



3 November 2022

Committee Chair: Councillor M Magill
Committee Vice-Chair: Alderman M Girvan

Committee Members: Aldermen – T Burns and P Michael

Councillors – H Cushinan, S Flanagan, R Foster,
M Goodman, B Mallon, A McAuley, T McGrann,
N Ramsay, V Robinson, B Webb and R Wilson

Dear Member

MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee will be held in the **Round Tower Chamber, Antrim Civic Centre on Tuesday 8 November 2022 at 6.30 pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

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

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

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

For any queries please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9034 0048/028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

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**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2022**

3 INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 G/MSMO/018 NILGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Members are advised that correspondence (enclosed) has been received in relation to the 2023 NILGA Annual Conference.

The event will be held on Thursday 23 February 2023 in the Silver Birch Hotel, Omagh. The theme for this year's event is "Responding to Future Challenges".

At present this is a "Save the Date" so there is no indication of free places being available or the costs involved, however in previous years NILGA has allocated 2 free places to Council.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council's NILGA representatives attend the event as an approved duty.

Prepared by: Member Services

Approved by: Jacqui Dixon, Chief Executive

4.2 G/BCEP/5 DRAFT REVISED JOINT EMERGENCY CALL-OFF CONTRACT PROTOCOL

Purpose of Report

To seek approval from Members to sign the revised Joint Emergency Call-Off Contract Protocol between Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and NI Councils which may help enhance Council's response to a civil emergency.

Introduction

The NIHE has a number of measured term contracts in place to facilitate response maintenance to its properties. The contracts are on a local council basis and have been utilised over the years by NIHE and councils in the aftermath of emergencies, for example flooding, to provide practical assistance to communities and households that have been affected. This protocol permits local councils to access these contracts at pre-agreed rates when an emergency has occurred.

Key Points

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council approved the Joint Emergency Call-Off Contracts Protocol back in June 2018. An updated draft protocol has been received for approval and is **enclosed**.

The protocol details NIHE contracts/contractors that could be utilised by the Local Councils to support local communities in the aftermath of major emergencies. This may be required should existing Council contracts/contractors not have sufficient resource to deal with the support required. It provides a statement of intent, rather than a binding protocol to enable Councils to provide aid during an emergency or business continuity disruption that goes beyond the resources of an individual council.

The Head of Property and Building Services, Building Control and Property Services has been consulted and is content to have the availability of this in an emergency although Council would in all circumstances try using their own contractors in the first instance.

Activation of the protocol will be via formal request by the Chief Executive or nominated representative.

RECOMMENDATION: that Members approve the signing of the revised protocol on the understanding that the use of the protocol will be available if required by the Council.

Prepared by: Liz Johnston, Deputy Director of Performance and Governance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

4.3 G/BCEP/006 ALL PARTY SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP MARCH, JUNE AND SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

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

The minutes of the June and September meeting are **enclosed** for approval.

An overview of the meetings is outlined below:

June 2022

The group was provided with an update on the Council's Climate Action Plan and a presentation from Geological Survey of Northern Ireland. The presentations were subsequently shared with the group.

Following a request by the Chair of the working group, Members agreed to change the name of the group to the Sustainability Working Group to reflect the wide range of subjects considered by the group.

September 2022

Matters covered during the meeting included:

1. Revised Terms of Reference for the newly named Sustainability Working Group A copy of the revised Terms of Reference for the renamed Sustainability Working Group are **enclosed** for approval;
2. An overview of the Climate Act and the likelihood of future targets focusing on Fleet, Energy and Waste. Approval was to be sought from the Policy and Governance Committee to place a focus on these 3 areas within the Climate Change Action Plan;
3. Review of the Five Climate Action Strategic Objectives.
 - i. Reducing emissions from Council estate and operations;
 - ii. Reduce consumption of resources, increasing recycling and reducing waste and encouraging behavioural changes;
 - iii. Reducing emissions from transport by promoting sustainable transport, reducing car travel and encouraging behavioural changes;
 - iv. Reducing energy consumption and emissions across our Borough by proactively supporting homes and businesses through education and awareness communications regarding energy efficiency, decarbonisation, sustainable construction, renewable energy sources and embedding behavioural change;
 - v. Enhancing and protecting Biodiversity on Council property whilst seeking to influence and support collaborative partnerships that champion biodiversity initiatives;

Approval being sought from the Policy and Governance Committee that the five strategic themes still remain appropriate;

4. Council's Climate Change Action Highlights;
5. A Sustainability Screening tool for possible implementation for Council projects;
6. COP27 events plan

The minutes of the June and September meeting are **enclosed** for approval.

