



7 January 2026

Committee Chair: Councillor S Wilson

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor M Brady

Committee Members: Aldermen - J McGrath and S Ross

Councillors – J Burbank, S Cosgrove, P Dunlop, J Gilmour, R Lynch, H Magill, T McGrann, V McWilliam, M Ní Chonghaile, A O'Lone, and M Stewart

Dear Member

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Community Development Committee will be held in the **Council Chamber, Mossley Mill** on **Monday 12 January 2026** at **6.30pm**.

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

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**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING ON
MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2026**

3 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 FI/FIN/11 ESTIMATES UPDATE PRESENTATION

1. Purpose

An update on the 2026/27 Estimates for the Community and Culture Directorate will be presented at the meeting.

A summary of the financial position for the 2025/26 financial year and the current financial estimates for 2026/27 is enclosed.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the presentation be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

3.2 AC/TOU/009 LOUGH NEAGH PARTNERSHIP

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the work of the Lough Neagh Partnership.

2. Introduction/Background

The Lough Neagh Partnership is a stakeholder organisation established in 2003 to help manage, protect and develop Lough Neagh. The Board of the partnership is composed of Elected Members, landowners, fishermen, farmers and local community representatives. The Council's current representatives on the Partnership Board are Councillor Dunlop, Councillor Cushinan, Councillor Wilson, Councillor Burbank and Councillor Lynch.

The Lough Neagh Partnership is the main organisation responsible for the sustainable development of Lough Neagh. Over the past two decades, the Partnership has been involved in enhancing, preserving, and promoting the distinctive attributes of the Lough Neagh area.

The Council, along with the four other Councils based around the shoreline of Lough Neagh, makes an annual financial contribution to the Partnership to cover core organisational costs to support their work.

Following a presentation given by Lough Neagh Partnership to the Community Planning Committee in February 2024 it was agreed that an annual update be provided on the work of Lough Neagh Partnership.

3. Previous Decision of Council

At the annual meeting of the Council on 2 June 2025 Councillors Dunlop, Cushinan, Wilson, Burbank and Lynch were appointed to serve on the partnership for the year.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the presentation be noted.

Prepared by: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte PA to Director of Community and Culture

Approved by: Ursula Fay Director Community and Culture

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 AC/TOU/009 LOUGH NEAGH PARTNERSHIP

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the annual renewal of the Service Level Agreement with Lough Neagh Partnership Ltd, and associated funding of £24,200 to Lough Neagh Partnership Ltd for core organisational costs.

2. Introduction/Background

The Lough Neagh Partnership is a stakeholder organisation established in 2003 to help manage, protect and develop Lough Neagh. The Board of the partnership is composed of Elected Members, landowners, fishermen, farmers, and local community representatives. The Council's current representatives on the Partnership Board are Councillor Dunlop, Councillor Cushinan, Councillor Wilson, Councillor Burbank and Councillor Lynch.

Lough Neagh Partnership is the main organisation responsible for the sustainable development of Lough Neagh. Over the past two decades, the Partnership has been involved in enhancing, preserving, and promoting the distinctive attributes of the Lough Neagh area.

The Council, along with the four other Councils based around the shoreline of Lough Neagh, makes an annual financial contribution to the Partnership to cover core organisational costs to support their work. Service Level Agreements, setting out what the Council receives in return for this contribution, have been in place since 2016, and support was previously provided by the legacy Council.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The 2025/2026 Service Level Agreement with Lough Neagh Partnership Ltd and payment of the annual fee of £24,200 was approved at the January 2025 Community Development Committee. At the annual meeting of the Council on 2 June 2025 Councillors Dunlop, Cushinan, Wilson, Burbank and Lynch were appointed to serve on the partnership for the year.

4. Lough Neagh Partnership Service Level Agreement 2026/2027

Lough Neagh Partnership have requested that the Council provides funding of £24,200 towards their core operational costs for 2026/2027 and agrees to a draft Service Level Agreement for the same period, which outlines what services the Council will receive from the Partnership. The draft Service Level Agreement is **enclosed** for Members' information.

