



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD AT ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON TUESDAY 4 APRIL 2023 AT 6.30 PM

- In the Chair** : Councillor M Magill
- Members Present (In person)** : Alderman M Girvan
Councillors – H Cushinan, B Mallon, N Ramsay and B Webb
- Members Present (Remote)** : Councillors – S Flanagan, R Foster, A McAuley and V Robinson
- In Attendance (In person)** : Mr S McCartney, Fibre Ambassador, Fibrus
Mr J Simpson, Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Fibrus
- Officers Present** : Director of Finance & Governance – S Cole
Director of Organisation Development – D Rogers
Deputy Director of Finance – J Balmer
Deputy Director of Governance – L Johnston
Head of Human Resources – J Close
Head of Communications & Customers – N McCullough
Administrative Officer (Communications & Customers) – N McBride
ICT Systems Support Officer – J Wilson
Member Services Officer – C McIntyre

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the April Meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee, and reminded all present of recording requirements.

1. APOLOGIES

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

None.

4 PRESENTATION

4.1 G/MSMO/007/VOL5 PROJECT STRATUM PRESENTATION BY FIBRUS

Representatives from Fibrus attended the meeting in person to provide an overview of Project Stratum and Full Fibre Broadband availability within the Borough. A copy of the presentation was circulated.

Mr Simpson updated Members, responded to Members' queries and agreed to provide further location details of scheduled works within the Antrim and Newtownabbey Council area.

The Chair and Members thanked Mr McCartney and Mr Simpson for their presentation and they left the meeting.

ACTION BY: Member Services

5 ITEMS FOR DECISION

5.1 G/MSMO/23 PILGRIMAGE TO THE SOMME REGION

In July 2019 Members were reminded that it was approved that a delegation from Council would participate on a pilgrimage to the Somme Region on an annual basis.

Attendees included a proportionate representation of around 8 Members accompanied by Officers from the Community Planning section.

Previous visits included attendance at

- Official services including
 - the Thiepval Memorial to commemorate more than 72,000 men of the British forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and who had no known grave, the majority of whom died during the Somme offensive of 1916.
 - the Somme Association's annual services at the Ulster Tower and at Guillemont to commemorate the men of the 36th (Ulster) and the 16th (Irish) Division.
- The laying of wreaths on behalf of the Council at services.
- Visits to memorial sites in Ypres, Belgium including Ploegsteert, the Island of Ireland Peace Park, Tyne Cot, Langemarch, Menin Gate Memorial and Armistice Museum.

To enable attendance at the Somme in 2023, arrangements needed to commence in advance of the next term of Council. Approval was requested to progress the annual pilgrimage to the Somme Region.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Robinson and agreed that

the Council continue to send a delegation on an annual basis to the Somme Region and that the commencement of arrangements in advance of the next term of Council be approved.

ACTION BY: Liz Johnston, Deputy Director of Governance

5.2 G/BCEP/006 ALL PARTY SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP MARCH 2023 MEETING MINUTES

The All Party Sustainability Working Group meet quarterly to draw on expert external advice to provide informed policy input and practical suggestions on issues that the Council can and should be addressing going forward to champion Sustainability.

The minutes of the March 2023 meeting were circulated for approval.

At the meeting two presentations were given as follows:

1. The Head of Recycling and Waste Sector Climate Action Plan from DAERA delivered a presentation to the meeting on 'The Future of Waste Management in NI: A Policy Perspective'.
2. The Director of Parks and Leisure Operations presented on biodiversity and active travel routes highlighting current sustainability initiatives and promotion of biodiversity.

Updates were also provided on the Energy Task and Finish Group, Climate Change Action Plan and the Circular Economy Consultation response.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed that

the minutes of the March 2023 Sustainability Working Group be approved.

ACTION BY: Liz Johnston, Deputy Director of Governance

5.3 FI/AUD/04 ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY

Members were reminded that the Council had an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which had been implemented in April 2015 and was last updated in April 2021.