RECOMMENDATION: that Members approve

- 1. the minutes from both the Climate Change Working Group meeting in June and the renamed Sustainability Working Group minutes in September 2022;**
- 2. the revised Terms of Reference for the renamed Sustainability Working Group;**
- 3. focus be placed on Energy, Fleet and Waste within the Climate Action Plan to reflect potential future targets in relation to the Climate Act;**
- 4. the Five Climate Action Strategic Objectives remain appropriate for the Council.**

Prepared by: Elaine Girvan, Head of Resilience and Sustainability

Agreed by: Liz Johnston Director of Performance and Governance (Interim)

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

4.4 G-LEG-321/21 STAFFORDSTOWN ROAD, CREGGAN - PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION

Members are advised that correspondence has been received from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) regarding a proposed speed limit reduction at Staffordstown Road, Creggan. A copy of the correspondence and map is **enclosed** for Members' information.

DfI have requested comments from the Council in respect of this proposal.

Members' instructions are requested.

Prepared by: Deirdre Nelson, Paralegal

Approved by: Paul Casey, Borough Lawyer & Head of Legal Services

4.5 P/PLAN/027 RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF RECORDS SCHEDULE – PLANNING SECTION

The Council is currently working in partnership with DfI and all other Councils, except Mid Ulster, to develop a New Planning Portal. Within the requirements for this system is the provision of an integrated GDPR module to enable the removal of electronically stored data and documents in accordance with the Planning Sections elements of the Council's Retention and Disposal Schedule (RADS).

In order to ensure a consistent approach to the publication and availability of planning information for all citizens in NI the Planning Senior Administrative Officer Group, which includes representation from Mid Ulster District Council, have now reviewed the position and are proposing a revised RADS schedule (**enclosed**) which is consistent across all Councils.

This revised RADS schedule will allow the supplier of the new Planning Portal system to incorporate an appropriate module within the system to enable the Councils' to apply the retention and disposal requirements to electronic files. The current Northern Ireland Planning Portal does not offer the functionality to apply retention and disposal requirements to electronic files.

The revised RADS schedule remains broadly in line with the previous schedule. The main changes are the reduction in the retention period for planning files from 10 years to 6 years and the increasing of the retention period for Planning Enforcement records from 1 year to 2 years.

Members are asked to note that Section 242 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 requires for the permanent retention of a Planning Register and therefore the main documents from planning application files, such as the application form, decision notice and stamped drawings and any other documents relevant to Section 242 of the 2011 Act will be permanently retained.

RECOMMENDATION: that the revised RADS schedule for planning files be approved.

Prepared by: Kathryn Bradley, Economic Development and Planning
Business Support Manager

Approved by: Majella McAllister, Director of Economic Development and
Planning

4.6 **G/MSMO/008/VOL 3 PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CLOSURE OF MUCKAMORE ABBEY HOSPITAL**

Correspondence (**enclosed**) has been received from the Department of Health, Muckamore Abbey Review Team advising of the launch of Public Consultation on Proposed Closure of Muckamore Abbey Hospital.

Full details of the consultation and a link to the survey are available at [Public consultation on future of Muckamore Abbey Hospital | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/public-consultation-on-future-of-muckamore-abbey-hospital)

The survey will be open until 24 January 2023.

Contacts in relation to the consultation are:

Department of Health
Muckamore Abbey Review Team
Room D2:17
Castle Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3SQ

Members may wish to respond on a corporate, individual or party political basis.

The Committee's instructions are requested.

Prepared by: Member Services

Approved by: Jacqui Dixon, Chief Executive

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 G/MSMO/27 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Members are advised that a meeting of the Member Development Working Group took place on Monday 10 October 2022.

A copy of the Minutes of the meeting are **enclosed** for Members' information.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Minutes of the Member Development Working Group Meeting held on Monday 10 October 2022 be noted.

