

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

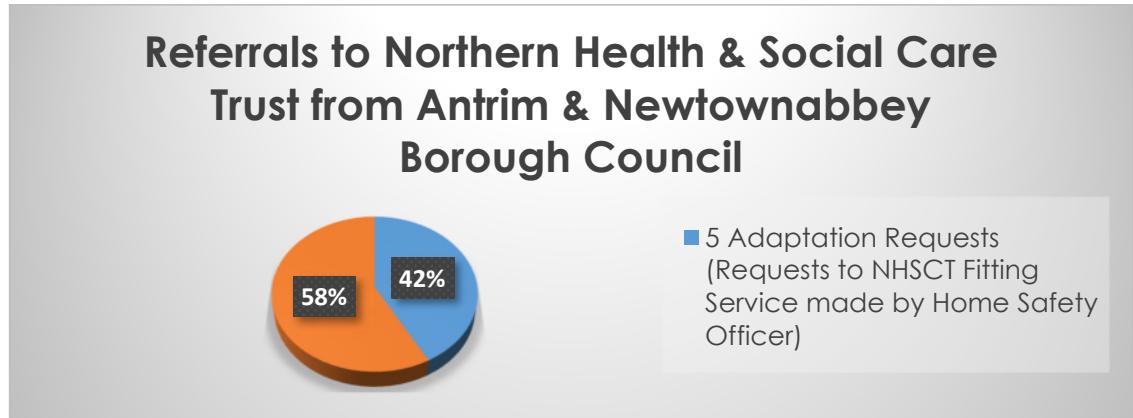
3.3 EH/PHWB/2 HOME ACCIDENT PREVENTION - OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PILOT

Members are reminded that since August 2019, the Environmental Health Service has been piloting an initiative with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust Occupational Therapy Service.

The aim of the pilot was to test a new way of working and see if this could provide efficiencies in the process of providing minor Occupational Therapy adaptations for clients. During the pilot, where minor adaptations were required, such as a handrail, grab rail or stair rail, the Home Safety Officer selected the appropriate adaptations from a list of options and made a referral directly to the fitting service.

Over the course of the pilot, twelve clients were eligible for referral to Occupational Therapy. Five of these were referred directly to Northern Health and Social Care Trust fitting service for minor adaptations. For the remaining seven clients, the Home Safety Officer identified requirements or adaptations outside the remit of the pilot and these cases were referred for a full Occupational Therapy assessment.

For those clients referred directly to the fitting service, this resulted in the requested adaptation being fitted within 20 working days. This saved the clients approximately 12 weeks waiting time for an initial Occupational Therapy Assessment plus a further waiting time for the adaptations to be fitted.



The Trust have indicated they feel the pilot is working well and their ultimate aim is to rollout the arrangement with other Councils across the Northern Area. An evaluation was planned at the end of the initial phase of the pilot, however due to the low number of referrals during this period both it was felt that it would be beneficial to extend the pilot for a further 3 months. This will allow for a larger sample of clients to be evaluated at the end of this extended period.

RECOMMENDATION: that the pilot between Council and Northern Health and Social Care Trust is extended for a further three months.

Prepared by: Tom Durrant, Home Safety Officer

Agreed by: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

3.4 PK/CP/001/VOL4 CAR PARK ARRANGEMENTS CHRISTMAS 2019

Once again this year a number of requests have been received to use car parks for Christmas events. These are listed below:

Christmas Switch-On, Ballyclare

The Christmas lighting Switch-on in Ballyclare is planned for Saturday 23 November 2019 at The Square. To facilitate this event, it is proposed that the car park is closed from 6.00 am to 10.00 pm that day.

Christmas Switch-On, Randalstown

The Christmas lighting Switch-on for Randalstown is planned for Friday 29 November 2019 at John Street Car Park. It is proposed that a section of the car park (nearest to the play park) is closed from 6.00am until 12 midnight that day.