A condition of the funding is the requirement for Lough Neagh Partnership Ltd to submit six-month and end-of-year progress reports for each year of the

Agreement, showing progress against the targets and the plan for the year ahead. The progress report for April to September 2025 is **enclosed**.

The benefits to the Council of this agreement with Lough Neagh Partnership are as follows:

Tourism Development and Marketing: Including marketing and promotion of Lough Neagh and related attractions in the Borough such as River Bann tours, Antrim Castle Gardens and Artisan Food Markets at the Lock Keepers Cottage in Toome. The inclusion of Antrim and Newtownabbey attractions in the 'Lough Neagh Tours' portfolio showcased at events such as 'Meet the Buyer', across social media channels and within email marketing campaigns.

Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Conservation efforts focused on key environmental areas including Farr's Bay, Rea's Wood, and Ram's Island. Managing the Environmental Group Farm Scheme encouraging farmers within the environmental designations of the Lough to implement environmentally friendly practices.

Stakeholder Engagement: Strategic collaboration with key stakeholders including Shaftesbury Estates who own the bed of the Lough, local businesses, government departments and DAERA and NIEA on the continued development of environmental and sustainability plans. Consultation with Lough Neagh Partnership on the '10 Year Heritage Resilience Plan' currently in development, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The proposed core funding contribution of £24,200 has been included in the 2026/ 2027 Tourism budget estimates.

6. Summary

Lough Neagh Partnership was established in 2003 to help manage, protect and develop Lough Neagh. The Council has been supporting Lough Neagh Partnership through a Service Level Agreement since 2016, with the legacy Council previously providing support. Lough Neagh Partnership continues to play a key role in the sustainable management and development of Lough Neagh, and the recommended renewal of the Service Level Agreement for 2026/2027 and provision of funding will ensure continued collaboration and support for projects that enhance the region's tourism and environmental profile.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the annual renewal of the Service Level Agreement with Lough Neagh Partnership Ltd and associated funding of £24,200 to Lough Neagh Partnership Ltd for core organisational costs be approved.

Prepared by: Marie-Clare McGeachy, Tourism Officer

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.2 AC/GEN/083 SOUTH EAST FERMANAGH FOUNDATION MEMORIAL QUILT EXHIBITION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to hold an exhibition of memorial quilts in the Mossley Mill Old Museum Space in July 2026 commemorating victims of The Troubles.

2. Introduction/Background

The South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF) was founded in 1998 to provide practical and emotional support for people who had been through traumatic experiences as a result of The Troubles. Over the last twenty years, SEFF's development as a provider of services for victims/survivors has expanded from its original geographical base, and SEFF now has staff located across Northern Ireland. In the last four years, additional focus has been given to developing support services for victims/survivors based in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

The Council's Veterans' Champion has been approached by SEFF to ask if the Council would be prepared to exhibit nine Memorial Quilts made up of patches provided by the families of those who lost their lives during the Troubles. If approved, this exhibition would be held in the Old Museum Space in Mossley Mill in July 2026. The exhibition would be open to the public free of charge during normal opening hours.

3. The Memorial Quilts

Descriptions of the nine Memorial Quilts are as follows:

1. Your Legacy Lives On

This Memorial Quilt was SEFF's first, and remembers victims of The Troubles who mainly had connections in the County Fermanagh and West Tyrone areas.

2. A Patchwork of Innocents

This Memorial Quilt contains a centrepiece in the shape of a heart, raising awareness of the cost of The Troubles upon young people, remembering the under 16s whose lives were lost. Those remembered come from across Northern Ireland.

3. Terrorism Knows No Borders

This Memorial Quilt remembers victims from across Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

4. Uniting Innocent Victims

This Memorial Quilt remembers people killed across mainland Europe as a consequence of terrorism.