The Policy set out the Council's commitment to the prevention of fraud and corruption and the promotion of an anti-fraud culture.

The Council operates a zero tolerance attitude to fraud and corruption, whether from internal or external sources and requires staff and individuals/organisations to act with honesty and integrity, to safeguard public resources and to report all suspicions of fraud and corruption.

The Policy provided details of the anti-fraud and corruption roles and responsibilities of all levels throughout the Council, and provided detailed

guidance on fraud prevention, detection and investigation as well as a guideline for reporting suspicions of fraud or corruption.

In accordance with the Council's Policy Framework and Schedule, the Policy had been reviewed and updated.

There had been no significant amendments made with the exception of reformatting the Policy to comply with the requirements of the Policy Framework.

A copy of the updated Policy was circulated with amendments highlighted in red for Members' information.

The Policy had been reviewed and approved by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed that

the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy be approved.

ACTION BY: Paul Caulcutt, Head of Internal Audit

5.4 FI/AUD/04 ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY

Members were reminded that the Council had an Anti-Bribery Policy which was implemented in April 2015 and last updated in April 2021.

The Policy set out the Council's commitment to the prevention, deterrence and detection of bribery. It also provides a framework to enable employees to understand and implement arrangements enabling compliance with the Policy and to identify and effectively report potential breaches.

In accordance with the Council's Policy Framework and Schedule, the Policy had been reviewed and updated.

There had been no significant amendments made with the exception of reformatting the Policy to comply with the requirements of the Policy Framework.

A copy of the updated Policy was circulated with amendments highlighted in red for Members' information.

The Policy had been reviewed and approved by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the Anti-Bribery Policy be approved.

ACTION BY: Paul Caulcutt, Head of Internal Audit

5.5 CCS/EDP/11 EQUALITY SCHEME AND ACTION PLAN (EAP) 2023 - 2026

Members were advised that the Council's Equality Scheme and Action Plan were now due for review and that a draft of the new scheme had been presented at the recent Equality and Diversity Working Group in March for its consideration and feedback.

The circulated draft Equality Scheme and Action Plan (EAP) 2023 – 2026, once agreed by the Council, would be subject to a 12-week consultation period opening in early May.

Members were reminded that Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 required the Council, when carrying out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine categories of persons noted within the legislative framework. The Council must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The Council's Equality Scheme described certain arrangements that, as a public authority, the Council must set-up. It is obliged to apply and follow, as a means of fulfilling the statutory requirements of Section 75 (1) and (2), the duties to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

The Equality Scheme included arrangements for training staff, assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the Council on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that had been adopted. On an annual basis the Council must provide a progress report to the Equality Commission to outline how those arrangements had been applied and to assess how effective they had been in supporting the Council to comply with the Section 75 duties.

Members were reminded that regular updates were provided to the Equality Commission in relation to the status of the Equality Scheme and Action Plan delivery. The next progress report was due for submission to the Equality Commission by 31 August 2023.

A further update would be brought to the Council.

Proposed by Alderman Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the draft Equality Scheme and Action Plan be approved and proceed to public consultation.

ACTION BY: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

5.6 CCS/GEN/007 INCLUSIVE SUMMER SCHEME UPDATE

Following the continued success of the Inclusive Summer Scheme in 2022 at the Valley Leisure Centre and the Antrim Forum and evaluation feedback from parents, it was proposed to extend the Scheme further in association with the Mae Murray Foundation.

The Scheme provided specialised one-to-one care for up to 20 children (per day) with complex disabilities/medical conditions and included inclusive wheelchair games, inclusive biking, as well as arts and crafts.

It was planned that the proposed scheme would be extended by one day each week and a further one week added with associated costs provided as follows:

Item/Duration	Costs
Mae Murray Foundation personal care support and volunteers X 12 Days 11am – 2pm	£17892
Scheme Activity Providers X 12 Days 11am – 2pm	£4000
Total	£21892

This year's Inclusive Summer Scheme would be held at the following locations on the dates detailed:

Date	Location
17 th – 20 th July	Antrim Forum Leisure Centre
24 th – 27 th July	Lillian Bland Pavilion
7 th – 10 th August	Crumlin Leisure Centre

Activities planned were inclusive biking, arts and crafts, sensory play and a visit by exploris mobile touch tank.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed that

the proposed Inclusive Summer Scheme costs of £21,892 be approved.