Christmas Switch-On and Fair - Whiteabbey

A request has been received from Whiteabbey Village Business Association for the closure of the Car Park at Whiteabbey Village on Saturday 30 November 2019 to accommodate a mobile stage as part of a Christmas Fair and Tree Lighting event. It is proposed that the car park is closed from 6.00 am to 6.00 pm that day.

2. Free Car Parking in December, Ballyclare

In recent years, parking has been free on Saturdays in December at both Car Parks in Ballyclare to promote Christmas shopping in the town. Local traders have indicated that this initiative encourages people to both visit the town and stay for longer and it is therefore proposed that free parking is offered each Saturday at the Square car park from 6.00 am to 6.00 pm inclusive. (Harrier Way will be a free car park from 1 January 2020).

3. General Car park arrangements for Public Holidays

On a number of Public holidays there will be no traffic attendants. On these days the car parks have traditionally been free.

The days detailed for the year ahead are:

- Wednesday 1 January 2020
- Monday 13 April 2020 (Easter Monday)
- Monday 13 and Tuesday 14 July 2020.

It is proposed to continue with these arrangements.

Proposed Delegated Authority for car park closures

As car parks will be managed directly by Council's appointed contractor, from this point forward, Council may wish to consider approving delegated

authority for to the Director of Operations for the full or part closure of car parks for the following purposes:

- To facilitate a Council event (e.g. Christmas switch on).
- To facilitate public holiday closures as above

Any other requests (e.g. a request from a club or organisation for an outside event) would be brought to Committee for consideration in the normal way.

Members may wish to note that the recently approved changes to Car Parking charges will come into effect in January 2020.

RECOMMENDATION: that approval be given for:

- 1. Temporary closure of the following car parks to facilitate Christmas Switch-ons:**
 - i. The Square, Ballyclare on Saturday 23 November 2019 from 6.00 am until 10.00 pm.**
 - ii. John Street, Randalstown on Friday 29 November 2019 from 6.00 am until 12.00 midnight.**
 - iii. Whiteabbey Village on Saturday 30 November 2019 from 6.00 am until 6.00 pm.**
- 2. Free car parking at the Square car park, Ballyclare on Saturdays 6, 13, 20 and 27 December 2019.**
- 3. Free car parking on public holidays: Wednesday 1 January 2020, Monday 13 April 2020, Monday 13 July and Tuesday 14 July 2020 at all charged car parks.**
- 4. That authority be delegated to the Director of Operations to fully or partially close car parks to facilitate Council events.**

Prepared by: Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks and Cemeteries

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

3.5 PK/GEN/157 NORTHERN IRELAND AMENITY COUNCIL BEST KEPT AWARDS CEREMONY 2019

The Northern Ireland Amenity Council Best Kept Awards ceremony 2019 in association with George Best Belfast City Airport, was held on 14 October in Ballymena. The Awards recognise those cities, towns, villages and housing areas which go the extra mile with efforts to create well maintained, clean and beautiful communities in which to live and work.

At this year's event, Merville Garden Village won the 'Large Housing Area' category, while Ballynure got second place in the 'Best Kept Small Village' category. The President's Trophy, chosen at the discretion of the sitting president, was awarded to Suzanne Winters of 'Tidy Randalstown.' Again this year, the efforts of the groups in the Borough, have been recognised.

It is proposed that the prize money is invested in the respective areas, in consultation with Merville Garden Village residents group (£100) and Ballynure and District Community Association (£50).

RECOMMENDATION: that the awards are noted and that Officers work with the groups which received prize money to invest the money in their area.

Prepared by: Elaine Upton, Countryside Officer

Agreed by: Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

3.6 PK/GEN/158 PARKS CHARGES AND PRICING POLICY 2020-2021

A proposed schedule of charges and pricing policy for the Parks service are enclosed for the financial year 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

Having reviewed all charges, Officers are recommending that all charges should remain unchanged. Charges for Caravan Parks are included.

The Section 75 Screening Form has been reviewed, is enclosed and an EQIA is not required.