Prepared by: Diane Moorehead, Employee Performance and Development Manager

Approved by: Debbie Rogers, Director of Organisation Development

5.2 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

Members are reminded that the Department for Communities (DfC) issued revised guidance (Local Government Circular 19/2016) on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments in November 2016. This guidance requested councils to record specific performance targets of 10 working days and 30 calendar days and continue a cycle of quarterly reporting on prompt payment performance by councils to the DfC and its publication on their website.

The Council's prompt payment performance for the period **1 July 2022 to 30 September 2022** is set out below:

The default target for paying invoices, where no other terms are agreed, is 30 days.

(N.B. 30 days target is 30 calendar days and 10 days is 10 working days).

During the above period, the Council paid invoices totalling £14,729,862.

The Council paid 5,155 invoices within the 30-day target. (85%)

The Council paid 3,615 invoices within the 10-day target. (59%)

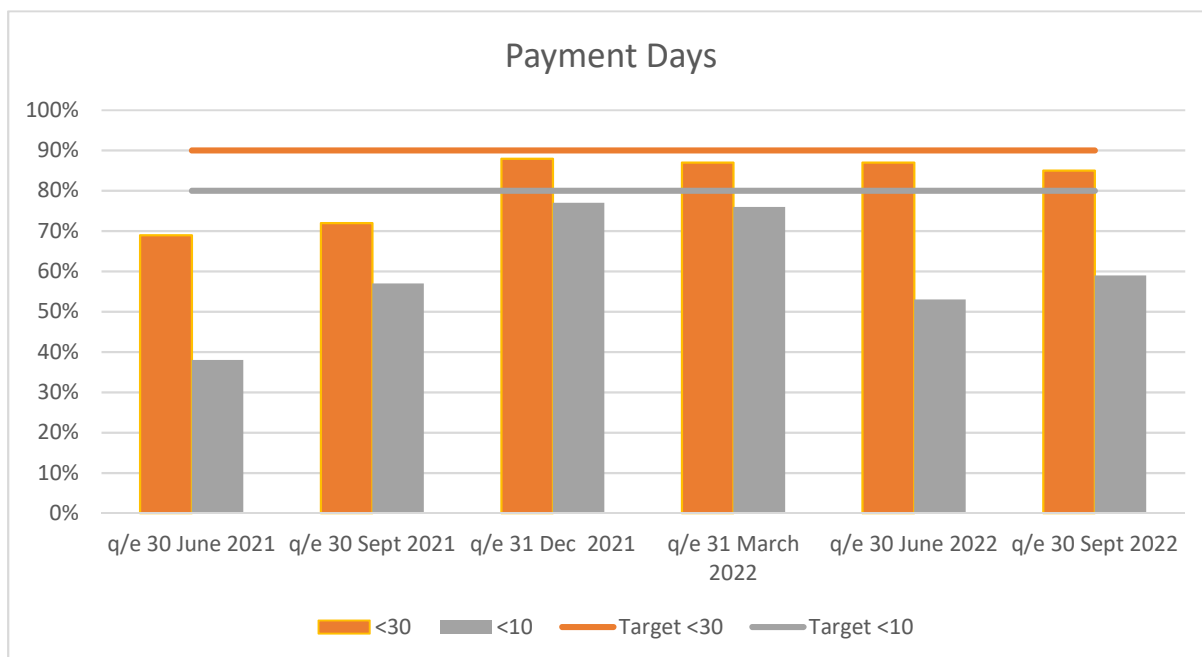
The Council paid 935 invoices outside of the 30-day target. (15%)

The Council has set a target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days and 80% within 10 days.

This compares to quarterly results for 2021/22 as follows:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
q/e 30 June 2021	3,352	69%	38%
q/e 30 September 2021	5,867	72%	57%
q/e 31 December 2021	6,575	88%	77%
q/e 31 March 2022	5,539	87%	76%
q/e 30 June 2022	4,254	87%	53%
q/e 30 September 2022	6,090	85%	59%

The performance presented graphically highlights the performance metrics for the above.



Members will recall that a new finance system went 'live' on 12 April 2021. This impacted on performance whilst the new system and procedures were embedded.