ACTION BY: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

6 ITEMS FOR NOTING

6.1 G/MSMO/21 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILLORS (NAC) NORTHERN IRELAND REGION CONSTITUTION

Correspondence had been received from the National Association of Councillors (NAC) in relation to their revised Constitution.

The revised Constitution and the current Constitution were circulated with a number of changes highlighted for Members' attention:

1. The constitution now included a mission statement;

2. Section 2 contained a list of aims and objectives;
3. The Quorum at General Meetings had been reduced from 20 to 15 members;
4. The sections on executive committees, chairs, secretary, treasurer and women's representatives had been expanded;
5. There were new sections on co-option, honoraria and dissolution.

Comments in relation to the Constitution were to be forwarded no later than Friday 28 April 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Cushman and agreed that

the revised constitution be noted.

NO ACTION

6.2 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – FEBRUARY 2023 – Period 11

A budget report for February 2023 – Period 11 was circulated for Members' information.

The Council's financial position at the end of February 2023 had shown an adverse variance on Net Cost of Services of £3.49m.

The Actual Penny Product (income from District Rates) was anticipated to be £724k favourable, giving an overall variance of £2.76m.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.3 HR/GEN/019 MANAGING ATTENDANCE

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the management of attendance from April 2022 – February 2023 (circulated).

Members were advised that absence at the end of February was above target by 3.02 days with 14.14 average days lost per employee against a target of 11.12 days; Covid absence had not been included in the reported figures.

It was projected that the absence rate for 22-23 was likely to be approximately 15 average days lost against a target of 12 days. Members were advised that this projection may fluctuate depending on the presenting and returning of cases in March 2023; Covid absence was not included in this projection.

A number of long term absence cases had resulted in employees exhausting their sick pay entitlement and although no additional cost had been incurred by the Council during the 'no pay' periods – these days lost were still included in the absence figures.

If days lost to employees who were not in receipt of sick pay were not included in the absence figures, the average days lost per employee at the end of February 2023 would have been 12.2 days.

Despite reducing absence over the months of October and November, and a number of the complex cases being resolved, the significant increase in absence in December and January had made it more challenging to achieve the annual target of 12 average days lost per employee.

In February 2023, there continued to be a positive return to work of short term cases and in particular 4 complex long term cases had returned to work with 1 further case leaving the Council.

Further analysis of Absence Figures to February 2023 indicated the following:

100% attendance

60% of our workforce had achieved 100% attendance from 1 April 2022 to 28 February 2023, which was a significant achievement and it was anticipated that we will be on target to maintain this level of attendance by March 2023.

Formal Case Reviews to date

Formal Case reviews (FCRs) were normally held where all possible steps had been taken and had failed to secure the employee's return to work within a maximum of 9 months.

- **Concluded cases – 8**, with employees either returning to work, obtaining ill health retirement or leaving the organisation.
- **In Progress – 7**, this included 2 Ill Health Retirement cases approved by NILGOSC and a further case that was pending outcome shortly.
- **Approaching – 2**, since last month, one case had been progressed to Formal Case Review and there were 2 others approaching this stage.

Long Term Absence – 86% of the overall absence figures

Long term absence is defined as continuous absence greater than 20 days. Although there was a slight decrease in long term absence from 87% to 86% compared to the previous month, it was expected that this trend would continue in the coming year. This was due to our continued efforts to address complex long term absence cases, conducting regular wellbeing meetings with employees, utilising Occupational Health services, and holding timely absence review meetings.

- **% of Challenging long term cases – 46%**, this included absence related to hospital procedures, disability related illness, broken bones and road traffic accidents.
- **Exhausted sick pay – 3 employees** with one case progressed to Formal Case Review stage.