RECOMMENDATION: that approval be given for the Parks Schedule of Charges, Pricing Policy and Section 75 Screening Form for 2020/2021.

Prepared by: Mark Wilson, Parks Manager

Agreed by: Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

3.7 L/GEN/5 LEISURE CHARGES AND PRICING POLICY 2020-2021

A proposed schedule of charges, pricing policy Screening Form for Leisure in 2020/2021 are enclosed.

Key changes in the schedule of charges are set out below for Members' convenience.

1. To retain existing and encourage new members by introducing additional benefits for "More" members:
 - 20% discount on exercise courses (Yoga, Pilates etc.)
 - 20% discount on children's swimming lessons and gymnastics courses
 - 10% discount on Birthday Party bookings
 - 10% discount on Ten-Pen bowling
 - Free equipment hire
2. To encourage/enable more children to participate in leisure activities, a proposed price reduction for the following:
 - Schools' use of Fitness Suites reduced from £2.80 per person to £2.00
 - Pay as you go Children's Classes reduced from £2.50 to £2.00 per session
 - Introduction of 'Kid's 4 a Quid' where under 16s can swim for £1 on Friday evenings between 5pm - 9pm (reduced from £3)
 - Use of 3G pitches when not booked, reduced from £2 to £1 on a Pay as you go basis and included within the More family membership.
3. To encourage an increase in participation in golf and create pathways for young people, the following is proposed:
 - Golf at Ballyearl to be included within the More Membership package
 - Reduction in Annual Junior Membership at Allen Park from £83 to £66
 - Introduction of Annual Young Adult Membership at Allen Park
 - o aged 18-22: £130
 - o aged 23-29 £260
 - Reduction in Junior Green Fees at Allen Park from £13 (£15 at weekends) to £8
4. Swimming lessons and gymnastics prices are currently pay as you go and have remained unchanged since 2015. In addition, following benchmarking by Officers against other local authorities, Council's current price is on average 22% cheaper than adjacent councils. Therefore, an increase from £4 per session to £5 per session is proposed, however, those paying by direct debit will receive a discount and it is further proposed that More members should receive a 20% discount on these activities.

The Pricing Policy remains largely unchanged, however, there is one recommendation; to provide the Head of Service flexibility in dealing with bookings from National Governing Bodies. The recommendation, if approved, will allow the Head of Service to authorise a discretionary discount of up to

50% off the standard rate if the programmes/activities are not for profit and contribute to Council's Leisure Strategy and Community Plan.

A Section 75 Screening Form has been completed and is **enclosed**, and an EQIA is not required.

RECOMMENDATION: that approval is given for the 2020/2021 Leisure Pricing, Pricing Policy and Revised Section 75 Screening Form.

Prepared by: Janine Beazley, Leisure Grants and Special Projects Officer

Agreed by: Matt McDowell, Head of Leisure

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

3.8 PK/PG/001 PLAYPARK UPDATE

Members are reminded that following the merger of the two councils, the Property Services team undertook an audit of play park provision across the Borough followed by a workshop and as result it was agreed in 2016 to carry out works to a number of play parks.

At that point, there were 34 play parks which varied in age, scale and condition. Based on the audit the 10 highest ranking play parks requiring works were identified as:

1. Rathcoole, People's Park (part of Rathcoole Leisure Park)
2. Erskine & Rashee
3. Jordanstown Lough Shore
4. Kings Park
5. Mossley
6. Rathcoole, The Diamond
7. Burns Memorial, Crumlin
8. William Morrison, Mallusk
9. Monkstown
10. Muckamore

Item 1. Rathcoole People's Park

It was agreed that due to the scale of refurbishment work involved at this site, full replacement may be a feasible option. It was subsequently agreed that the play park would undergo an extensive refurbishment and this is almost completed.

Total investment of £417,600.

Items 2-10

Works to items 2-10 play parks have been completed at a total cost of £116,145.

