



3 June 2026

Committee Chair: Councillor E McLaughlin

Committee Vice-Chair: Alderman L Clarke

Committee Members: Aldermen – P Bradley and J Smyth

Councillors – M Cooper, S Flanagan, R Foster, J Gilmour,
N Kelly, L Kirkpatrick, AM Logue, A McAuley, V McWilliam,
L O'Hagan and S Ward

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Operations Committee will be held in **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Monday 8 June 2026 at 6.30 pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Baker".

Richard Baker, GM MSc
Chief Executive, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

PLEASE NOTE: Refreshments will be available in the Café from 5.20

For any queries, please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 3.1 Food Service Delivery Plan 2026-27
- 3.2 Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan 2026-27
- 3.3 Product Regulation: New Product Safety, Market Surveillance and Enforcement Consultations
- 3.4 Consultation on the Fire Safety of Domestic Upholstered Furniture
- 3.5 Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Consultation on Proposed Animal Welfare Policy Reforms in Northern Ireland
- 3.6 Home Accident Prevention – Occupational Therapy Service Level Agreement
- 3.7 Application for the Grant of an Entertainment Licence – Tweedies Inn, 11-13 Main Street, Parkgate, BT39 0DG
- 3.8 From Waste to Worth – Waste Prevention Consultation Response
- 3.9 Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group Minutes
- 3.10 Application for the Renewal of Premises for Civil Marriages / Civil Partnership Ceremonies
- 3.11 Horticultural Grant Aid Programme
- 3.12 Trustees of Ballynure Angling Club – Fishing Rights
- 3.13 Lands at Toome – Lease Renewal
- 3.14 Proposed CCTV Installations Based on Sites Experiencing High Levels of Anti-Social Behaviour, Vandalism and Associated Repair Costs
- 3.15 Business Plan 2025/26, Performance Reporting Template - Quarter 4

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

- 4.1 Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Animal Welfare Report 2024

4.2 Food Waste Collection Service Update

4.3 PEACEPLUS Programme – 8 June 2026

4.4 Correspondence from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs – Advisory Letter for Reas Wood

4.5 Energy Projects Update

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 arc21 Joint Committee Report

6.2 Framework for the Provision of Fire Alarm Maintenance - Further Competition 1

6.3 Planning Application Submitted Relating to Council Land at Farnley Carpark, Glengormley

REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY 8 JUNE 2026

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 EH/EHS/018 FOOD SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2026-27

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Food Service Delivery Plan 2026-2027.

2. Key Issues

The Council is required to produce an annual plan showing how it intends to fulfil its statutory duties and deliver Food Control services, a copy is included for Members information (enclosed). A review of the Food Service Delivery Plan for 2025-2026 has been undertaken and is also included for Members information (enclosed).

The Plan sets out how Environmental Health will address both Council's statutory obligations.

3. Summary

Environmental Health has a key role in securing the safety of food processed, manufactured etc. in the Borough. The plan's key focus is to demonstrate how the Council will meet its statutory obligations and duties related to food safety for the year 2026-2027.

The Food Safety Service Delivery Plan outlines key objectives for the Food Safety section including:

- I. the implementation of a thorough inspection regime;
- II. strategies for education and enforcement;
- III. a detailed approach to achieving these objectives within the current resource levels.

4. Financial Implications

The 2026/27 budget includes financial provision to deliver the Food Service Delivery Plan.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Food Service Delivery Plan 2026-2027 be approved.

Prepared by: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

3.2 EH/EHS/011 HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2026-27

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Health and Safety Delivery Plan 2026-2027.

2. Key Issues

Members are reminded that under Article 20 of the Health and Safety at Work Northern Ireland Order 1978 Council has to set out a planned Health and Safety activity programme on an annual basis.

A copy of the Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan 2026-2027 (**enclosed**) and the Review of the Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan for 2025-2026 (**enclosed**) are included for Members information.

3. Summary

Environmental Health plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety of employees and the public in business workplaces for which Council has statutory responsibility. The primary aim of the plan is to outline how Council will meet its statutory obligations and duties related to Health and Safety at work for the year 2026/2027.

The Health and Safety Service Plan details key objectives for the Health and Safety section including:

- I. the implementation of a comprehensive inspection regime;
- II. strategies for education and enforcement;
- III. a detailed approach to achieving these objectives within the current resource levels.

4. Financial Implications

The 2026/2027 budget includes financial provision to deliver the Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan 2026-2027 be approved.

Prepared by: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

3.3 EH/EHS/CP/002 PRODUCT REGULATION: NEW PRODUCT SAFETY, MARKET SURVEILLANCE AND ENFORCEMENT CONSULTATIONS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for a Council response on two linked consultations:

- **Product Regulation: The UK's new product safety framework consultation**
- **Product Regulation: Market surveillance and enforcement framework consultation**

2. Background

The UK Government began a Product Safety Review in 2019, with outcomes reflected in the Product Regulation and Metrology Act 2025, which received Royal Assent in July 2025.

The current product safety framework is complex and highly technical, comprising around 150 pieces of legislation. It is largely based on the Consumer Protection Act 1987 and the General Product Safety Regulations 2005, which in Northern Ireland have been updated through Regulation (EU) 2023/988 on General Product Safety.

However, the regulatory system has not kept pace with significant changes in technology and consumer purchasing behaviour, particularly the rapid growth of online retail. In March 2024, online sales accounted for 25% of all UK retail sales, compared to 10% a decade ago. This shift presents increasing challenges for enforcement authorities in identifying and removing unsafe products from the market, particularly where goods are sold cross-border or via international online platforms.

3. Key Issues

The UK Government has launched two linked consultations proposing significant reform of the product safety, market surveillance and enforcement framework. The existing system is widely recognised as complex, fragmented, and increasingly difficult to apply consistently across different product types and enforcement regimes.

To address these issues, the UK government has launched two consultations:

- a) Product Regulation: The UK's new product safety framework

Details of the consultation can be found at;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/product-regulation-the-uks-new-product-safety-framework/the-uks-new-product-safety-framework>

This consultation sets out proposals for a reformed product safety framework under the following main themes:

- Getting the basics right
- Accountability throughout the supply chain
- A new approach to product information
- Supporting enforcement activity
- Building on the new foundations: Introducing additional tools to address higher-risk products and enabling further reform of sector-specific regulations where required.

Officers support the overall direction of these proposals, particularly the focus on strengthening supply chain accountability, clarifying responsibilities, and improving cooperation in enforcement activity.

However, the consultation responses, highlight that careful consideration is required in relation to Northern Ireland's unique regulatory position, where EU product safety legislation (including Regulation (EU) 2023/988) continues to apply. There is a risk that divergence in definitions or enforcement expectations could create practical difficulties for both businesses and enforcement authorities.

b) Product regulation: market surveillance and enforcement framework

Details of the consultation can be found at;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/product-regulation-market-surveillance-and-enforcement-framework>

This consultation seeks to modernise enforcement arrangements by:

- Simplify and consolidate enforcement powers to create a comprehensive, more consistent, and effective regulatory framework.
- Expanding civil sanction options by introducing monetary penalties to provide alternatives to criminal prosecution.
- Address enforcement challenges posed by online and international supply chains.
- Explore whether cost recovery should form part of the enforcement toolkit and if so, for what types of activities.
- Allow enhanced information sharing between relevant authorities, establishing clear statutory powers to facilitate the secure and effective exchange of data for the purposes of product regulation, safety, and compliance.