- **Returned to work – 5 cases**, total to date, 51 long-term cases had successfully returned to work.

Short Term Absence – 14% of the overall absence figures

Short term absence is defined as absence less than 20 working days. Whilst it is understood that short term absences are inevitable, it is crucial for Managers/Supervisors, Human Resources and employees to work together to minimise the impact of these absences on service delivery.

- **Main Reasons:**
 - Cold/flu, stomach bug – accounting for 37% of short term absence
 - Stress Depression, Mental Health
 - Chest and respiratory issues
 - Musculoskeletal problems
 - Back and neck problems
 - Infection

Overall Absence

Stress-related absence (including work related stress) had increased from 46% to 47% of total absence which included work related stress. Proactive work was ongoing to address this by:

- Encouraging open communication to address stress and mental health concerns in wellbeing meetings.
- Providing mental health awareness training for employees.
- Providing access to mental health support services through Inspire Counselling service, the Council's Occupational Health service and additional information available through STAYWELL.
- Implementing flexible working arrangements, supporting phased returns and reasonable adjustments in the workplace.
- Encouraging physical activity through the promotion of the Council's employee subsidised Gym Membership Scheme.
- Encouraging participation in our wellness programme with regular wellbeing activities and health advice promoted weekly through the STAY MORE CONNECTED kudoboard.
- Partnering with legal advisors and Employers for Disability NI to arrange awareness sessions on mental health illnesses, to provide training to managers on managing stress and how to encourage open communication to reduce stress-related absence and to promote a healthy work environment.

To improve absence rates and encourage earlier returns to work, the following actions were being undertaken.

- Regular case management discussions with legal advisors to support a targeted approach for complex cases. These helped Directors, Heads of Services, and HR to review cases, consider reasonable adjustments, and understand the legal context, enabling specific action plans for individual cases.
- Meetings held with directorates with high or complex absence cases had been increased to analyse cases and agree on next steps, with attendance from relevant Directors, Deputy Directors, and Heads of Service. Formal case reviews would be scheduled as needed.

- The HR Business Partnership team continued to work closely with managers and Occupational Health on an individual case management basis. This would ensure that prompt action would be taken to keep absences within target and would provide support to managers in absence review trigger meetings for a fair and consistent approach.
- Monthly case management discussion meetings were scheduled as needed to review complex cases with an Occupational Health consultant. Case managers attended these sessions to ensure effective use of the Occupational Health service and support earlier returns to work where possible.
- The Corporate and Human Resources Risks registers had been reviewed to reflect the current absence rate position, with actions and interventions recorded to mitigate risks.
- Managers within Parks had received training on effectively managing absence caseloads. Absence management toolkits were under development, and best practice toolkits had been identified and shared on STAYWELL to further assist managers and employees.
- Targeted training was being planned in areas of high absence provided by Human Resources, legal advisors, and in partnership with Employers for Disability NI or other relevant organisations.
- Development continued on an online training module to promote the importance of attending work. This would be rolled out to new staff initially and then across the wider organisation in 2023.
- The use of the Wellbeing Calendar would continue to support employee wellbeing.
- Physiotherapy services were being provided for appropriate cases of back and musculoskeletal-related absence.

Proposed by Alderman Girvan

Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.4 HR/HR/019 AGENCY STAFF UPDATE

Members were reminded that agency staff were used across the Council to provide temporary cover for absence such as:

- Maternity leave
- Secondments
- Sickness absence
- Vacant posts
- Seasonal Events

The use of agency staff was subject to a rigorous approval process, which required the approval of the Corporate Leadership Team; there was budgetary provision for the majority of posts filled via departmental salary budgets, salary contingency and grant funding.

Current Agency staff

The table appended provided an update for Members on the use of agency staff in February 2023 compared to February 2020 (pre covid-19). It excluded limited ad-hoc agency cover, which was necessary to provide operational cover, at short notice. Given the exceptional nature of 2020/21; 2019/20 agency figures had been used for comparison.