Glengormley Urban DEA

It was also agreed at that point that as there were only 2 play parks in the Glengormley Urban DEA and no land owned by Council suitable for use, that potential sites should be investigated and further development at Lilian Bland Park was approved. The refurbishment of the play park at Lilian Bland is now completed and the Mayor has officially opened it.

Total investment of £452,400.

Inclusive Equipment

Following completion of an access audit of council facilities in 2017, which included play parks, a range of components including; entrances, paths, surfaces, ramps, steps and a range of accessible equipment were identified as being required.

The play parks at V36 and Antrim Lough Shore Park both contain accessible equipment (and wheelchair swings). The recently completed Lilian Bland play park and the soon to be completed Rathcoole play park also include

both accessible equipment and wheelchair swings. Of the remaining 30 play parks, the correct mix of equipment was assessed as being in place in 5 with approval given for additional accessible equipment to be installed in the remaining 25. In addition, accessibility modifications were approved including; improved signage, disabled parking and associated markings, dropped kerbing, contrasting visual aids and path gradients etc.

Wheelchair Accessible Swings were also approved for Burns Memorial (Airport) Sixmilewater Park (Ballyclare), John Street Play Park (Dunsilly) and Lough Shore Park (Three Mile Water). These are in addition to the 4 referred to above and this means that each DEA has a play park containing a wheelchair accessible swing as well as other items of accessible equipment.

The approved budget for investing in inclusive equipment, including wheelchair accessible swings and accessibility modifications to play parks was £386,000.

In addition to land being required for a play park in the Glengormley DEA (Hightown) both Parkgate and Mallusk also require suitable sites for the development of play parks as reported to Operations Committee.

RECOMMENDATION: that a further review is carried out and reported to Operations Committee in due course.

Prepared by: Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

4 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

4.1 EH/EHS/CP/004 TOBACCO TEST PURCHASE EXERCISE (Quarter 3)

Members are reminded that Councils in Northern Ireland have a statutory duty to enforce the legislation relating to the sale of certain age-restricted products, such as cigarettes and tobacco products. The Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 makes it an offence to supply any cigarettes or tobacco products to any person under the age of 18.

The Public Health Agency funds the employment of Tobacco Control Officers (TCO) who work on behalf of District Councils in Northern Ireland to ensure compliance with tobacco control legislation.

During the year each TCO is required to carry out a minimum of 50 visits to tobacco retailers to carry out a test purchase in order to check compliance with age restricted sale legislation. A test purchase exercise for the sale of tobacco products was carried out in October 2019.

Environmental Health Officers, accompanied by a young person aged under 18 who attempted to purchase tobacco products, visited fifteen retailers in the Borough. No sales were made in any of the retailers visited, therefore both the businesses and customer service staff involved demonstrated 100% compliance with the legislative requirements.

This is the second test purchase exercise carried out in 2019 in which no sales have been made therefore demonstrating a consistent level of compliance across the tobacco retail premises within the Borough. Environmental Health staff will continue with the programme of advisory visits that have secured this level of compliance and further test purchase exercises are planned for later in the year.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Colin Kelly, Environmental Health Manager (Commercial)

Agreed by: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

4.2 EH/EHS/LR/6 PRIVATE TENANCY UPDATE REPORT

Environmental Health is responsible for enforcing much of the legislation surrounding the private rented sector and can take enforcement action against landlords who fail to comply.

Landlords have a number of legal obligations to their tenants. These are set down in the legislation that governs the Private Rented Sector in Northern Ireland, namely the Private Tenancies (NI) Order 2006, The Rent (NI) Order 1978 and the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011.

Information in Landlords' legal obligations is set out below for Members' convenience. If further information or clarification is required Officers from the Environmental Health team can assist.

Landlord Registration

- All private landlords must register with the Department for Communities (DFC) Landlord Registration Scheme.
- Registration lasts for 3 years, and landlords must re-register after each three-year period.
- It costs £80, but if landlords register online it is £70.
- Landlords can register online at www.nidirect.gov.uk/landlord

If a landlord fails to register their property or provides false information they could face a fine up to £500 or be prosecuted in court, where they could be fined up to £2,500.