Officers commend the principle of consolidating enforcement powers into a single coherent framework. The current regime is fragmented, with multiple legislative instruments leading to inconsistency, complexity and operational uncertainty.

A single enforcement toolkit would:

- Improve consistency and transparency
- reduce administrative burden on enforcement officers
- increase confidence in enforcement decision-making
- support more proportionate and effective enforcement outcomes

However, it is noted that any consolidated framework must operate effectively within Northern Ireland's dual regulatory environment and must not weaken existing enforcement capability.

There are also current differences between enforcement powers under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and the Market Surveillance (Northern Ireland) Regulations and aligning or consolidating these powers would improve clarity and operational effectiveness.

Drafted responses (enclosed) are included for Members approval.

4. Summary

The UK Government has launched two consultations to reform the product safety, market surveillance and enforcement framework, which is widely recognised as complex and in need of modernisation.

The proposed reforms aim to simplify and consolidate legislation, strengthen enforcement powers, and improve the ability to address unsafe products, particularly in relation to online and cross-border trade.

The draft responses support the principle of reform and the development of a more consistent and coherent regulatory framework. However, it is essential that any new arrangements properly reflect the distinct legal position of Northern Ireland and do not reduce existing enforcement effectiveness.

The importance of maintaining alignment with Great Britain where possible, while avoiding unnecessary regulatory divergence that could create uncertainty for businesses and enforcement bodies, has also been highlighted.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft consultation responses be approved.

Prepared by: Gareth Thompson, Environmental Health Manager (Health and Safety and Consumer Protection)

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

3.4 EH/EHS/CP/002 CONSULTATION ON THE FIRE SAFETY OF DOMESTIC UPHOLSTERED FURNITURE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for a Council response on a Fire and Furnishing Consultation.

2. Background

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 were introduced following a significant rise in fatal domestic fires involving upholstered furniture during the 1960s–1980s, when smoking materials were a major ignition source.

The Regulations introduced mandatory ignition resistance testing, including open-flame testing, alongside labelling requirements. These measures are widely recognised as having significantly reduced fire-related deaths.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), within the Department for Business and Trade, has launched a consultation on reforming the Regulations. The aim is to modernise fire safety requirements to reflect current domestic risks, modern furniture design, and updated scientific evidence, particularly around chemical flame retardants, while maintaining a high level of consumer protection.

The consultation builds on the “Smarter Regulation” review and a Government policy paper published on 22 January 2025. Details of the consultation can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/product-regulation-fire-safety-of-domestic-upholstered-furniture/the-fire-safety-of-domestic-upholstered-furniture>

3. Key Issues

While the 1988 Regulations have been effective in improving fire safety outcomes, Council recognises that elements of the framework are now outdated in the context of modern manufacturing practices, product design, and current domestic fire risks.

The consultation notes that most domestic fires involving upholstered furniture are more likely to start from slow, smouldering ignition sources (such as cigarettes) rather than large open flames. On this basis, it proposes focusing regulation more on how products perform in realistic fire conditions, rather than relying on prescriptive open-flame test methods.

Council supports this shift towards an outcomes-based approach, where the emphasis is on real-world fire performance rather than compliance with specific test procedures.

Council's key views within the consultation response are as follows:

- Supports the proposed shift away from open-flame testing due to concerns over chemical flame retardants, including potential human health and environmental impacts;
- Supports maintaining robust fire safety standards while reducing unnecessary use of chemical flame retardants where safe and appropriate;
- Highlights the importance of clear, detailed guidance to ensure consistent enforcement, regulatory certainty, and a level playing field;
- Supports the use of the General Product Safety Regulations for re-upholstered, repaired, and second-hand furniture, provided clear definitions and guidance are issued;
- Supports simplified labelling and documentation requirements where these reduce burden without compromising safety.

A draft response (**enclosed**) is included for Members approval.

4. Summary

The consultation proposes reform of the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 to modernise fire safety requirements for domestic upholstered furniture.

It is recognised that the overall direction of reform, particularly the move towards smoulder-based testing and an outcomes-based regulatory approach.

Officers support the continued use of the General Product Safety Regulations for second-hand, repaired, and re-upholstered furniture, provided that clear guidance is issued to ensure consistent application and enforcement.

Overall, Officers consider the proposals to be a proportionate and modernised approach to fire safety regulation, provided that clarity, consistency, and effective enforcement are maintained.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft consultation response be approved.

Prepared by: Gareth Thompson, Environmental Health Manager (Health and Safety and Consumer Protection)

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

3.5 EH/EHS/002 DEPARTMENT FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DAERA) CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY REFORMS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform members of a consultation by the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) on proposed Animal Welfare Reforms in Northern Ireland.

2. Background

The Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has launched a consultation seeking views on proposed changes to animal welfare policy across Northern Ireland. The consultation is aimed at stakeholders with an interest in animal welfare, including councils who hold statutory responsibilities for enforcement of dog control and companion animal welfare legislation.

Councils currently have statutory responsibilities under the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 in relation to non-farmed animals and under the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983. However, Councils have no current statutory role in relation to the regulation of rescue and rehoming organisations, pet shops, boarding kennels, home boarding, or cat ownership and microchipping.

The proposal outlines measures aimed at strengthening animal welfare protections for companion animals across four key policy areas:

- The regulation of rescue and rehoming organisations;
- An inflationary increase in dog licence fees;
- A ban on specific aversive training devices; and
- Strengthened microchipping requirements for dogs.

In addition, the consultation also includes a call for evidence to inform future decisions around the mandatory microchipping of pet cats.

The consultation is part of DAERA's wider Animal Welfare Pathway (May 2025), which sets out a programme of legislative reform across companion animal welfare, including dog breeding, rescue and rehoming regulation, and responsible ownership measures

Full details of the consultation, including all supporting documentation can be found at the following link;

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-proposed-animal-welfare-policy-reforms-northern-ireland>

3. Previous Decision of Council

DAERA has undertaken ongoing engagement with councils through a range of stakeholder forums, including the Northern Ireland Dogs Advisory Group (NIDAG), recognising councils' role as the primary enforcement authorities for dog control and non-farmed animal welfare legislation.

This engagement has consistently identified the need to modernise existing legislative frameworks to reflect current best practice, improve animal welfare outcomes, and respond effectively to emerging issues. At the same time, councils have highlighted concerns regarding the financial and operational pressures associated with increasing enforcement responsibilities, as well as the adequacy of existing funding arrangements.

The proposals form part of DAERA's wider "Animal Welfare Pathway" published in

May 2025, <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/animal-welfare-pathway-advancing-animal-welfare-northern-ireland-2025-27>

A copy of the draft consultation response is attached for Members information (enclosed).