In reviewing the number of agency workers it was noted that:

- In February 2023 the number of agency workers reduced to 39 compared to 53 in February 2020.
- Seasonal Grounds Maintenance Operatives who usually finished their work assignment in October each year had been retained for further cover this year due to vacancies and operational demands within Parks. However, in February 2023 this seasonal cover reduced to 5 from the 17 originally retained.

Cost of Agency

The expenditure on agency workers in February 2023 had been circulated.

The cost of agency staff from 1 April 2022 to February 2023 had remained at 6% of all staffing costs for the same period in 2019/2020 (pre-covid).

The costs had been impacted by:

- The 1.75% NJC pay increase for the 2021 financial year
- The increase in National Insurance of 1.25% from 6 April 2022; this had been reversed effective from 5 November 2022
- Agency staff had received the NJC pay award for 2022 and the recent local Council pay agreement (January 2023) which was backdated to 1 April 2022

Current recruitment

Following recent recruitment exercises within Finance, some of the posts that were previously covered by agency workers had now been filled by permanent employees:

- 1 x Financial Accounting Assistant commenced their role in February 2023
- 2 x Accounts Assistants had been offered posts with potential start dates in late March and April 2023

Further recruitment exercises were ongoing to fill the remaining posts within Finance that were currently being covered by agency workers. Additionally, it was anticipated that recruitment would commence to fill vacant positions within the Waste section and this would further decrease our reliance on agency cover.

Council were committed to reducing its dependence on agency workers and would continue to recruit directly for vacant positions. However, the use of agency workers may still be required for more ad hoc, seasonal, or temporary coverage as needed.

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
 Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.5 CCS/EDP/020 CUSTOMER CONSULTATION AND SURVEY REPORT

The Council actively seeks feedback through surveys and consultations throughout the year. Consultations offer a formal approach to gaining constructive feedback on a specific project and surveys were used to inform service improvements. The feedback received through consultation and surveys enabled residents to shape how services are delivered.

Consultations and surveys can take different formats and are mainly anchored around a data collection software package called Citizen Space, accessed through the Council's website. To obtain direct feedback from our leisure customers the Listen 360 integrated software was utilised which provided real time feedback on any aspect of the leisure experience. This provided analytical tools to support the collation and interpretation of the data for individual services.

Consultations & Surveys Year to Date 2022-23

Surveys April 2022 – March 2023	Number of Responses
Corporate Recovery and Improvement Plan 2022-23	35
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Integrated Masterplan Consultation	113
Glengormley Environmental Improvement Scheme Feedback	24
Borough Life - Our Beautiful Borough	175
Borough Life – Council's Digital Services	180
Borough Life – Feeling safe in our Borough	214
Borough Life – Cleanliness of the Borough	179
Garden Show Ireland 2022	1,267
Balmoral Show 2022 - Business and Traders Survey	6
Balmoral Show 2022 - Visitors to our stand	89
Ballyclare May Fair 2022	12
Have Your Say – Corporate Plan	137
Theatre Experience - Theatre at the Mill	60
Theatre Experience - The Old Courthouse	14
Christmas at our Theatres	540
Summer Scheme 2022 Feedback	122
Inclusive Summer Schemes 2022 Feedback	11
Tourism Accommodation Providers	14
Sixmile Leisure Centre Fitness Suite Feedback	31

Halloween Events Feedback	509
Christmas Switch On Events	35
Enchanted Winter Garden Staff Mystery Shop	40
Enchanted Winter Garden Residents	1,009
Enchanted Winter Garden Visitors (from outside Borough)	2,436
PEACEPLUS Public Engagement	289
	7,541

Detailed below were the completed key public consultations and surveys, which had taken place and had been completed between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023, with **7,541** respondents.

Officers received a detailed report from each consultation or survey, which contained a summary of comments, and actions being developed as a response to feedback.

Key Information from recent consultations and surveys:

Cleanliness of the Borough – Borough Life

The survey ran from 9 January to 31 January 2023, and received 176 responses.