Tenancy Deposit Scheme

Any deposit taken by a landlord from 1 April 2013 must be protected in an approved Tenancy Deposit Scheme within 14 days and a tenant must be informed that their deposit has been secured within 28 days.

If landlords do not protect the deposit, or comply with the requirements of the deposit scheme, they could face a fine (up to three times the value of the deposit) or be prosecuted in court, where they could be fined up to £20,000.

The scheme also makes it illegal for a landlord or agent to take a deposit in any other form than money – all deposits must be monetary. The fine for taking a deposit in any other form can be up to £500 or a fine in court of up to £2,500.

Property Inspections

If a tenant living in a private rented property is concerned that it is in disrepair, or suspect the property is unfit to live in, they can contact Environmental Health to arrange an inspection.

An inspection of the property will be carried out, and if necessary one or more of the following notices may be issued:

- A Statutory Nuisance Abatement Notice - if the disrepair is causing conditions that have an impact on health, for example, through damp or dry rot. This can entitle the landlord to a repair grant from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.
- A Notice of Unfitness - if the property is unfit for habitation.
- A Notice of Disrepair - if repair works are necessary, the landlord is given a specific time frame for repairs to be carried out (this notice may only be issued if the property meets the fitness standard).

Pre-1945 Properties Fitness Inspections

Under the Private Tenancies (NI) Order 2006, the landlord of a private tenancy commencing after 1 April 2007 with a property which was built before 1 January 1945 must have a fitness inspection carried out by Environmental Health unless the following exemptions apply:

- The landlord owns and live in the house i.e., has a lodger but also lives in the property;
- The tenancy began before the Private Tenancies (NI) Order 2006 came into force;
- The house was built after 1 January 1945;
- A renovation grant for the house has been paid by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (this only applies for a period of ten years from the date of the grant);
- An HMO grant has been paid by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (this only applies for a period of 10 years from the date of the grant);
- It is currently registered as a House in Multiple Occupation;
- It was formerly let under a protected or statutory tenancy where a regulated rent certificate has been issued (this only applies for a period of ten years from the date of the certificate).

Any property found to be unfit is subject to rent control.

Harassment and Unlawful Eviction

A private tenant can only be forced to leave their home if a court of law has issued a court order.

Environmental Health can:

- Provide advice to landlords and tenants;
- Investigate complaints of harassment and unlawful eviction;
- Prosecute landlords who have harassed or illegally evicted their tenants.

Harassment

Harassment covers any action taken by a landlord, or someone acting on their behalf, to make a tenant leave their home.

Examples include:

- Interfering with gas, water and electricity supplies;
- Making threats and instructing a tenant to leave;
- Entering the property without consent;
- Refusing to carry out repairs;
- Making frequent unannounced visits, especially late at night.

Unlawful Eviction

This occurs when a landlord, or any person acting for them, forces or attempts to force a tenant from their home without following the proper legal procedures.

Examples include:

- Changing the locks to a property when a tenant is not at home;
- Physically throwing a tenant out;
- Stopping a tenant from getting into part or their entire home.

If a landlord wants a tenant to leave, they must provide a 'Notice to Quit', even if there is no tenancy agreement.

The following timescales for Notices to Quit apply, regardless of what the tenancy agreement states:

- If the tenancy lasted for less than 5 years, you must receive 4 weeks' notice to leave.
- If the tenancy lasted for more than 5 years but less than 10 years, you must receive 8 weeks' notice to leave.
- If the tenancy lasted for more than 10 years, you must receive 12 weeks' notice to leave.

The Notice to Quit should be in writing and both the landlord and tenant should keep a copy.

If the tenant does not leave after the notice has run out, the landlord can apply for a court order from a Magistrates' Court.

However, it is an offence to evict a tenant without getting a court order, even if the Notice to Quit has expired.