4. Key Issues

Regulation of Rescue and Rehoming Organisations

Rescue and rehoming organisations provide an important service in animal welfare and rehoming. However, the sector currently operates without consistent statutory regulation or minimum standards.

While DAERA are responsible for the inspection and licensing of riding establishments, pet shops, animal boarding establishments, catteries and day care facilities, rescue and rehoming centres currently fall outside the scope of any licensing and inspection regime, therefore remaining unregulated.

DAERA proposes introducing a licensing regime to improve welfare standards, transparency, and accountability, aligned with other regulated animal establishments.

Key proposals include:

- Licensing requirement for organisations rehoming more than 5 animals annually, or caring for 8+ animals (or 5+ dogs)
- Compliance with minimum welfare standards based on Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH) guidance
- Inclusion on a public register

Council supports the principle of licensing but raises concerns regarding:

- The appropriateness of proposed thresholds
- Impact on small, volunteer-led and foster-based organisations
- Lack of clarity around foster arrangements, informal rescuers, and premises-based requirements
- Potential overlap with council kennel arrangements and contracted services

Council also considers that a proportionate, tiered approach is required to avoid unintended impacts on smaller organisations and to ensure enforceability.

Dog licence fees

Dog licensing has been in place in Northern Ireland since 1983 and is a key mechanism for promoting responsible dog ownership, supporting public safety, and enabling effective dog control services. Anyone who keeps a dog is required to hold a valid licence issued by Council.

The current fee structure was last reviewed in 2011 and has remained largely unchanged since then. Fees have not kept pace with inflation or the rising costs of service delivery. As a result, councils continue to subsidise dog control services through general rates, as income from licence fees does not cover the full cost of provision.

Current fees (unchanged since 2011)

- Single dog licence: £12.50
- Block licence: £32.00
- Concessionary licence: £5.00
- Over 65s: free licence for first/only dog
- Reduced concession may apply for those on income-related benefits or where a dog has been neutered

Proposed revised fees (DAERA inflationary increase)

- Single dog licence: £18.50
- Block licence: £47.50
- Concessionary licence: £7.50
- Over 65s: free licence for first/only dog retained

Council supports the principle of an inflationary increase to licence fees, recognising the need to ensure charges remain proportionate and reflective of the costs associated with enforcement and administration of the service. Council notes that current dog licence fees do not achieve full cost recovery for the delivery of dog control services, with a proportion of service costs continuing to be met through the district rate.

Information gathered through the Northern Ireland Dog Advisory Group (NIDAG) indicates that the estimated cost of delivering dog control services

across the 11 councils is approximately £5.46 million per annum. After accounting for income generated through dog licence fees, fixed penalty notices, kennelling fees and other service-related income, councils continue to incur a significant net cost in delivering the service.

The NIDAG analysis considered the potential impact of a £25 single dog licence fee. Based on 2024/25 licensing figures, such a fee would generate an estimated £3.31 million in income across Northern Ireland. While this would represent a substantial increase in income and move councils closer towards recovering the costs associated with service delivery, it would not, based on current expenditure levels, achieve full cost recovery across the sector.

However, Council further notes the following:

- Current fees remain below full cost recovery, with councils continuing to subsidise the service
- A significant proportion of licences (approximately 70%) are issued on a concessionary basis
- Consideration should be given to introducing a small administrative fee for all licences, including those currently issued free to over 65s (e.g. £2)
- Demand on dog control services continues to increase, alongside rising statutory and enforcement pressures, including those relating to XL Bully legislation
- Any uplift in income from the proposed increases would provide only a marginal improvement relative to overall service costs

While Council is broadly supportive of the proposed inflationary increases, it remains of the view that further consideration is required to ensure a more sustainable and equitable cost recovery model going forward.

Ban on specified aversive training devices

The consultation proposes banning the use of specific aversive training devices, including electric shock collars, choke collars and prong collars, on both dogs and cats. These devices are designed to deter unwanted behaviour through the use of discomfort or pain and are widely regarded as causing unnecessary suffering when misused.

Council fully supports the principle of prohibiting such devices on animal welfare grounds. However, the draft response highlights that enforcement of any ban will require appropriate supporting powers. In particular, consideration should be given to the introduction of Fixed Penalty Notices and seizure powers to ensure that enforcement can be carried out effectively and proportionately.

Council also notes that while the proposals focus on use, consideration should also be given to restrictions on the sale and supply of such devices in order to support the effectiveness of the legislation.

Council agree with the Department's proposal that electronic containment fences and spray collars would not be banned and acknowledge that these

present a lower risk of deliberate misuse or direct harm than e-collars, choke collars and prong collars.

Strengthening microchipping requirements for dogs

Microchipping was introduced under the Dogs (Licensing and Identification) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 to improve identification of dogs and owners, support enforcement, and help reunite lost dogs with their keepers. A valid dog licence requires the dog to be microchipped and registered on an approved database containing both owner and animal details.

Currently, puppies kept with their mother must be microchipped by six months of age, while those under breeding or block licences must be chipped by eight weeks. Dogs must also be microchipped before sale, transfer, or the issue of a licence. Microchipping can be carried out by a vet or trained individual, including council or kennel staff, and must be reported to the database within seven days. Owners are also required to keep their details up to date.

The Department proposes to:

- Make it an offence for dog owners not to update ownership details on microchip databases within a specified timeframe (i.e. 14 days);
- Require owners/keepers to declare breeder status to enable recording of breeder information; and
- Require all dogs to be microchipped by eight weeks of age.

While Council supports the intention of these changes, it raises a number of concerns. In particular, it notes that without Fixed Penalty Notices, enforcement would rely on prosecution, which is costly and disproportionate for minor breaches. It therefore suggests that Fixed Penalty options should be made available. It also considers the proposed 14 day timeframe for updating records to be too strict, suggesting 28 days would be more reasonable.

Council further highlights the need for better regulation and consolidation of microchip databases into a more centralised and easily searchable system. It also notes potential welfare concerns with the proposed eight-week microchipping requirement, especially for very small breeds where early implantation may not be appropriate due to veterinary risks. It recommends that any changes should be based on veterinary advice and developed in consultation with the Northern Ireland Veterinary Association.

Call for evidence on microchipping of pet cats

The consultation seeks views on whether mandatory microchipping of pet cats should be introduced in Northern Ireland. While cats are not currently required to be microchipped, DAERA is exploring whether such a requirement would improve welfare outcomes, particularly in relation to lost or stray animals.

Council recognises that mandatory microchipping could improve traceability and reunification rates. However, significant challenges are identified in relation to enforcement, given the free-roaming nature of cats and the practical difficulty in demonstrating non-compliance. There are also concerns regarding cost to owners, veterinary access, and the absence of a centralised database system.

The draft response also notes that councils may not be best placed to lead enforcement in this area and suggests that alternative delivery models could be considered.