Key results were:

- 91% of respondents were satisfied with the Council's Waste and Recycling Service
- 89% are satisfied with the cleanliness of parks
- 72% are satisfied with the cleanliness of roads and streets
- 90% of users were satisfied with the bulky collection service

Comments - Actions

- Wheelie boxes in Newtownabbey were regularly missed and Bryson had to be continually chased to return for these
 - **Dealt with under management review – watch lists created and reports had been put in place.**
- After collection of the kerbside boxes there was always mess left on the roadside
 - **Dealt with under management review – watch lists created and reports had been put in place.**
- O'Neill Road site is never swept with large pieces of glass and metal shards lying around
 - **Sweeping rota is in place and actioned. Site records when sweeping is completed.**

Enchanted Winter Garden

Survey links were e-mailed out to staff, residents and visitors from outside the Borough, who attended the Enchanted Winter Garden. The consultations ran from 25 November 2022 to 31 January 2023 with 3,485 responses. The survey for the 2021 Enchanted Winter Garden received 2,947 responses.

Previously attended the Enchanted Winter Garden

- 67% of residents
- 41% of visitors
- 82.5% of staff

Overall satisfaction with the Enchanted Winter Garden 2022

- 86% of residents
- 82% of visitors

Attendees whom visited local shops or restaurants before or after their visit

- 21% of residents
- 20% of visitors

The visit to the Enchanted Winter Garden would encourage attendance at other Council events

- 83% of residents
- 76% of visitors

Comments included:

- *I thought the addition of the food 'village' with seated area was a brilliant addition and the quality of the food stalls was superb.*
- *The event was well marshalled (e.g. when queues for attractions became unwieldy, marshalls intervened and sought cooperation to realign queues, tactfully!).*
- *The Grinch was fantastic, there were elf's on stilts greeting everyone as they came in, they didn't miss a single child, really engaging and full of Christmas cheer.*
- *Lovely buzz about the place and friendly staff.*
- *The layout was fantastic and was so easy to take the children around - it was set up in such a good way they could explore safely and each section led on very nicely to the next one. My grandsons were fascinated by each new illumination, lots of 'wows' and 'guys look' from grandson, as was my daughter, so great for both adults and children. The rides were a good distance apart, which meant no big crowds, gathered; particularly at the time we were there which was good for my two grandsons. The illuminations were wonderful; my daughter was at one in England and said how much better this one was for her little boys ages plus the music on the way round added more Christmas magic to the event. It was wonderful!*

Christmas at our Theatres

Theatre-goers were contacted via e-mail and the consultation ran from 13 December 2022 to 31 January 2023, with 540 respondents.

Key results were:

- 98% of respondents were satisfied with the ticket booking process
- 98% of theatre goers were satisfied with the way they were looked after during their visit
- 97% were satisfied with the facilities at the theatre they attended
- 94% thought that their performance they attended provided value for money

- 98.5% believe that the theatres cater to their interests
- 97% would revisit, or recommend our theatres
- 94% of attendees rated accessibility satisfactory

Feedback included some comments on the access to hospitality options, signage and some access issues with e-tickets.

Comments included:

- *Excellent experience throughout. It was our first visit and we were unsure of exactly where it was but we found it without much trouble. The staff were excellent and very helpful and the interval drinks layout very good. Looking forward to seeing you again soon. The performance was excellent and a little nostalgic to cap a great night out.*
- *Both experiences exceeded my expectations. Performances were excellent and theatres very comfortable. Staff were exceptional, very friendly and looked as if they enjoyed doing their job. Will definitely be attending more performances.*
- *Lovely theatre. No matter what seat you are in you've got a great view of the stage. I also attend the Courtyard Theatre. Great amateur dramatics.*

Further surveys would follow later in the year, in combination with a plan for more targeted feedback, including mystery shopping.

Listen 360 Leisure

Listen 360 is a digital customer engagement platform, used to survey leisure customers for their feedback on their recent interactions at Council's Leisure Centres. Customers are sent a communication following a recent visit, being asked to score their visit out of 10 and then asked the reason for the score.