5. Brougher Mountain Innocents

This Memorial Quilt remembers the five civilians who were killed on 9th February 1971 at Brougher Mountain, Co. Tyrone as they travelled to repair a BBC transmitter.

6. Through Remembering, We Build Bridges

This Memorial Quilt remembers victims from across the community with connections to the West Tyrone and North West areas of Northern Ireland.

7. Lives that Mattered

This Memorial Quilt recognises victims with connections to the East Region of Northern Ireland.

8. Diversity in Life, Remembered in Unity

This Memorial Quilt contains a special feature connecting to the South Down area with Down Cathedral and the message of Saint Patrick at the centre.

9. SEFF's Tree of Evolution

SEFF's Tree of Evolution charts the history and heritage of the organisation.

In addition to the Memorial Quilts themselves, the exhibition also contains interpretive signage, fliers and booklets.

4. Financial Position/Implication

There are no financial implications to hosting this exhibition.

5. Summary

The South East Fermanagh Foundation, which provides practical and emotional support to people affected by The Troubles, has asked the Council to host an exhibition of nine Memorial Quilts in July 2026 and it is proposed to facilitate this in the Old Museum Space Mossley Mill.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request by the South East Fermanagh Foundation to exhibit nine Memorial Quilts in the Old Museum Space at Mossley Mill be approved.

Prepared and Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.3 AC/GEN/008 FREE USE OF THE THEATRE AT THE MILL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the free use of the Theatre at the Mill by Jordanstown School for their annual production in June 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

Jordanstown School is the Northern Ireland school and centre of excellence for children who are deaf or visually impaired.

The main focus of the school is to deliver a curriculum which ensures all pupils (aged from 4 – 19) reach their maximum potential and that the class programmes ensure their academic, social, personal and emotional needs are met.

All the permanent members of teaching staff are specifically trained or qualified in teaching pupils who are deaf and / or who have a visual impairment.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Approval was given at the June 2025 Committee for a revision to the Community Development Pricing Policy, which now requires all free use requests to be brought to the Committee for decision. Previously, the Head of Service had delegated authority to approve one-off requests that met certain criteria and contributed to the Council's Community Plan; under this policy, the last previously approved free use of the Theatre at the Mill by Jordanstown School was in June 2025.

4. Request for Free Use

Jordanstown School have requested the free use of the Theatre at the Mill on 23 and 24 June 2026 for their production of Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat. They have also requested the use of the theatre on 22 June to rehearse and set up.

Through this production, the school intends to promote performance skills and make the arts accessible to deaf and visually impaired people. British Sign Language will be used throughout the performance to ensure the event is accessible to deaf people. This would be a free event to which the whole community would be welcome.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The daily community rate for hiring the Theatre at the Mill is currently £650, and the potential lost income for the requested days is therefore £1,950.

The direct costs to the Council for facilitating this booking would be £1,644.

6. Summary

Jordanstown Special School have requested the free use of the Theatre at the Mill for rehearsals and performances for three days in June 2026.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request for Jordanstown School to have free use of the Theatre at the Mill on 22-24 June 2026 be approved at a cost of £1,644.00.

Prepared by: Katherine Gardiner, Arts and Theatres Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.4 AC/GEN/009, CP/CF/001 FACILITY CLOSURES 2026/2027

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the 2026/2027 schedule of Public Holiday closures for Arts, Culture and Community Facilities.

2. Introduction/Background

A proposed schedule of closures for Arts, Culture and Community Facilities is reported to Committee for approval at the start of each calendar year. This covers arrangements for facilities including community centres, theatres and visitor attractions.

The proposed schedule of Public Holiday closures for Arts, Culture and Community Facilities in 2026/2027 is **enclosed**.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Approval for all Council 2025/2026 closures was given at the January 2025 Community Development Committee.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the 2026/2027 schedule of Bank Holiday closures for Arts, Culture and Community Facilities be approved.