5. Financial Implication

The implementation of the proposals is expected to have significant financial and resource implications for councils. These include increased staffing requirements, training costs, inspection activity, enforcement workload, and potential costs associated with animal seizure, kennelling, and veterinary care.

Additional pressures may also arise from the need for IT system development, maintenance of public registers, and increased administrative workload associated with licensing and compliance monitoring.

In the absence of additional and sustainable funding from DAERA, it is unlikely that councils will have sufficient capacity to fully implement and enforce the proposed changes. The Regulatory Impact Assessments provided by the Department are considered in detail within the draft consultation response.

6. Summary

Council recognises the need to modernise animal welfare legislation in Northern Ireland and broadly supports the policy intent of the proposals set out in the consultation. The reforms have the potential to improve welfare standards, strengthen responsible ownership, and enhance public confidence.

However, significant concerns remain regarding the practical and financial implications for councils, particularly in relation to the expansion of enforcement responsibilities without corresponding funding or resources. There is also a need for greater clarity around definitions, enforcement mechanisms, and proportionality in application.

Council therefore supports the principle of reform but emphasises that any new statutory duties must be accompanied by realistic implementation arrangements and appropriate financial support.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft consultation response be approved.

Prepared by: Mark Sloan, Deputy Head of Environmental Health

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

3.6 EH/PHWB/004 HOME ACCIDENT PREVENTION – OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Council's Home Accident Prevention Service and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT) Occupational Therapy Service.

2. Background

Since 2019, Council's Home Accident Prevention Service has been leading a unique initiative in partnership with the NHSCT Occupational Therapy Service. This programme, the only one of its kind delivered by a council in Northern Ireland, aims to improve efficiency in providing minor adaptations to clients' homes.

3. Key Issues

As part of the Home Safety Check, Council's Home Safety Officer assesses whether minor adaptations, such as handrails, grab rails, or stair rails, are required. The Officer selects appropriate adaptations from an approved list and refers them directly to the NHSCT Estates Team for installation, eliminating the need for an Occupational Therapy assessment in suitable cases.

Since the initiative began:

- 192 clients were eligible for referral to Occupational Therapy.
- 102 clients (53%) were referred directly to the NHSCT Estates Service for minor adaptations.
- The remaining 90 clients required interventions beyond the scope of the initiative and were referred for a full Occupational Therapy assessment.

A service user evaluation undertaken by the NHSCT Occupational Therapy Service found that 80% of handrails were fitted within three weeks of the Home Safety Check, which is a significant reduction in installation time compared to the traditional referrals that took up to six months. In addition, 100% of clients reported satisfaction with the service and indicated they would recommend it to others. The Trust has expressed its satisfaction with the positive feedback and the efforts of Council in delivering the initiative. Although the initiative has been successful since 2019, it has operated informally. A Service Level Agreement is now needed to formalise roles, clarify responsibilities, streamline referrals to ensure the long-term sustainability and accountability of the service.

The proposed Service Level Agreement (**enclosed**) formalises this initiative, with the overall aim of reducing waiting times and streamlining services for clients requiring minor adaptations.

The agreement also continues to allow the NHSCT Occupational Therapy Service to refer suitable clients to the Home Accident Prevention Officer for a Home Safety Check. The proposed SLA will be reviewed every three years.

The proposed Service Level Agreement has been reviewed and approved by the Council's Governance and Legal Services to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

4. Financial Implication

There are no additional costs to Council associated with delivery of the minor adaptation's initiative.

5. Summary

Due to the ongoing success of Council's Home Safety Officer providing minor adaptations in residents' homes, a Service Level Agreement is proposed to formalise the service.

The minor adaptations initiative has successfully enhanced service efficiency and client satisfaction. By enabling direct referrals for suitable cases, the program has reduced waiting times for home adaptations and streamlined the assessment process. Client feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and Council remains the only authority in Northern Ireland delivering this innovative approach in partnership with the NHSCT Occupational Therapy Service.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Service Level Agreement between the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and Council be approved.

Prepared by: James O'Kane, Environmental Health Manager

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

3.7 EH/EHS/LR/001 EL228 APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF AN ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE – TWEEDIES INN, 11-13 MAIN STREET, PARKGATE, BT39 0DG

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence, held by Aidan McAlinden for Tweedies Inn, 11-13 Main Street, Parkgate, BT39 0DG.

2. Introduction

An application has been received for the grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence for the following location

Licensee	Location of Premises	Type(s)and hours of entertainment	File Number	New Application or Renewal
Aidan McAlinden	Tweedies Inn, 11-13 Main Street, Parkgate, BT39 0DG	Dancing, Singing, Music, Other entertainment of like kind. Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence Monday – Sunday Midday – 01.00hrs Number of persons – no greater than 120	EL228	New Application

In line with the Council Protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, approved in December 2016, the application must be considered at the Operations Committee meeting.

Council can decide the following:

- i. Grant the licence;
- ii. Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- iii. Refuse the licence;
- iv. Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

If Council makes a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote will be taken.

3. Main Report

An application has been received for the grant of an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence for the above named location. In accordance with the Entertainment Licence Policy, Members approval is required before the licence can be granted.

Members should note that the premises previously held an entertainment licence until 2020. The licence was not renewed at the time following the restrictions imposed during the Covid pandemic.

This application has now been submitted by a new tenant of the premises, who also owns and manages another licensed premises within the Borough, which currently holds an entertainment licence.

4. Summary

An application for an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence has been received from Aidan McAlinden in relation to the Tweedies Inn, 11-13 Main Street, Parkgate. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members is needed on the granting of the licence.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that an Annual Indoor Entertainment Licence be granted to the applicant, Aidan McAlinden for Tweedies Inn, 11-13 Main Street, Parkgate with the following conditions:

- a) that all relevant licensing requirements are met.**
- b) that statutory and public consultees have no objections to the approval.**

Prepared by: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

3.8 WM/WM/040 FROM WASTE TO WORTH – WASTE PREVENTION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the draft response to the “From Waste to Worth” Waste Prevention Programme 2026 consultation by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

2. Background

As Members will be aware DAERA opened a consultation on the “From Waste to Worth” Waste Prevention Programme 2026 consultation which aims to reduce the generation of waste at its source, thereby conserving resources, minimising environmental impact, and supporting a transition to a circular economy.

There are 21 Actions set out in the Waste Prevention Programme and they include:

- Implementation of the Deposit Return Scheme from October 2027;
- Support WRAP in conducting an Absorbent Hygiene Products Collection study into the separation of AHP waste;
- Consideration of bans or levies on certain problematic product materials to tackle the problem of littering;
- Develop a waste prevention education programme with councils;
- Provide support for targeted projects focused on food waste prevention;
- Establish an annual Reuse and Repair Week to promote waste prevention across Northern Ireland.

While the publication of the draft Waste Prevention Programme is welcomed Officers highlight the concerns that there is a disconnect between with the overall Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland that was consulted on a few months ago. In addition, Officers would have concerns that the majority of the actions don't have specific timings and they are not quantifiable.