This is known as a net promoter score system which provided a key metric in measuring customer loyalty, as well as key insights into customers' views of their leisure centres.

The current rolling score for leisure is 63 against a UK leisure standard of 34.

It was noted that the Net Promoter Score was a current Corporate Performance Indicator for the Leisure Service (Usage/Membership and Subsidy per visit).

Some key annual statistics relating to daily surveys were as follows:

- Total survey requests: 12,130
- Total responses: 3,385
- Staff, Facilities and Courtesy remain consistently the top 3 responses/mentions from customers over the past 12 months
- Staff and Courtesy were the top two most positive scoring feedback areas
- Allen Park, Ballyearl Arts and Leisure and Crumlin showed the highest upward trend in positive comments

- Allen Park (100) and Ballyearl Arts and Leisure (78) had the highest scores across the centres

Planned Consultation and Surveys

Planned consultations during quarter one of 2023-24 were detailed, which may be subject to change; results and feedback from the surveys would be reported through the appropriate Committee when complete.

Planned Consultations and Surveys	
Our Beautiful Borough (Borough Life)	April/May 2023
Digital Services	March/April 2023
Capital Development – Sovereign Centre & Muckamore Community Centre	March/April 2023
Capital Development – V36 Skatepark	March/April 2023
Equality Scheme 2023-2026	May/July 2023

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Ramsay and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.6 CCS/CS/006 COMMUNICATIONS & CUSTOMERS CHANNEL REPORT

Members were reminded that the Corporate Recovery & Improvement Plan for 2022-23 sets out the following Performance Improvement Target, “We will achieve high levels of customer satisfaction”.

The purpose of this report was to provide a provisional end-of-year update on the indicators that the Plan set out as measurements of progress towards this target. A full update of performance, for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, would be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee during September 2023.

We achieve at least 80% satisfaction with overall Council services:

Each issue of the Borough Life magazine had a specific, themed survey, and within each one, residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with Council services.

Quarter four included surveys within the January issue of Borough Life, “Cleanliness of the Borough, a targeted consultation of residents attending the Enchanted Winter Garden, and feedback on the Council’s Corporate Plan.”

As previously reported, this had been achieved, with a total satisfaction rating of **92.9%** with overall Council services throughout 2023-23, based on five surveys, and **1,890** respondents.

2021-22	Target 2022-23	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
87.5%	80%	N/A	89.8%	93.2%	92.9%

The percentage of abandoned calls will be 6.5% (or less):

A total of **42,069** calls were projected to be presented during quarter four, a decrease of **1.2%** compared to **42,562** in quarter three, with a projected total of **176,392** calls through 2022-23. There were **173,660** calls during 2021-22. The overall percentage for abandoned calls for the year was projected to be **5.1%**, compared to **6%** in 2021-22.

2021-22	Target 2022-23	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
6.0%	6.5%	5.0%	4.7%	5.5%	5.3%

We have achieved at least 600,000 online transactions:

Officers continued to promote and monitor the shift of transactions to an online basis, where practical and beneficial. For the purposes of maintaining consistency with previous benchmarks, this indicator focused upon the number of online transactions including:

- Caravan bookings (Q4 303)
- Online theatre and events bookings (Q4 8,654)
- Leisure bookings (Q4, 165,299)
- Dog licensing applications (Q4 1,969)
- Bulky waste bookings (Q4 3,266)

By the end of March 2023, there were projected to have been **800,409** online transactions, which was **33.4%** above target for the year.

2021-22	Target 2022-23	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
652,593	600,000	176,882	235,715	208,321	179,491

There are at least 5,062 downloads of the Residents App:

Downloads of the ANBorough App were measured through official app stores (Google and Apple) and total **13,963** in 2022-23, this was **175.8%** above target for the year.