Prepared by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events, and Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.5 CP/CD/289 DUNANNEY CENTRE – RATHCOOLE LIBRARY FREE USE REQUEST

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the free use of the Training Room in the Dunanney Centre by Libraries NI for the delivery of core social activities in February 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

Libraries NI are a community planning partner who deliver a comprehensive, accessible public library service across Northern Ireland, acting as inclusive community hubs for learning, work, and connection, offering books, digital resources (eBooks, Wi-Fi), skills development, and support for all ages, fostering lifelong learning and strengthening communities by connecting people to information, ideas, and experiences.

3. Previous Decision of Council

At the Community Development Committee in June 2025, it was agreed that the Community Development Pricing Policy be approved. Within the policy all requests for free use must be reported to the Committee for consideration.

4. Request for Free Use

Members are advised that Rathcoole Library have requested the free use of the Training Room, Dunanney Centre in February during a period of refurbishment works at the Library.

To accommodate their regular customers, the library wishes to relocate core activities to the Dunanney Centre on the dates and times below to avoid customers feeling isolated from regular social activities that take place at the library:

Date	Time
Monday 9th February	2pm – 4pm
Tuesday 10th February	10am – 12noon
Thursday 12th February	10am – 12noon
Monday 16th February	2pm – 4pm
Tuesday 17th February	10am – 12noon
Thursday 19th February	10am – 12noon
Tuesday 24th February	10am – 12noon
Thursday 26th February	10am – 12noon

Members are advised that these dates are to cover the estimated closure period but may be subject to change. Any change of dates would be subject to availability of the Training Room and current bookings at the Centre would not be displaced.

5. Financial Position/Implication

The hourly standard rate for hiring the Training Room is £22.50, and the potential lost income for the requested days would be £360.00 however there are no direct costs to the Council for facilitating these sessions.

6. Summary

Libraries NI have requested the free use of the Training Room, Dunanney Centre on various dates throughout February 2026 for the delivery of core social activities whilst the Rathcoole Library undergoes refurbishment work. There is no cost to the Council for facilitating this request.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the request for Libraries NI to have free use of the Training Room in the Dunanney Centre on various dates during February 2026 for the delivery of core social activities be approved.

Prepared by: Paul Townsend, Community Facilities Coordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.6 CP/CP/007 A FAIRER PATHWAY TO SETTLEMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Home Office “A Fairer Pathway to Settlement” consultation.

2. Introduction

The Home Office has launched a public consultation entitled “A Fairer Pathway to Settlement”, setting out proposals to reform the UK's settlement system through an earned settlement approach. The consultation seeks views on how settlement requirements may be structured in future and the potential impacts of these changes.

3. Key Issues

Participation in the consultation will ensure that the Council has the opportunity to consider the proposals.

Key points include:

- The consultation outlines proposed changes to settlement pathways, with a focus on an earned approach.
- Responses submitted directly to the Home Office will be formally considered as part of the consultation process.
- In addition to responding directly to the Home Office, The Executive Office (TEO) has requested that Councils share their views to help inform advice provided to Ministers.
- TEO has indicated that understanding perspectives from Councils will support a holistic assessment of the potential impacts of the proposals and help identify any concerns or issues arising from them.

Members' views and feedback will therefore be valuable in shaping both the Council's response and the broader advice provided at Executive level.

The consultation has opened and will close on 12 February 2026. The Home Office wishes to hear from a wide range of interested persons and organisations. The consultation documents and associated survey are available online via [Home Office Consultation on Earned Settlement](#) Members are advised that they may wish to respond on a corporate, individual or party-political basis.

4. Summary

The Home Office has launched a consultation “A Fairer Pathway to Settlement” proposing reform to the settlement system that may have implications for communities, services and integration at local level. Input is welcomed from all interested parties. The consultation closes on 12 February 2026. Full details and documentation can be accessed via the Home Office website. Members are advised that they may wish to respond on a corporate, individual or party-political basis.

5. Recommendation

Members' instructions are requested.