The draft consultation response has been developed in association with arc21 and other Northern Ireland councils. A copy is **included** for Members information.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft response to the “From Waste to Worth” Waste Prevention Programme 2026 consultation be approved.

Prepared and Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

3.9 PK/GEN/035/VOL5 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES SUB-GROUP MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the most recent Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 12 May 2026.

2. Summary

At the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting on 12 May 2026, Members considered a detailed report which provided a range of updates from the Parks section. The minutes of the meeting are **enclosed** for Members' consideration.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 12 May 2026 be approved.

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

3.10 PK/REG/018, PK/REG/011 APPLICATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES

1. Purpose

This report seeks Council approval for the renewal of place approvals for the Dunsilly Hotel and The Rabbit Hotel as venues authorised to host Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership ceremonies.

2. Background

In accordance with the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act 2004, Council is responsible for approving applications for temporary place approvals for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

As part of this process, a Notice of Interest must be displayed in a prominent location at the proposed venue for a period of three weeks to allow for any public objections to be submitted.

No objections were received during the public notice period. In addition, each of the premises has been formally inspected and deemed suitable to proceed with the approval process.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The venues were previously granted approval by Council in September 2023, following the successful completion of all required statutory procedures and assessments at that time.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Dunsilly Hotel and The Rabbit Hotel be re-approved as venues to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, and for the registration of Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

Prepared by: Paula Redpath, Registrar

Agreed by: Emma Thompson, Bereavement Services Manager and Paul Mawhinney Head of Parks

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

3.11 PK/GEN/223 HORTICULTURAL GRANT AID PROGRAMME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the 12 grant award recommendations set out within the 1st Call of the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme 2026-27.

2. Background

Members are reminded that Council previously approved the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme that offers grants of up to £1,500, fully funded, to support up to 20 local community groups in delivering horticultural projects on land accessible to the general public within the Borough.

Eligible applicants must be fully constituted community groups, schools, or sporting organisations based in the Borough.

Successful applications will demonstrate increased community involvement in planting activities and/or the purchase of horticultural materials and features.

3. Call 1 Applications 2026-27

A total of 12 applications were received during the first call for the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme, with 12 applications meeting the approved criteria. A comprehensive table outlining the 12 applications, including key details and corresponding recommendations, are **enclosed** for Members' information and consideration as part of the decision-making process. Members are reminded that funding is subject to satisfactory monitoring and evaluation.

4. Financial Position

The approved budget for the 2026-27 Horticultural Grant Aid Programme is £30,000. Based on the assessment outcomes and subject to Member approval of the recommended successful applicants, a total of £16,702 will be allocated in this round. This will leave a remaining budget of £13,298. A second call for applications will be issued shortly, with submissions to be assessed and presented for consideration at a future meeting of the Operations Committee.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that approval be granted for the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme applications, totalling £16,702 for 2026-27.

Prepared by: Anna Boyle, Funding Unit Manager and Nadine Campbell,
Parks Manager

Agreed by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance and Paul Mawhinney, Head of
Parks

Approved by: John Balmer, Director of Finance

3.12 PK/GEN/193, G/LEG/63/1 TRUSTEES OF BALLYNURE ANGLING CLUB – FISHING RIGHTS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members that the lease to the Trustees of Ballynure Angling Club in respect of the fishing rights along the Sixmilewater River within Sixmilewater Park be renewed for a further 10 year term on the same terms and conditions as previously approved, including an annual rent of £250 payable on 1 March each year (copy enclosed).

Council will then contract the Club to manage the fishing rights along Sixmilewater River for a fee of £200 per annum. The residual balance of £50 will be payable to Council on an annual basis.

2. Introduction/Background

The Council has previously granted fishing rights along the Sixmilewater River within Sixmilewater Park to the Trustees of Ballynure Angling Club, and the previous lease approved by Council was for a term of 10 years commencing on 1 March 2016.

A renewal of the lease on the same terms and conditions will provide continuity in the management and use of the fishing rights and will maintain the existing leasing arrangements previously approved by Council.

3. Previous Decision of Council

At the meeting of the Operations Committee held on 1 February 2016, it was agreed that the Trustees of Ballynure Angling Club be granted a new 10-year lease to commence from 1 March 2016 in the same terms and conditions as previously for an annual rent of £250.00 paid on 1 March each year.

At that same meeting, it was also agreed that the Trustees of Ballynure Angling Club be contracted for an annual fee of £200.00 to manage the fishing rights to the Sixmilewater River on Council owned land on behalf of the Council.

4. Key Issues

The previous lease term commenced on 1 March 2016 for a period of 10 years. Renewal of the lease is now recommended to regularise the continued occupation and management arrangements for the fishing rights.

It is proposed that the renewed lease be granted on the same terms and conditions as previously approved by Council, namely a term of 10 years at an annual rent of £250 payable on 1 March each year.

In addition, Council propose to contract the Club for an annual fee of £200 in respect of management of the fishing rights on Council owned land. Thus, leaving a balance of £50 payable to Council on an annual basis.

5. Summary

Officers are seeking Member approval to renew the lease for a further 10-year term on the same terms and conditions as the previous lease. The renewal of the lease will maintain continuity of the existing arrangements for the fishing rights at Sixmilewater Park.

Officers propose that the Club will pay Council an annual rent of £250 and will then be contracted by Council to manage the stretch of river for a fee of £200, leaving a balance of £50 to be paid to Council on an annual basis.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members approve the renewal of the lease to the Trustees of Ballynure Angling Club in respect of the fishing rights along the Sixmilewater River within Sixmilewater Park for a further 10-year term on the same terms and conditions as previously approved, including an annual rent of £250 payable on 1 March each year.

Council will then contract the Club to manage the fishing rights along Sixmilewater River for a fee of £200 per annum. The residual balance of £50 will be payable to Council on an annual basis.

Prepared by: Deirdre Nelson, Paralegal

Approved by: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer (Legal, Land, Governance and Policy)

3.13 PK/PG/008, G/LEG/69/30 LANDS AT TOOME – LEASE RENEWAL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members that approval be granted to officers to commence negotiations with the landlords in relation to the renewal of the lease for lands at Toome, comprising allotments, play area and car parking, for a further term of 20 years on the same terms and conditions as previously. (enclosed).

2. Introduction/Background

The Council leases lands at Toome, Co. Antrim. Under the terms of the lease, the land must be used for recreation and associated community use, so on the leased lands there are Council allotments, a play area and car parking.

The existing lease was for a term of 20 years from 1st March 2006. Although, the lease has expired, it is currently rolling over pending agreement of a renewal. Officers therefore require authority to engage with the landlords, the Diocese of Down and Connor Trustee, to regularise the Council's continued occupation and use of the lands.

3. Key Issues

Given the Council's ongoing use of the lands for allotments, play area and car parking, officers consider it appropriate to seek Member approval to commence negotiations with the landlords, the Diocese of Down and Connor Trustee, for the renewal of the lease to regularise the position and to secure continuity of occupation and use.