The table and graph above show the performance improvement over the last year. Performance levels have been maintained in for the 30-day figure and additional resources have been applied to regain ground lost for the 10-day figure.

The prompt payment performance for Councils in Northern Ireland is published quarterly by the Department for Communities (DfC). The prompt payment performance for the quarter ended 30 June 2022 is enclosed; the Council's performance for Quarter 2 against the average performance for the other Councils for Quarter 1 of 2022/23 is set out in the table below:

Council	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Antrim & Newtownabbey BC (Quarter 2 22/23)	85%	59%
All Councils (Quarter 1 22/23)	89%	70%

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance and Governance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5.3 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2022 – Period 06

A budget report for September 2022 – Period 06 is enclosed for Members information.

The Council's financial position at the end of September 2022 shows an adverse variance on Net Cost of Services of £145K

Members will note the significant overspend in energy (£1.24M for the entire organisation at Period 6) The energy overspend is most notable in Operations Department particularly gas and electricity costs within Leisure and Property Services and also vehicle and machinery fuel costs within waste.

There are a number of options available to Council at year end to mitigate the overspend in energy. Correspondence received from DFC enclosed permits the use of COVID19 reserves to cover increased operating costs as a result of the cost of living crisis, and LPS have informed Council that currently the in year APP is positive (£738K October 2022).

The usage and cost of energy will be continually reviewed and reported to Council as we move in the second half of the 2022/23 financial year.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance and Capital

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance

5.4 G/DPFI/2 QUARTERLY REPORT ON FOI/EIR/DPA REQUESTS

A report has been prepared on requests received in the second quarter of the year (1 July to 30 September 2022) under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) and this is **enclosed**.

A summary of the quarter's statistics is as follows:

- There was an 11.6% increase in the number of requests on the same period the previous year.
- Of the 77 requests received, 53 were under FOI, 23 under EIR and 1 under DPA.
- 61 requests were completed within the quarter.
- 89% of the requests were completed within the legislative deadlines of 20 days for FOI and EIR requests and a calendar month for requests made under DPA.
- The sections that received the most requests in the quarter were Environmental Health (18), Finance (18), Planning (14), Comms and Customer Services (11), Property and Building Services (10) and HR (10).
- No appeals were received during the quarter
- No complaints to the ICO were notified within the quarter.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Helen McBride, Information Governance Manager

Agreed by: Liz Johnston, Deputy Director of Performance and Governance (Interim)

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5.5 HR/GEN/019 MANAGING ATTENDANCE

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the management of attendance from April 2022 – September 2022 (summary **enclosed**).

ABSENCE – 1 APRIL 2022 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

Members are advised that absence at the end of September was above target by 1.91 days with 8.03 average days lost per employee against a target of 6.12 days. Covid absence is not included in the reported figures.

A number of long term absence cases have resulted in employees exhausting their sick pay entitlement and although no additional cost is incurred by the Council during the 'no pay' periods – these days lost are 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 September 2022 would have been 6.72 days.

Analysis of this month's absence figures has highlighted the following:

Long term absence

- Accounts for 91% of the absence figures.
- The main reason for long term absence remains within the "other category" of absence. Types of absence include:
 - Absence following family bereavement
 - Surgery/hospitalisation
 - Road Traffic Accident
- 45% of these long term cases are deemed unpreventable and therefore more challenging to manage including hospital procedures, broken bones, road traffic accidents and heart attacks.
- To date, 5 Formal Case Reviews have been concluded with 1 at appeal stage. This leaves 5 absence cases at Formal Case Review stage with 1 in progress (potential ill health retirement) and 4 to be progressed to Formal Case review (2 of which are pending Employee Relations case outcomes).
- 6 long term cases have exhausted their sick pay entitlement.
- To date, 35 long term cases returned to work.

Short term absence

- Accounts for 9% of the absence figures.
- The main reasons for absence are
 - Other - Cold/flu, vomiting
 - Musculoskeletal problems
 - Back and neck problems
 - Stress Depression, Mental Health
 - Infection

It is noted that absence related to stress (including work related stress) currently accounts for 36% of the overall absence (both long term and short term). This is a significant reduction against 46% the previous month. The Council remains focused on encouraging health and wellbeing in the workplace, and continues to promote the Employee Assistance Programme through Inspire offering 24/7 confidential support in addition to other wellbeing initiatives in place.