Rent Books

A landlord must provide their tenants with a rent book. This must be provided free of charge, within 28 days of a tenancy beginning and must include the

landlord's name, telephone number, address and details of rent and rates charged.

Energy Performance Certificate

Landlords must have a valid Energy Performance Certificate for any property they are letting out. This certificate should be available for any potential tenants to view when they visit the property and must be provided to tenants once they move in.

Gas Safety Measures

Landlords are legally required to have all gas appliances and gas heating systems checked annually by a Gas Safe Registered engineer and to provide a Gas Safety Certificate to their tenants.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 was introduced on 1 April 2019.

Under this new piece of legislation, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council must license any property which is rented to 3 or more people from different families.

This new law gives Council enhanced powers to regulate shared properties to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of tenants through the ability to put specific conditions on a licence, and landlords must have a range of policies in place e.g. an antisocial behaviour plan, to help deal with any issues which arise from the property.

The Northern Ireland HMO Unit, based in Belfast City Council, manages the administration and implementation of the Act regionally. Their contact details are as follows:

- Email nihmo@belfastcity.gov.uk
- Telephone 028 9027 0428
- www.belfastcity.gov.uk/nihmo

After the Northern Ireland HMO Unit receives a complete application they will carry out inspections to assess whether the living accommodation is suitable for occupation as an HMO and if the applicant is a fit and proper person, and submit a report to Councillors to consider.

Each local Council decides on the licence applications for their own electoral area. They will consider the recommendations from the Northern Ireland HMO Unit and any objections received and they may grant the licence, grant with conditions or refuse it on a number of grounds including:

- The property would breach planning control if being rented as a HMO;

- Granting the licence would result in or contribute to over provision of HMOs in the area;
- General HMO management arrangements are not satisfactory;
- The property is not fit for occupation as a HMO or;
- The owner, and any managing agents, are not fit and proper persons.

Fees

The HMO licence application cost depends on the number of people living in the property. It is set at £37 per person living in the property per year and it is possible to apply for a licence for up to 5 years.

There is also a charge to vary the licence or to add more occupants after the initial application.

All fees and charges were reported to Council in March 2019.

Training for Elected Members

As part of the Transfer agreement, the Northern Ireland HMO Unit will provide Training for new Councillors.

This information is summarised in the **enclosed** leaflets and further advice and information can be obtained from Environmental Health on 028 90340161 or envhealth@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

4.3 EH/PHWB/012 LONELINESS NETWORK

Members are reminded that the Antrim and Newtownabbey Loneliness Network was launched on 24 June 2019. The keynote speaker at the launch was Fiona Murphy, Campaigns Manager for the Campaign to End Loneliness in Northern Ireland.

The Network is Chaired by Valerie Adams, Independent Member of the Police and Community Safety Partnership and Lead on the Age Sector Platform for Loneliness and Digital Isolation. Other members of the Network Steering Group include:

- Northern Health and Social Care Trust
- Red Cross
- Age Northern Ireland

Wendy Brolly, Environmental Health Manager (Health and Wellbeing), represents the Council on the Steering Group.

Since its launch, the Network has met on two occasions with attendees from a wide range of statutory, community and voluntary groups as well as local businesses. The network is developing an action plan to address loneliness in the Borough.

Following the work in Antrim and Newtownabbey, Wendy Brolly was invited to make a presentation to the Campaign to End Loneliness Seminar in the Europa Hotel, Belfast on Friday 27 September 2019. A copy of the agenda for this event is **enclosed**. Sinéad Bradley, MLA, chaired the event and the theme of the seminar was "Loneliness in Northern Ireland - What have we learnt so far?"

The seminar was attended by senior citizens groups, Northern Health and Social Care Trust, Libraries Northern Ireland and the Active Aging Policy for Department for Communities.