Prepared by: Conor Cunning, DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.7 CP/GEN/016 PSNI PROBLEM SOLVING AWARDS 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for attendance at the PSNI Problem Solving Awards in the Harbour Commissioners Office in Belfast on Thursday 19 February 2026.

2. Introduction/Background

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in partnership with the Northern Ireland Policing Board developed the PSNI problem-solving awards not only to recognise problem solving but also as an opportunity to contribute to the growing evidence and knowledge base that will help other police and stakeholders address issues in their community. The awards are one element of a comprehensive plan to embed effective problem-solving leading to more informed, professional and positive outcomes.

The awards are taking place on Thursday 19 February 2026 in the Harbour Commissioners Office in Belfast when winners will be announced.

3. PSNI Problem Solving Awards Shortlist

The Community Development Team in partnership with the PCSP submitted an entry to the Awards and have been shortlisted as finalists in the following category:

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships – Domestic and Sexual Abuse Community Toolkit.

Applications submitted to this category must be problem-oriented projects that have been undertaken by a Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) in partnership with other agencies, including the PSNI (as a key partner), in order to address an issue or issues being experienced in the local community.

The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Community Toolkit was launched by Antrim and Newtownabbey PCSP and PSNI to provide comprehensive, practical and accessible information for community-focused individuals and organisations to recognise the signs of domestic and sexual abuse, respond appropriately and refer individuals to the necessary support and services.

4. PSNI Problem Solving Awards Ceremony

Members are advised the Awards ceremony will take place on 19 February 2026 at the Harbour Commissioners Office in Belfast.

It is proposed that the Mayor, the Chairperson of the Community Development Committee and the Chairperson of the PCSP (or their nominees) accompanied by 2 officers from the Community Development Team attend the Awards.

5. Financial Position/Implication

Members are advised that there is no cost for attendance at the Awards ceremony.

6. Summary

The Community Development Team has successfully been shortlisted as a finalist in the PSNI Problem Solving Awards. It is proposed that the Mayor, the Chairperson of the Community Development Committee and the Chairperson of the PCSP (or their nominees) accompanied by 2 officers from the Community Development Team attend the awards ceremony in the Harbour Commissioners Office in Belfast on 19th February 2026.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Mayor, the Chairperson of the Community Development Committee and the Chairperson of the Policing Community Safety Partnership (or their nominees), accompanied by 2 officers attend the PSNI Problem Solving Awards ceremony on Thursday 19th February 2026 in Belfast.

Prepared by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.8 CP/CD/476 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT AID PROGRAMME SMALL GRANTS FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS 2025/26

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to the Community Development Small Grants Funding Programme awards being recommended.

2. Background

The Small Grants Programme provides financial assistance to groups within the Borough of up to £1,000 towards seeding costs, public and employer's liability insurance, small items of equipment or an activity.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Small Grants Programme was approved by the Council in October 2014 as part of the Council's Community Development Grant Aid Programme.

Members are advised that groups who apply for a small grant are not permitted to apply for any other funding available under the wider Community Development Grant Aid Programme during the course of the 2025/26 financial year.

In December 2019 Members agreed that from 1 April 2020 all Small Grants be assessed on the basis of Pass/Fail against eligibility criteria and not subjected to a scored assessment process. All proposed awards are subject to a signed disclosure from the group confirming that all appropriate supporting documentation is in place and can be provided on request or the offer of funding will be withdrawn.

4. Financial Implication

Members are reminded that the total budget for the 2025/26 Community Development Small Grant Aid Programme is £15,000.

During the month of December, 3 applications were received and assessed by Officers, with 1 application totalling £999.09 recommended for approval, details of which are **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Summary

It is proposed to award 1 Small Grant to the successful applicant as outlined. The Community Development Small Grants will remain open as a rolling programme with applications being reported to the Community Development Committee on a quarterly basis.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Small Grant application requesting a total of £999.09 be approved.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.9 COMD/MCPR/001 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the Council's draft Communications Strategy 2026 to 2030.