Ongoing actions

- The Head of HR and HR Manager have held several bi-monthly meetings to date with the directorates with the highest levels of absence, namely Parks & Leisure, Waste Operations and Community Planning. The relevant Directors, Deputy Directors & Heads of Service attend. These meetings cover in depth analysis of absence cases and the associated reasons, to agree next steps for complex cases and to schedule formal case reviews where appropriate. General feedback has been positive with the targeted focus valued.
- Following a contract management meeting with Independent Occupational Health, we note an improvement in the standard of reports received from IOH which in turn, supports more focussed case management. The next contract management meeting is scheduled for December 2022.
- A contract management meeting has also recently taken place with Inspire to discuss current waiting times and challenges along with discussions around further promotion of the service and additional support materials available. Follow-up meetings are due to take place in December 2022. It should be noted that waiting times for Inspire have subsequently reduced following this recent meeting.
- Monthly case management discussion meetings scheduled to review complex cases with an Occupational Health consultant. Case managers will attend these sessions to ensure effective use of the Occupational Health service and to support earlier returns to work where possible.
- Training has commenced for managers within Parks on how to effectively manage their absence caseloads. Absence management toolkits are also under development to further assist managers.
- Development of online training module on the importance of attending work, to be rolled out to new staff initially and then across the wider organisation.
- Delivery of the Wellbeing Calendar with access to the flu vaccine for staff and Elected Members was delivered on 18 and 19 October 2022. All 90 flu vaccines offered were used, with 9.9% take up from Waste, 8.1% take up from Leisure and 5.4% uptake from Parks.
- An overview of the Inspire Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Sessions is scheduled for 30 November in Antrim Civic Centre and 14 December 2022 in Mossley Mill. These sessions will be delivered by Inspire and are

open for all Managers/Supervisors to attend in order to familiarise themselves with the service and how they can best support their staff.

- Continued provision of physiotherapy services for appropriate cases (back and musculoskeletal related absence)

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Victoria Stewart, HR Systems and Data Analyst

Reviewed by: Jennifer Close, Head of Human Resources

Approved by: Debbie Rogers, Director of Organisation Development

5.6 CCS/CS/006 COMMUNICATIONS & CUSTOMER CHANNELS REPORT

Members are 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 is to provide an update on the indicators that the Plan set out as measurements of progress towards this target covering the first and second quarters of 2022-23.

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

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

The October issue of Borough Life has just been distributed and will provide us with an updated score for next month’s channel report.

2021-22	Target 2022-23	April	May	June	July	August	September
87.5%	80%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	89%	N/A

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

A total of **45,217** calls were presented July to September 2022, a decrease of **2.8%** compared to **46,544** in April to June 2022, with the total of **91,761** calls being **13.8%** higher than the same six month period in 2021.

The percentage of abandoned calls at the end of Quarter two is **4.7%** which is an improvement on the Quarter one result of **5%**. The overall percentage for abandoned calls for the first half of the year is **4.9%** which is an overall improvement on the same period of 2021 which was **5.9%**.

As we enter a busy period of events and service demands across the whole of the Council, the Customer Service team will continue to support sections with addition resource to maintain high levels of customer service.

We have achieved at least 600,000 online transactions:-

Officers continue 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 focuses upon the number of online transactions including:

- Caravan bookings
- Online theatre and events bookings
- Leisure bookings
- Dog licensing applications
- Bulky waste bookings

By the end of September 2022, there had been **412,597** online transactions, which is **68.8%** of the target for the year. There has been a sharp increase in online theatre and events bookings with the release of Enchanted Winter Garden tickets.

2021-22	Target 2022-23	April	May	June	July	August	September
652,593	600,000	67,844	60,947	48,091	52,203	61,639	121,873

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

Downloads of the ANBorough App through the official app stores to date in 2022-23 total **7,006**, this is **38.7%** above target for the year.

Since the launch of the app in September 2019 a total of **36,944** downloads have been made, across Android and Apple devices (to the end of September 2022).