2021-22	Target 2022-23	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
14,481	5,062	3,475	3,531	2,904	4,053

The performance of the Corporate Recovery and Improvement Policy 2022-2023 was reported on a quarterly basis to the Policy and Governance and Audit and Risk Committees, and final, validated figures were contained within the Annual Report on Performance 2022-23 (Self-Assessment), which would be reviewed by Council and published on the Council's website by 30 September 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Ramsay
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.7 PT/CI/050 RECOVERY AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN – PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT QUARTER 3 – FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

Members were 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.

The Council's Corporate Recovery and Improvement Plan 2022-23 was approved in June 2022. This set out a range of challenging performance targets, along with four identified improvement objectives and a number of Statutory Performance Targets.

A third quarter progress report for Finance and Governance was circulated for Members' information. The Corporate Recovery and Improvement Plan 2022-23 Quarter 3 Performance Progress Report was scrutinised, reviewed and noted by the Audit & Risk Committee on 21 March 2023

Proposed by Councillor Ramsay
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the Corporate Recovery and Improvement Plan 2022-23 Quarter 3 progress report for Finance and Governance be noted.

NO ACTION

6.8 PT/CI/051 RECOVERY AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN – PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT QUARTER 3 – ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Members were 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.

The Council's Corporate Recovery and Improvement Plan 2022-2023 was approved in June 2022. This set out a range of challenging performance targets, along with four identified improvement objectives and a number of Statutory Performance Targets.

A third quarter progress report for Organisational Development was circulated for Members' information. The Corporate Recovery and Improvement Plan 2022-23 Quarter 3 Performance Progress Report was scrutinised, reviewed and noted by the Audit & Risk Committee on 21 March 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the Corporate Recovery and Improvement Plan 2022-23 Quarter 3 progress report for Organisational Development be noted.

NO ACTION

6.9 G/LEG/462/19 COUNCIL REMOTE/HYBRID MEETINGS

The Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 were introduced to enable Councils to hold meetings remotely or by hybrid means.

These Regulations were previously extended and were due to expire on 24 March 2023.

The circulated letter informed Councils that The Coronavirus Act 2020 (Extension of Provisions Relating to Local Authority Meetings) (No2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023 was made on 23 March which thereby extended the Regulations to allow for remote or hybrid meetings to continue to 24 September 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

6.10 CCS/CPRM/027 TOWN, VILLAGE AND HAMLET SIGNAGE UPDATE

Members were reminded that Council had agreed in September 2022 to install hamlet signage.

Due to the number of hamlets, and those proposed under the Local Area Development Plan, it was approved to proceed with a phased approach, with Phase One including all existing hamlets.

Following visits to all sites, the installation of signage began week commencing 27 March 2023, with signs placed in Killead, Moneyglass, and Ballyeaston.

Following these installations, there would be a review of the dimensions of signage and the development of the timetable to complete installation of stage one.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

8 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

A Member requested that a report detailing a breakdown of Local Government Training Group spend be provided for consideration by Members in the new mandate.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

that a detailed breakdown of Local Government Training Group spend for Antrim and Newtownabbey Members and staff be provided.

ACTION: Helen Hall, Interim Director of Corporate Strategy

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Robinson
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

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

7 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

7.1 **IN CONFIDENCE** FI/PRO/GEN/044 PROCUREMENT TENDER REPORT AND AWARD OF CONTRACTS

Members were reminded that Council had agreed in June 2021 that the Council Scheme of Delegation be used for the award of contracts and that Members would be updated retrospectively.

This process would allow service and project delivery to be expedited more efficiently and facilitate timely delivery of actions against the Council's Recovery plan.

A list of contracts approved by the Corporate Leadership Team and awarded in March was circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Foster and approved that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed

that the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

The Chairperson advised that the audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further Committee business, the Chairperson thanked Members and staff for their contributions to the effective conduct of business during his tenure as Policy and Governance Committee Chair.

He paid tribute to the Vice Chair and wished everyone well for the future.

A Member concurred and thanked the Chair for carrying out his role in a very fair manner.

The meeting concluded at 7.07pm.

MAYOR