Officers therefore propose seeking a further 20-year lease on the same terms and conditions as previously agreed. The current rent for the lands is £5,000 per annum exclusive, however, the lease renewal will be subject to negotiation and to the terms ultimately agreed between the parties.

4. Summary

The Council occupies lands at Toome which is used for allotments, play area and car parking under a lease which was granted for a term of 20 years.

The lease commenced on 1st March 2006 and although it has expired, it is currently rolling over. The current rent is £5,000 per annum exclusive, and officers consider it appropriate to commence negotiations with the landlords, the Diocese of Down and Connor Trustee, with a view to securing a further 20-year lease on the same terms and conditions as previously.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members approve officers commencing negotiations with the landlords, the Diocese of Down and Connor Trustee, in relation to the renewal of the lease for lands at Toome, comprising allotments, play area and car parking, for a further term of 20 years on the same terms and conditions as previously, with all necessary legal documentation to be progressed in due course.

Prepared by: Deirdre Nelson, Paralegal

Approved by: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer (Legal, Land, Governance and Policy)

3.14 PBS/PS/013 PROPOSED CCTV INSTALLATIONS BASED ON SITES EXPERIENCING HIGH LEVELS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, VANDALISM AND ASSOCIATED REPAIR COSTS.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek members approval to install ‘stand-alone’ CCTV cameras at various locations within the Borough to reduce high levels of anti-social behaviour, vandalism and associated repair costs.

2. Introduction / Background

Over recent times Council sites have experienced varying degrees of anti-social behaviour, vandalism and associated repair costs. As these costs are covered by Council on an annual basis, Estate Services continually review available technology to ascertain what cost effective solutions are available to reduce expenditure.

Technology now exists where individual CCTV installations can record locally while also sending data to the cloud which is then accessed by the Mossley Mill CCTV suite. Images can then be viewed by CCTV operatives. There is no longer a need for cameras to be linked to Council’s network i.e. connected to buildings.

Such installations can be a single location (pole) with multiple camera heads to cover relevant areas.

3. Previous Decision of the Council

Members are reminded that in April 2026 Council approved the installation of stand-alone CCTV system at Neillsbrook Community Centre MUGA due to high levels of vandalism and associated repair costs.

4. Proposed CCTV Criteria for Installation

At present Estate Services manage the maintenance of the CCTV infrastructure in the borough and are aware of sites that are experiencing similar ASB related issues and costs on a continual basis.

To ensure that CCTV systems are installed in a structured and robust manner Estate Services propose that certain criteria must be met before a CCTV solution can be installed at any site.

Criteria

- | | |
|--|--|
| • High Levels of ASB | Site managers and PCSP to provide data |
| • High levels of vandalism | Estate Services to monitor |
| • Continual repair costs | Estate Services to monitor |
| • Annual repair cost comparison with CCTV installation costs | Estate Services to evaluate |

Estate Services will monitor these factors and assess when a CCTV installation would be a more effective use of Council money at Council sites. Estate Services will then install a new stand-alone CCTV solution with the agreement of the site manager.

Please note that Estate Services will also monitor annual vandalism costs at sites which have already had stand-alone CCTV installations to evaluate if the CCTV installation has had the desired effect i.e. a reduction in annual vandalism related costs. This will inform future decision making.

5. Finance

It is hoped that the reduction in vandalism related repair costs, at sites, will cover the costs of a stand-alone CCTV installation over a 4 year period. Installation costs are currently between £4K - £8K depending on the agreed number of camera heads on the single pole to cover relevant areas.

6. Governance

The Estate Services section have operational responsibility for CCTV, so the Operations Committee is the appropriate Committee to consider relevant CCTV operational matters.

7. Summary

Estate Services seek approval to install stand-alone CCTV systems at sites where it is more cost effective to complete such installations rather to continue to pay for expensive vandalism repair costs.

When any installation has reached this point Estate Services will bring a report to Council for noting so that members are aware of new CCTV installations.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be approved.

Prepared by: David Blair, Head of Estate Services

Agreed and Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

3.15 PT/CI/066 BUSINESS PLAN 2025/26, PERFORMANCE REPORTING TEMPLATE QUARTER 4

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members to approve the Business Plan 2025/26, Quarter 4 Performance Reporting Template for Estates and Recreation and Environmental Service and Sustainability.

2. Background

Members are reminded that Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 puts in place a framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services. Specifically, the duties in the Act relate to Section 84(1), 85(2) and 85(9) whereby the Council has a statutory duty to make arrangements to:

- Secure continuous improvement
- Secure achievement of its improvement objectives
- Exercise its functions so that any Departmental specified standards are met.

3. Previous Decision of Council

In June 2025 the Council approved a strategic performance framework as part of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26.

4. Business Planning

Business planning plays a vital role in the Council's performance management and delivery processes. It offers a more efficient and cohesive approach to monitoring and evaluating performance while improving overall visibility.

The purpose of the Directorate Business Plans is to:

- Demonstrate how each of the Directorates are supporting and achieving Council's priorities.
- Provide a clear sense of purpose of the Directorate and the challenges it faces.
- Illustrate how it is aligning its resources to meet the challenges ahead.
- Measure performance and hold ourselves to account to ensure we deliver for the Council and its residents.

Business Plans Quarter 4 Performance Reporting Templates for Estates and Recreation (**enclosed**) and Environmental Service and Sustainability Directorates 2025/26 are **enclosed** at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for approval.

5. Financial Position / Implications

As agreed, as part of the Council's rate setting process.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Business Plan 2025/26 Quarter 4 Performance Reporting Template for Estates and Recreation and Environmental Service and Sustainability be approved.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton, Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed and Approved by: Michael Lavery, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 EH/EHS/002 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS ANIMAL WELFARE REPORT 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update members on the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Annual Animal Welfare report 2024, published on 2 April 2026 and to highlight the key findings relating to animal welfare enforcement activity across Northern Ireland.

2. Background

Members are reminded that in Northern Ireland, animal welfare is governed by the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. Under this legislation, Councils are responsible for the investigation and enforcement of welfare concerns relating to non-farmed animals, including domestic pets, horses and donkeys.

Following a review of the implementation of the legislation by Councils in 2016, it was recommended that an annual animal welfare report be produced to monitor enforcement activity and provide consistency of reporting across all statutory agencies.

Since that time, nine annual reports have been published by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). The most recent report provides an overview of animal welfare enforcement activity undertaken during the reporting period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

The report highlights continued collaborative working between all NI Councils, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and DAERA in protecting animal welfare across Northern Ireland.

The Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 places a legal duty on any person responsible for an animal, whether permanently or temporarily, to ensure its welfare needs are met.

Enforcement responsibilities are divided between three statutory agencies:

- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs – farmed animals;
- Police Service of Northern Ireland – animal fighting, wild animals and animals on roads; and
- Councils – non-farmed animals, including domestic pets and equines.

A copy of the full report, including further detailed information about cases investigated by both DAERA and PSNI, can be found at the following link:

[Animal Welfare Service Delivery Statistical Bulletin 2024 0.PDF](#)

3. Key Issues

The report highlights the significant level of enforcement activity undertaken by Northern Ireland Councils Animal Welfare Officers during 2024 through the regional collaborative delivery model.