2021-22	Target 2022-23	April	May	June	July	August	September
14,481	5,062	1,104	1,241	1,130	1,207	1,227	1,097

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

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Agreed by: Nicola McCullough, Head of Communications and Customers

Approved by: Debbie Rogers, Director of Organisation Development

5.7 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 are used to inform service improvements. The feedback we receive through consultation and surveys enables our residents to shape how we deliver our services.

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

Consultations & Surveys YTD 2022/23

Please see below the number of consultations and surveys that have been carried out to since 1 April 2022 to 31 October 2022 and the relevant number of responses received.

Consultations April – October 2022	Number of Consultees
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Integrated Masterplan	66*
Glengormley Town Centre Environmental Improvements Pre-Application Community Consultation	13*
79	

*Consultation still open more responses will be received

Surveys April – October 2022	Number of Survey Responses
Borough Life – Our Beautiful Borough	175
Garden Show Ireland 2022	1267
Balmoral Show 2022	89
Balmoral Show 2022 – Business and Traders Survey	6
Ballyclare Mayfair 2022	12
Borough Life – Council's Digital Services	180
The Old Courthouse	14
Theatre at the Mill	60
Tourism Accommodation Providers	14
Sixmile Leisure Centre Fitness Suite	31
Summer Schemes 2022	122
Inclusive Summer Scheme 2022	11
Borough Life – Feeling Safe in our Borough	55*
2036	

*Survey still open more responses will be received

Officers receive a detailed report from each consultation or survey, which contains a summary of comments, and actions are developed as a response to feedback.

Key Survey Information from surveys to date:

Our Beautiful Borough

175 residents responded to the survey in the April Borough Life issue.

- 74.3% of residents felt proud of their surroundings
- 86.7% of respondents were satisfied with Council parks and open spaces
- 62.8% of residents were satisfied with the cleanliness of roads and streets in their area
- 78.4% of people were satisfied that litter bins were well maintained and emptied regularly
- 23.4% replied that they had previously reporting littering or fly-tipping
- 44 respondents stated their interest in taking part in a community litter pick, with a further 69 requesting additional information
- 29 people were interested in forming/joining a group to enhance their local area, with 74 more asking for further details
- A number of respondents expressed an interest in finding out more about or expressed an interest in joining litter picks.

As a result of the above responses and promotion of the Big Spring Clean, participants that took part in litter picks during May increased from 100 in 2021 to 300 in the same period of 2022.

Garden Show Ireland

Garden Show Ireland took place at Antrim Castle Gardens from 29 April 2022 to 1 May 2022, with 1,267 attendees who responded to a post event survey which was e-mailed directly to all customers who booked tickets.

Below are some key results:

- 81.2% of respondents were satisfied with the event
- 88.4% believed that the event raised the profile of the Borough
- 22.4% of attendees visited another attraction/restaurant in the Borough before, or after, attending the show
- 88.35% indicated they were satisfied with the accessibility options of the event

Comments and feedback is used in planning for the 2023 event.

Balmoral Show

Two separate consultations gathered feedback from local businesses participating in the Council's event stand, all of whom reported a positive experience and were happy with the location of the Council stand and from visitors during the show.

Below are some key results:

- 97.75% thought the stand was in a good location

- 96.6% found the Event Stand to be interesting and informative
- 98.9% found Council staff to be helpful and engaging
- 97.75% were satisfied with their experience at the Council Event stand

Feedback included:

"I thought the council stand was a great size, well positioned in the food pavillion and gave a great opportunity for a variety of different businesses to showcase their products and services. I really appreciate the chance to be a part of it"

Comments and feedback will be used to shape the Council's attendance at the 2023 event.

Council's Digital Services

180 residents responded to the survey in the July issue of Borough Life.

Below are some key results:

- 75.6% of residents stated they were well informed about events in the Borough
- 82.2% believe they are well informed about Council services
- 47.8% felt that they were well informed about what Councillors do
- 80% used one of the Council's digital platforms in the last twelve months
- 86.4% were satisfied with how the Council communicates with them
- 93.9% found it easy to navigate our digital platforms

A number of suggested articles for the Borough Life magazine will be reviewed for consideration in future issues. 57 respondents indicated their interest in participating in discussions about how Council informs and communicates with residents and will be considered in focus groups going forward.

Summer Schemes

A post-scheme evaluation was carried out with parents, and 122 responses were received.