2. Introduction

Within the Council's Corporate Plan 2024 to 2030 the four strategic themes of People, Place, Planet and Prosperity are underpinned by high performance and positive profile. Within the Profile section of the Corporate Plan the stated objectives are as follows:

- To raise the Council brand and profile as a place...through the promotion of the Council's distinctiveness; and
- To embrace Council communications by proactively and positively engaging with citizens and showcasing the Borough.

All of the Council's external communications are delivered by the Marketing, Communications and PR Section of the Community and Culture Directorate.

As part of the commitment to delivering this function to the highest standard a Communications Strategy has been developed to ensure delivery of all Corporate Plan Profile aims and objectives.

3. Previous Decisions of the Council

It was agreed at the October 2025 meeting of the Community Development Committee that the Media Protocol be approved for immediate implementation.

4. Communications Strategy

The draft Communications Strategy is **enclosed** for Members' information. It is a comprehensive and forward-looking communications strategy. The strategy sets out what the Council wants to achieve, how communications will support those outcomes and how success will be measured whilst aligning with the Council's vision, values and Corporate Plan.

5. Finance

There are no costs associated with the development of the Council Communications Strategy.

6. Governance

The Strategy will be kept under review with any updates or revisions brought to the Committee for approval.

7. Summary

The delivery of an effective communications strategy underpins the success of the Council's Corporate Plan strategic themes and is vital to raising the Council profile and proactively engaging with citizens and stakeholders. A Communications Strategy has been developed to ensure delivery of the Corporate Plan Profile aims and objectives.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft Council Communications Strategy 2026 to 2030 be approved.

Prepared and Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

4.10 COMD/GR/007 GOOD RELATIONS GRANT AID PROGRAMME 2025/26

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to the Good Relations Grants Funding Programme award being recommended.

2. Background

The Good Relations Grant Programme provides financial assistance to groups within the Borough of up to £2,000 towards activities, events and programmes that align with the aims of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan.

The Good Relations Grant Programme opened for applications on 1 April 2025 and closed on 31 December 2025.

All Good Relations Grants are assessed against eligibility criteria and a scored assessment process. Applicants are required to score a minimum of 60% for an application to be recommended for approval.

3. Previous Decisions by Council

The Good Relations Grant Programme was approved at the May 2025 Community Development Committee as part of the Council's revised Good Relations Action Plan 2025-26.

4. Key Issues

During the months of November – December 2025 3 applications were received and assessed by Officers, with 1 successful application totalling £2,000 recommended for approval.

The project details are **enclosed** for Members' information.

All proposed awards are subject to a signed disclosure from the group confirming that all appropriate supporting documentation is in place and can be provided on request or the offer of funding will be withdrawn.

5. Financial Position/Implication

Members are reminded that the total budget for the 2025/26 Good Relations Grant Programme within the 2025/26 Community Development budget is £5,000.

6. Summary

It is proposed that the Good Relations funding award for £2,000 as detailed in the enclosure be approved.

Good Relations Grants 2025/26 closed for applications on 31 December 2025.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Good Relations Grant award for £2,000 as detailed be approved.

Prepared by: Amy Gribbon, Good Relations Officer

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 CP/CP/243 ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (EVAWG) – FUNDING UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of correspondence received from the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in relation to hosting of two Council EVAWG art projects at an exhibition in Stormont.

2. Background

The Council has been working in partnership with The Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the Programme for Government priority of Ending Violence Against Women and Girls. As part of this the Council delivered two art projects in 2025 as follows:

Liora's Hope – in partnership with White Ribbon and Seeking Refuge Photographic Exhibition – in partnership with Women's Aid ABCLN.

Both projects were funded by TEO and were showcased at the Council's EVAWG event for International Women's Day held in March 2025.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that outline proposals for the EVAWG Momentum Fund to be delivered by the end of March 2025 were approved at the Community Development Committee in December 2024. Proposals included both the above projects.