Key messages from the 2024 DAERA report include:

- 5,929 complaints were received across the 11 Councils;
- 9,612 visits were carried out by Animal Welfare Officers;
- Only 57 complaints were determined to be malicious or unfounded;
- 237 animals were voluntarily signed over to Councils;
- 200 Improvement Notices were issued, representing an increase on previous years;
- 116 seizure operations were undertaken;
- 189 animals were seized and taken into Northern Ireland Councils care.

The data demonstrates sustained enforcement activity, with an increase in visits, improvement notices and seizure operations compared to previous reporting periods.

In particular, the increase in Improvement Notices (from 173 in 2023 to 200 in 2024) and seizure operations (from 47 in 2023 to 116 in 2024) indicates a proactive and robust enforcement response by Councils.

The report also highlights significant enforcement outcomes through the courts.

During 2024:

- 65 prosecutions were initiated across all enforcement bodies;
- 44 prosecutions resulted in convictions;
- 21 prosecutions were taken by Northern Ireland Councils, with all resulting in convictions;
- Four Crown Court convictions resulted in prison sentences;
- Nine Magistrates' Court cases resulted in immediate imprisonment;
- 26 convictions resulted in disqualification or deprivation orders.

A particularly significant finding is the 100% conviction rate in Council led prosecutions, demonstrating the effectiveness of Council investigations and the evidential standards applied in enforcement cases.

This reflects the continued rigorous approach taken by Council Animal Welfare Officers in addressing serious welfare breaches.

4. Summary

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Annual Animal Welfare Report 2024 highlights strong enforcement activity across Northern Ireland, including 5,929 complaints investigated, 9,612 visits undertaken and increased formal enforcement action by Councils. The report demonstrates the continued effectiveness of Council Animal Welfare Officers in protecting non-farmed animals and reflects the success of the regional collaborative approach to animal welfare enforcement.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Mark Sloan, Deputy Head of Environmental Health

Agreed by: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing

Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environment Services and Sustainability

4.2 WM/WM/037/VOL3 FOOD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of the Food Waste Collection Service Trial.

2. Background

Members will be aware that as part of the funding received from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) for the harmonisation project, a food waste collection service trial is to be implemented. Officers are actively progressing the implementation of this trial in collaboration with key stakeholders, including third party waste companies, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and dedicated consultants.

3. Key Information

The introduction of a harmonised, source-separated weekly kerbside collection service enables Council to trial the separate food waste collection. The purpose of the trial is to monitor the yield of food waste collected separately in comparison to co-mingled green and food waste collections. Similar separate food waste collection services are mandatory for councils in England.

The trial will be implemented within a defined area of Newtownabbey comprising of approximately 1,000 households. The scale of rollout has been selected to allow for effective monitoring and evaluation to provide data on participation levels, capture rates and operational impacts. This will give Council the ability to monitor and review overall capture rates and look at the feasibility to extend to other areas of the Borough.

An area encompassing Blackrock/Aylesbury/Dermont has been identified for the trial and a map of the area is included for Members information (**enclosed**). This area has been selected based on key criteria including demographics, participation rates, and operational considerations such as route and crew management. The trial is scheduled to commence in mid-September 2026 and will operate for an initial 12-month period.

Households participating in the trial will be provided with the below to facilitate effective food waste separation, including:

- 23-litre outdoor food caddies;
- Kitchen (indoor) food caddies;
- Compostable caddy liners.

Officers continue to work closely with communications consultants, funded through DAERA, to ensure that a targeted and effective engagement campaign is delivered to participating households. It is anticipated that communications will include:

- An introductory leaflet and covering letter issued via direct mail to participating residents;
- An internal communications plan for operational and administrative staff, including frequently asked questions (FAQs) to support customer contact handling;
- A resident survey to gather feedback and inform ongoing evaluation of the trial.

The food waste collection trial will commence in September with approximately 1,000 households receiving a weekly food only kerbside collection alongside their wheelie box service. An extensive communication programme will advise residents receiving the service and Elected Members will receive copies of the information provided to residents with individual briefings for Airport DEA Members on request.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Leanne Smits, Waste Strategy and Sustainability Manager

Agreed and Approved by: Michael Laverty, Director of Environmental Services and Sustainability

4.3 CP/PP/012 PEACEPLUS PROGRAMME - 8 JUNE 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a progress update on the delivery of Programme 5, 'Our Active Borough'.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded that PEACEPLUS is a cross-border funding programme designed to support peace and prosperity across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. As part of the Council's PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan, Programme 5, 'Our Active Borough', is being delivered by the Estates and Recreation Directorate. This report provides a progress update on delivery.

3. Previous Decision of Council

At its meeting in June 2025, Committee noted the position in respect of Programme 5: 'Our Active Borough' and approved delegated authority for Officers to enter into a Service Level Agreement with the PEACEPLUS Partnership. Members also noted the outcome of the Section 75 Equality Screening and Rural Needs Screening processes.

4. Programme 5 Performance Update

Current delivery activity under Programme 5, 'Our Active Borough', is summarised across five project areas:

a) Mainstream Sport

- Club Engagement Workshops:

In February 2026, Council delivered an Autism in Sport workshop for local sports clubs at Mossley Mill. More than 60 coaches attended, with contributions from the IFA, Ulster GAA, Ulster Rugby and Autism NI. Planning is also under way for a further PEACEPLUS engagement workshop, provisionally scheduled for July 2026 at the Northern Ireland Centenary Stadium, with a focus on speed development and mechanics.

b) Alternative Sport

- Skate Activation Events:

Officers are progressing proposals for PEACEPLUS Skate Activation Events at V36 and Antrim Skate Park, subject to the new facility becoming operational. Procurement is under way for the delivery of eight events to 2028, with delivery expected to commence in August 2026. Each event is expected to attract more than 100 participants.

c) Recreational Activities

- Healthy Kids

In March 2026, Council invited all primary schools across the Borough to participate in the Healthy Kids Programme. The 11-week health and wellbeing initiative is being supported through PEACEPLUS, with 20 schools participating and approximately 700 children involved.

- Learn to Swim Programme

Following the successful free school swimming lessons pilot in 2025, a Phase 2 programme has been developed for the current academic year and offered to schools where 25% or more pupils are entitled to free school meals.

Twelve schools have been offered an eight-week programme of free swimming lessons, including transport, with 11 schools currently participating across Valley Leisure Centre, Sixmile Leisure Centre and Antrim Forum.

Approximately 300 pupils are currently participating in the programme.

d) Environmental Activities

Planning is under way for the development of an *I Can Grow* programme. Aimed at beginner and more experienced gardeners, the initiative will support households to develop the skills and confidence to grow healthy food at home. The programme will also build on the Council's *Muddy Boots* food initiative, supporting a more joined-up Council approach.

e) Intergenerational Forest School

Since August 2025, 120 participants have taken part in five *Embrace the Wild* family bushcraft sessions delivered across the Borough. Following the positive uptake, officers are now planning an expanded summer programme.