Below are some key results:

- 95.9% were satisfied with the value for money of the schemes
- 92.6% found the range of activities satisfactory
- 92.3% of children enjoyed participating
- 86.9% of children would be likely to attend future schemes

Comments about lowering the minimum age for some groups have led to the pilot of five years plus inclusion for the Halloween Camps. Other recommendations will be addressed when planning the main summer scheme for 2023.

Listen 360 Leisure

Listen360 is a digital customer engagement software which is used to survey leisure customers for their feedback on their recent interaction at Council's

Leisure Centres. Customers are sent a communication following a recent visit to a centre, 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 and provides a key metric in measuring customer loyalty as well as providing leisure management key insights into customer's views of the leisure centres. The current rolling score for leisure is 63% against a UK leisure standard of 40%. To note that the Net Promoter Score is a current Corporate Performance Indicator for the Leisure Service.

Some key annual statistics relating to our daily surveys are as follows:

- Total survey requests: 11620
- Total responses: 3343
- Staff, Facilities and Courtesy were consistently the top 3 responses/mentions from customers over the past 12 months
- Equipment and Bookings were the most frequently mentioned
- Crumlin LC and Ballyearl Arts and Leisure show the highest upward trend in positive comments
- Respondents by majority are female (44%) and the 25-54 age range (77%)

Upcoming Consultation and Surveys

Please see below the planned consultations, which may be subject to change. Outputs from the surveys will be reported through the appropriate Committee when complete.

Upcoming Consultations and Surveys	
Halloween Events 2022 Survey	November 2022
Enchanted Winter Garden 2022 Survey	December 2022
Theatre Visitor Satisfaction Survey	January 2023
Borough Life – Cleanliness of the Borough Survey	January 2023
Equality Scheme and Action Plan Consultation	January 2023
Corporate Improvement Plan 2023 -2024 Consultation	March 2023
PEACEPLUS Programme Consultation	TBC

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Customer Services Officer / James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Reviewed by: Nicola McCullough, Head of Communications and Customers

Approved By: Debbie Rogers, Director of Organisation Development

5.8 CE/OA/012 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP PANEL MEETING

The Local Government Partnership Panel provides a structured, political relationship between central and local government to discuss strategic policy and operational matters of mutual interest and concern.

The Partnership Panel met on the 27 October 2022. Supporting material received in relation to this meeting is **enclosed** for Members' Information.

The next meeting of the panel is planned for 22 February 2023.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Denise Lynn, PA to Director of Finance and Governance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5.9 HR/HR/019 - AGENCY STAFF UPDATE

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

- Maternity leave
- Secondments
- Sickness absence
- Vacant posts

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

Current Agency staff

The table appended provides an update for Members on the use of agency staff in September 2022 compared to September 2019 (pre covid-19). It excludes limited ad-hoc agency cover, which is necessary to provide operational cover, at short notice (enclosed). Given the exceptional nature of 2020/21; 2019/20 agency figures have been used for comparison.

In reviewing the number of agency workers it should be noted that:

- the number of agency workers has reduced from 88 in September 2019 to 58 in September 2022
- there are less agency workers covering sickness absence and vacancies on structures
- agency workers are used more to provide ad-hoc cover

Cost of Agency

The enclosure sets out expenditure on agency workers in September 2022.

The cost of agency staff has increased for the period of 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022 at 8.12% of all staffing costs compared to 7% for the same period in 2019/2020 (pre-covid).

The increased costs are impacted by:

- the 1.75% NJC pay increase that is also applicable to agency workers
- increase in National Insurance of 1.25% from 6 April 2022

In 2022/2023

While there are currently 18 Seasonal Grounds Maintenance workers in place, this cover is anticipated to finish in October/November 2022 and the reduction in numbers will be apparent in December's update report.

It continues to be challenging to fill roles through the agencies due to the current labour market and we are directly recruiting and filling vacancies that are currently covered by agency workers.

We will continue to recruit to fill vacancies across all sections and reduce the number of agency workers covering the vacancies with agency workers used for more ad hoc, seasonal, temporary cover when required.

RECOMMENDATION: that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Kirsty Clarke, Human Resources Advisor (Systems)

Agreed by: Jennifer Close, Head of Human Resources

Approved by: Debbie Rogers, Director of Organisation Development