4. Correspondence from the First and Deputy First Ministers

Given the feedback received in relation to both exhibitions the Director of Community and Culture wrote to the First and Deputy First Ministers in March 2025 to offer them the opportunity to put both projects on display at Stormont.

Correspondence has been received (copy enclosed) from the First and Deputy First Ministers confirming that they would like to host both projects at an exhibition in the Long Gallery Stormont. Officers will work with officials from the EVAWG team to plan the event and exhibition.

5. Finance

There are no costs associated with this activity.

6. Summary

Correspondence has been received from the First and Deputy First Ministers advising that they would like to host two of the Council's EVAWG projects at an exhibition in the Long Gallery Stormont which will include an evening launch event. When further details of the event are developed an update will be provided to Members.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared and Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

5.2 COMD/GR/006 ULSTER-SCOTS LEID WEEK 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the delivery and impact of the 2025 Ulster Scots Leid Week programme.

2. Introduction/Background

Ulster-Scots Leid Week (Ulster-Scots Language Week) is an annual event that has been run by the Ulster-Scots Agency since 2019. The event celebrates the Ulster-Scots language, history, and culture through a diverse and engaging public programme that includes interactive language workshops, storytelling sessions, community events, and exhibitions. This year Leid Week took place from 24-28 November 2025.

The Council has participated in Leid week annually since 2019 and plans to participate are included in the Good Relations Cultural Awareness Programme.

In previous years, the Council has participated in Leid Week by offering walking tours of the Whitehouse, Antrim, and Ballyclare, as well as music, poetry, history, and language workshops for people of all ages. It was anticipated to deliver a broader programme for this year's Leid Week, to incorporate increased language learning opportunities and engagement with children and young people.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that the Good Relations Action Plan 2025/26 was approved at the May 2025 Community Development Committee with provision for the 2025 Ulster-Scots Leid Week activity included.

Members are reminded that the Ulster Scots Leid Week programme overview was noted at the September 2025 Community Development Committee.

4. Leid Week 2025

The Good Relations Team delivered 10 events across the Borough, engaging a total of 199 participants.

Events engaged a wide range of participants including school groups, families and individuals with both existing and emerging interest in Ulster Scots language and heritage. Activities were hosted in Council venues, libraries, community settings and heritage sites, ensuring broad accessibility and Borough-wide reach.

Promotion included a co-ordinated social media campaign, event advertising, and a photo call with the Mayor and Ulster-Scots Agency. A press release and photography support were arranged in partnership with the Council's Communications Team. The Yarns Book Launch welcomed the

newly appointed Commissioner for the Ulster Scots and the Ulster British tradition, Lee Reynolds and featured on BBC Kintra and NTV

Programme Highlights included:

- OCN Level 1 Ulster-Scots Awareness Training: Delivered in partnership with the Ulster-Scots Community Network in advance of Leid Week. 19 participants completed the course on Ulster-Scots heritage, culture and language, with certificates presented at the *Yarns* launch event.
- Antrim Ulster-Scots Walking Tour: A guided heritage tour exploring Antrim's Ulster-Scots legacy, including key historical sites and local language insights.
- Leid and Lairn Language Workshop: An introductory Ulster-Scots language session delivered by Dr Dayna Jost, focusing on everyday vocabulary, pronunciation and conversational use.
- Launch of *Yarns* Poetry Collection: Delivered in partnership with the Ulster-Scots Agency. The event featured readings, music and dance, with the Commissioner for the Ulster Scots and the Ulster-British Tradition, Lee Reynolds, addressing attendees and presenting OCN certificates.
- South Antrim Poetry Workshop: A creative writing workshop led by Dr Frank Ferguson, of Ulster University, introducing pupils to the South Antrim poetry tradition.
- More than a Birler for Burns- Seamus Heaney's Ulster-Scots Poetry: A public talk by Dr Frank Ferguson exploring Heaney's engagement with Scots and Ulster-Scots literary traditions.
- Children's Ulster-Scots Workshop: Four school classes participated in language, craft, song and storytelling activities led by Shirlie Gregg from the Ulster Scot Agency.
- Bards and Bachles: My Journey in Ulster Scots: A talk by historian Dr. David Hume, followed by a guided tour of Sentry Hill, exploring Ulster-Scots identity and heritage.