Officers are also working with the Age Friendly Team to support delivery of the Over 50s Summer Scheme, which will include horticultural workshops to promote wellbeing, social connection and lifelong learning.

A Forest Schools initiative for primary schools is also planned for the autumn, providing outdoor learning opportunities that support children's confidence, skills development and engagement with nature.

5. Financial Implications

Delivery of Programme 5, 'Our Active Borough', is being supported through PEACEPLUS funding and is being managed within the approved programme resources. There are no additional financial implications to Council arising from this progress update.

6. Summary

Programme 5, 'Our Active Borough', continues to progress across the agreed PEACEPLUS activity areas, with delivery activity scheduled through 2026 and no additional financial implications at this stage.

7. **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the progress update on Programme 5: 'Our Active Borough' be noted.

Prepared by: Kevin Madden, Sport and Physical Activity Manager and
Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager

Agreed by: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations, Paul
Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations and Paula Kerr, Peace Programme
Co-ordinator

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

4.4 PK/BIO/044 CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS – ADVISORY LETTER FOR REAS WOOD

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Members that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has recommended against bathing at Reas Wood for the forthcoming season. A copy of the correspondence is enclosed.

2. Background

Members are advised that Rea's Wood at Lough Neagh was previously nominated by Council as a potential identified bathing water site as part of DAERA Bathing Waters Review for the 2022/2023 period.

This review forms part of DAERA's ongoing statutory responsibility to assess and designate bathing waters across Northern Ireland in line with regulatory standards and public health considerations. Following submission, the site was subjected to an initial screening process against DAERA's established criteria, including factors such as public usage, accessibility, and environmental suitability. Rea's Wood met these preliminary requirements and was therefore progressed to the monitoring stage.

Consequently, a programme of routine water quality monitoring was implemented, with samples collected and analysed throughout the subsequent bathing seasons to assess compliance with bathing water standards.

Members should note that, as Rea's Wood bathing water was only formally identified in 2025, the classification of the site remains at an early stage. Under the Bathing Water Regulations, classifications are based on statistical analysis of data compiled over a rolling four-year assessment period.

As monitoring at Rea's Wood commenced in 2023, a complete dataset sufficient to support a robust and reliable classification will not be available until the end of the 2026 bathing season.

Upon completion of this four-year monitoring cycle, DAERA will be in a position to assign a formal bathing water quality classification to the site, based on a more comprehensive evidence base. In the interim period, monitoring will continue to inform both DAERA and the Council of ongoing water quality trends and any associated public health considerations.

3. Key Implications for the site

Following completion of the statutory assessment at the end of the 2025 bathing season, Rea's Wood was classified as 'Poor' under the Bathing Water Regulations. This classification was determined based on monitoring results relating to both faecal indicator organisms and the presence of blue-green algae.

In accordance with the provisions of the Regulations, where a bathing water is assigned a 'Poor' classification, DAERA is required to implement appropriate management measures aimed at reducing, and where possible preventing, bathers' exposure to pollution.

These measures are a statutory requirement and are intended to ensure that public health is safeguarded at all designated bathing sites. To fulfil these obligations, and in line with Regulation 14 of the Bathing Water Regulations, DAERA has advised that an "Advice Against Bathing" notice be introduced at Rea's Wood for the duration of the 2026 bathing season.

This position will remain under ongoing review, informed by continued water quality monitoring and assessment. Any future reclassification of the site will be dependent upon demonstrable and sustained improvements in water quality over the prescribed multi-year assessment period, in line with the requirements of the Regulations.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the advised against bathing at Reas Wood for the forthcoming season be noted.

Prepared and Agreed by: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

4.5 PBS/PS/016 ENERGY PROJECTS UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the Council's Energy Management performance, highlighting completed work, projects currently planned, and longer-term development priorities.

2. Background

Members will be aware that energy across the Council estate is managed by the Estate Services Section, covering consumption, emissions, costs, monitoring, and billing. To support this, a £300k Energy Fund is available for energy efficiency initiatives in addition to stand alone capital-funded projects.

3. Completed Projects

Over the last financial year 2025/2026 Estate Services have delivered a series of improvements aimed at reducing costs, emissions, and fossil fuel dependency. Key projects include:

- Heating and Building Management System upgrades at Mossley Mill, Sixmile Leisure Centre, and Theatre at the Mill, with modern Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC) controllers installed.
- HVAC profile optimisation at Theatre at the Mill and Mossley Mill to better align energy use with building occupancy.
- Boiler replacement at Antrim Forum, four cascading high-efficiency, modulating gas boilers installed.
- Reconfiguration of the Combined Heat and Power boiler at Antrim Forum to maximise performance.
- Refurbishment of Sixmile Leisure Centre's biomass boiler, reducing reliance on gas.
- Installation of 8 new EV charging points at the Environmental Services Depot, integrated under a single management system.
- Introduction of charging at 9 Council EV locations, creating a revenue stream to fund ongoing maintenance and expansion.

4. Results

Comparing 2024/2025 to 2025/2026, energy consumption has fallen by 3.3% (734K kWhrs), costs by 10% (£225K), and CO₂ emissions by 14% (409K KG).

5. Pending Projects 2026–2027

Looking forward, the Estate Services Section will continue to prioritise the reduction of oil and gas use by rolling out renewable technologies and major plant upgrades. Planned projects include:

- New buffer tank at Antrim Forum. May 2026.
- Replacement SPA dehumidifier at Antrim Forum. May 2026.

- Solar panels at Mossley Mill – August 2026.
- Heating control and BMS upgrades at Valley Leisure Centre, Forum Leisure Centre, and Ballyearl Leisure Centre. July 2026
- LED floodlighting upgrades at Antrim Forum, Valley, Crumlin, Allen Park, and Sixmile Leisure Centres, with automated and remote controls. Capital team progressing this scheme at present. 2026
- Expansion of energy monitoring to top 15 sites, representing 90% of energy usage ongoing.
- Consultant reviewing opportunities for wind turbines, heat pumps, and large-scale solar installations, including car park canopies
- HVAC replacements at Antrim Forum and Crumlin Leisure Centre.

6. Future Development

In addition to the projects above, longer-term opportunities to further strengthen energy management have been identified. These include:

- Wind turbine and solar panels at the Environmental Services Depot.
- Solar canopies, hydro electrical projects to be evaluated across the estate.
- Expansion of EV charging network, with approximately 21 Council-controlled charge points by December 2026.
- Investigating building fabric thermal improvements (for example Sixmile Leisure Centre, solar film).
- Maximising heat recovery in ventilation systems at major sites.
- Extending automated metering for energy and water to enable benchmarking and performance tracking
- Monitoring and replacing plant and equipment (boilers, coils, generators, pumps) to maintain efficiency levels.
- Implementing a pool cover replacement programme to reduce heating costs across leisure centres.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: David Blair, Head of Estate Services

Agreed and Approved by: Richard Baker, Chief Executive

5 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Any Other Relevant Business (AORB) may be taken at this point.