Other presentations at the seminar included:

- Carol Hayden, National Development Team for Inclusion
- Owen Fenton, Community Fund
- Dr Paschal McKeown, Age NI
- Eamon Quinn, Engage with Age
- Mandy Cowden, CLARE (Creative Local Action Responses and Engagement) Project
- Elma Greer, Belfast Health Development Unit
- Lindsay Armstrong, Volunteer Now
- Robyn Cree, Red Cross and
- Olujoke Fakoya, Queen's University, Belfast

Wendy's presentation included information and photos from the launch, feedback comments from the delegates, key themes from the roundtable

discussions at the launch and the next steps for the network.

The seminar provided the opportunity to highlight the Council's role in the network.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operation

4.4 EH/PHWB/12 AGE FRIENDLY

Members are reminded that Council is applying to join the World Health Organisation Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC). The application process requires a letter from the Mayor showing commitment to the Network cycle of continual improvement.

As part of Positive Ageing Month the letter from the Mayor was signed at a Tea Dance in The Old Courthouse, Antrim on Wednesday 9 October. Department for Communities are responsible for implementation of the Northern Ireland Executive Active Ageing Strategy 2016-21, which has as its vision "Northern Ireland being an Age Friendly region." Antrim and Newtownabbey is the first Council to apply to the Global Network since the new Northern Ireland Regional Age Friendly Network was established in December 2018. In recognition of this Tracey Johnston, Head of Active Ageing Policy and Martin Walker, Active Ageing Policy, Department for Communities and Dr Andrew Gamble, Health and Social Wellbeing Senior Officer, Public Health Agency attended the letter signing event.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Wendy Brolly, Environmental Health Manager (Health and Wellbeing)

Agreed by: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operation

4.5 WM/WG/2 WINTER OPERATIONS PLAN

A Winter Operations Plan is in place to assist staff in delivering Council services as safely and efficiently as possible during the winter months. The Plan also includes provision for gritting services at all Council facilities and designated areas like town centres and car parks as well as the delivery of the waste collection services during adverse weather, and snow clearance operations.

The Plan is reviewed every year and as winter approaches, it was deemed prudent to advise Members of its provisions. A copy of the current Plan is enclosed together with maps showing town centre areas which are gritted through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department for Infrastructure, Roads. The MOU was agreed in 2015 and through it, Council has undertaken to carry out the gritting / snow clearance during prolonged periods of inclement weather and the Department pays an annual service fee of £2,358.

The Plan outlines the notification procedure for gritting operations which will be activated if the designated officer believes there is a strong possibility of ice occurring based on Met Office warnings and media weather reports.

The procedure takes into account micro climatic differences across the Borough, for example, areas may be gritted in Glengormley due to predicted sub-zero temperatures but there will be no requirement to do so in another area as the temperature is above freezing.

The Plan aims to have Council facilities gritted before staff arrive at work and the main town centres to be completed before shops and businesses open at 9am, although Members should be aware that gritting operations cannot take place during periods of heavy rain or snow.

The Plan also addresses the possible impact of adverse weather on the waste collection services. In the event of severe weather, road conditions are assessed and operations revised to reflect the increased risks to staff and public safety. It should be noted however that service disruptions are rare.

During periods of heavy snow fall, clearance operations are managed by a dedicated management team chaired by the Director of Operations. The removal of snow is dependant of the availability of resources although during heavy snow events, the street cleansing services may be suspended and staff re-allocated to clearance operations if deemed safe to do so.

All actions resulting from the Plan are passed to the Communications and Customers Services teams to ensure that Elected Members and the public are kept fully informed of Council operations.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Michael Lavery, Head of Waste Management and Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

4.6 WM/WM/37 REPAIR CAFÉ UPDATE

Members will be aware that Officers have helped facilitate the development of a local Repair Café, an independent volunteer run project, which will periodically provide repair events to local communities across the Borough.

The ethos of a Repair Café is all about repairing things in a relaxed and informal way and aims to have both environmental and social benefits. Organisers are seeking to create an enjoyable experience for both the volunteers and the attendees, rather than a transactional service. Attendees will be able to connect over a cup of tea and a bun, while the fixers try to bring new life to the items in need of repair. If successful they will see their possessions repaired and once again appreciate their value.