Some photographs are **enclosed** for Members' information.

5. Financial Position/Implication

Members are reminded that provision of £3,000 for 2025 Ulster-Scots Leid Week activity was made in the 2025/26 Good Relations Action Plan and budget. Members are advised that £1,250 of additional funding was secured from the Ulster Scots Agency to support programme delivery.

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

The 2025/26 Good Relations Action Plan has been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and has been screened out for the need of an Equality Impact Assessment. In addition, a Rural Needs screening exercise has been completed.

7. Summary

Ulster Scots Leid Week 2025 was delivered cross the Borough from 24-28 November 2025. The programme featured 10 inclusive events engaging 199 participants, including local schools. Language, heritage and cultural activities spanned the Borough and strengthened awareness and appreciation of the Ulster Scots language and tradition.

Highlights included the launch of *Yarns* Poetry Collection, OCN Level 1 Ulster-Scots Awareness Training and school children's workshops. The programme was supported by cross-departmental collaboration within Council, funding from the Ulster-Scots Agency, and partnerships Ulster Scots Community Network, as well as knowledgeable practitioners.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the update on the delivery and impact of the 2025 Ulster Scots Leid Week programme be noted.

Prepared by: Amy Gribbon, Good Relations Officer

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

5.3 CP/CP/007 COMMUNITY PHARMACY PALLIATIVE CARE NETWORK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Network and the role of community pharmacies in supporting palliative and end-of-life patients, their families and carers across Northern Ireland.

2. Introduction

The Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Network operates across Northern Ireland to ensure that patients receiving palliative and end-of-life care can access essential medicines and professional advice in a timely and local manner. The Network supports patients who are being cared for at home or in care settings, as well as their families and carers, by improving access to urgent medicines and providing expert guidance on their appropriate use.

All community pharmacies in Northern Ireland provide palliative care services. However, pharmacies that are part of the Palliative Care Network hold additional stocks of key medicines to meet urgent palliative care needs during normal pharmacy opening hours. This helps reduce delays in treatment and supports continuity of care at critical times.

The Network also acts as a local hub of information and expertise, supporting patients, carers and healthcare professionals involved in palliative and end-of-life care.

3. Key issues

Members are advised a newly enhanced Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Service was launched on 15 December 2025. Northern Ireland is projected to experience a significant rise in demand for palliative care services, with a 32% increase expected between 2023 and 2048.

To address this growing need, the Department of Health has collaborated with Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland to review current arrangements.

This review led to the creation of the enhanced Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Network, enabling participating pharmacies to:

- Improve patient care at the end of life;
- Provide expert advice on the use of palliative medicines;
- Ensure timely and accurate dispensing of prescriptions; and
- Provide compassionate support to patients, their families and carers during one of life's most difficult times;

The launch of this Network marks an important step in strengthening palliative care provision across Northern Ireland. Initially, the service will operate through 60 pharmacies across Northern Ireland, ensuring regional coverage. A factsheet is **enclosed** for Members' information.

It is important to note the scope of the service. The Network does not provide an on-call service outside normal pharmacy opening hours. Instead, it focuses on ensuring that appropriate medicines are readily available when pharmacies are open, reducing the need for emergency or out-of-hours prescribing where possible.

Information on local Network pharmacies is publicly available, allowing patients, carers and professionals to identify their nearest participating pharmacy through the Business Services Organisation (BSO) website.

4. Summary

The Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Network plays an important role in supporting palliative and end-of-life care across Northern Ireland. By ensuring timely access to essential medicines and providing expert advice through local community pharmacies the Network helps support patients, families and carers at a critical stage of care. All community pharmacies contribute to palliative care services, with Network pharmacies holding additional stock to meet urgent needs.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Conor Cunning, DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

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