An Information Evening for prospective volunteers (skilled people to carry out the repairs) was held on Saturday 10 September and over 45 people signed up from across the Borough. This was followed by a mock event held on 12 October in Ballyeaston Village to allow the group to trial their processes and work out any issues. The event was successful and as a result the official launch of the Repair Café will be held on Saturday 16 November from 10.00am to 1.00pm in Six Mile Leisure Centre, Ballyclare. The Mayor will officially launch the Repair Cafe and Members will be invited to attend.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Lynsey Daly, Waste Strategy and Contracts Manager

Agreed by: Michael Laverty, Head of Waste Management

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

4.7 WM/WM/40 CONSULTATION ON THE WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Department of Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is undertaking a consultation process for a Waste Management Plan for Northern Ireland (WMPNI). A Plan is required under the European Union revised Waste Framework Directive (rWFD), which has been transposed into UK legislation.

DAERA has stated that it is not the intention of the Waste Management Plan to introduce new policies or to change the landscape of how waste is managed in Northern Ireland. Its core aim is to bring current waste management policies under the umbrella of one national plan.

The plan also does not introduce new waste management measures. The purpose of the consultation, therefore, is to seek views on whether the plan, when combined with current Waste Planning Policy, will fulfil the obligations of the rWFD, as far as Northern Ireland is concerned. A failure to comply with the obligations of the rWFD could result in infraction proceedings against the UK, and this is not dependant on whether the UK has exited the European Union.

As a result the consultation seeks views on a single question:

Will the Waste Management Plan for Northern Ireland (WMPNI), including its constituent parts (detailed on page 5 of the WMPNI), when combined with the location specific guidance in the waste planning policy - meet the requirements of Article 28 of the revised Waste Framework Directive and the additional requirements as detailed in Schedule 3 to the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (see Appendix 1)? If not, what else is, in your view, needed?

A copy of the consultation is **enclosed** and can be found on DAERA's website at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/Waste-Management-Plan-for-Northern-Ireland>

Officers propose to present draft response to the consultation at the December 2019 Operations Committee.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Michael Laverty, Head of Waste Management

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

4.8 WM/WM/37 CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRIDE AWARDS

The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) Pride Awards are the leading regional PR awards which recognise the outstanding work being delivered across the UK. The Waste Management and Communication teams submitted three applications for the Awards for the very successful and innovative social media campaign that targeted increased recycling through a #irecyclerright campaign.

As previously reported to Committee, the #irecyclerright campaign used social media influencers to produce videos and post awareness messages to encourage greater recycling and as a result there was a significant increase in the collection rates for both food waste and dry recyclables. The cost of the campaign was funded through grant support from DAERA.

Despite a record number of entries and intense competition for the Awards, Council won a Gold and two Silvers in the three categories entered.

- Best Use of Social Media – Gold
- Best Use of Content – Silver
- Best Use of Influencer Relations - Silver

Judges commented on the success of the campaign and how it was clear that the use of social media was being used as best practice. Officers are considering options for further social media campaign in 2020.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Lynsey Daly, Waste Strategy and Contract Manager

Agreed by: Michael Laverty, Head of Waste Management

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

4.9 PK/GEN/030 BRITAIN IN BLOOM

The Mayor and community representatives from Randalstown and Antrim, attended the recent prestigious Britain in Bloom Awards at RHS Lindley Hall in Westminster, London. The Awards recognise those cities, towns, villages and housing areas across the UK who go the extra mile to create well maintained, clean and beautiful communities in which to live and work.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) judges visited both towns in August 2019. As a result of the judges' assessment and the demonstrated community involvement and environmental commitment, both towns were presented with awards. Antrim received a Silver Gilt in the Town category, whilst Randalstown received a Gold Award in the Small Town category.

This is a significant achievement for the Borough, given that more than 70 entries were submitted from across the UK.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Elaine Upton, Countryside and Physical Activity Development Manager

Agreed by: Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks

Approved by: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations