



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD
IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Alderman J McGrath
- Members Present** : Aldermen - T Burns and M Girvan
Councillors – J Archibald, A Bennington, M Cooper,
R Foster, J Gilmour, N Kelly, R Kinnear, J Montgomery,
N McClelland, S Ross and R Swann
- Non Committee Members** : Aldermen – L Clarke and D Kinahan
Councillors – V McWilliam and B Webb
- Officers Present** : Director of Operations - G Girvan
Head of Leisure - M McDowell
Head of Environmental Health - C Todd
Head of Parks - I McMullan
ICT Change Officer - A Cole
Media and Marketing Officer - J Heasley
Mayor and Member Services Officer - S Fisher

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the February Operations Committee meeting and reminded all present of the recording requirements.

1 APOLOGIES

Councillor A Logue

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 3.2 – Councillor J Montgomery

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 L/LEI/2 MARY PETERS TRUST – REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE 2020/21

Correspondence was again received this year from the Mary Peters Trust, and was circulated, requesting financial support for its sporting awards to upcoming athletes. The Trust provides encouragement and financial support to young sports men and women from across Northern Ireland in a range of sporting disciplines including: Gymnastics, Hockey, Soccer, Triathlon, Cycling, Basketball, Boxing, Fencing, Golf, Taekwondo, Athletics, Weight-lifting and Yachting.

Council support for the last 3 financial years had been £2,000 per annum. A list of those athletes from the Borough who have received support is set out in the letter.

The Mayor had agreed to host a reception for the Mary Peters Trust grant recipients and Mary Peters would be invited to attend.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

a contribution of £2,000 be made to support the work of the Mary Peters Trust within the Borough for 2020/2021.

ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Head of Leisure

Having declared an interest in the next item, Councillor Montgomery left the Chamber.

3.2 PK/GEN/035/VOL2 GRASS MANAGEMENT SUB GROUP

The minutes of the most recent meeting of the Grass Management Sub Group, which took place on 6 January 2020, were circulated.

In summary, Members were updated on:

- Roundabout improvement proposals for the next phase of six roundabouts
- Seasonal planting plans
- Proposals for living Christmas trees
- Proposal to develop a rose garden at the green at Hazelbank
- Proposed development of a Memorial Garden at Sixmile Cemetery
- Judges for the Best Kept Garden Competition 2020
- Town and Villages Action Plan deferral until next Grass Management Sub Group meeting
- Ballyclare District Historical Association request
- Provision of solar benches pilot

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor McClelland and agreed that

the minutes of the Grass Management Sub group of 6 January 2020 and the recommendations therein are approved and that Macedon is added to the areas to receive a Living Christmas tree.

ACTION BY: Ivor McMullan, Head of Parks

Councillor Montgomery returned to the Chamber.

The Chair advised that the following supplementary item would be taken at this point.

3.3 L/LEI/SD/013 SHORELINE TRIATHLON 2020

Members were reminded that Council has held an annual triathlon event in the Borough for a number of years. The 2019 triathlon, was re-named the Shoreline Triathlon to reflect the change of venue to Jordanstown Lough Shore Park and Hazelbank, and also that the event coincided with the hugely successful Shoreline Festival held over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

Due to the tides at Belfast Lough being unsuitable for the Bank Holiday weekend, it was proposed to change the date of the event to Sunday 16 August at 9.30am. The start, finish and transition area will be located at the Lough Shore Park which allows for an open water swim in Belfast Lough, cycling will take place along the Shore Road area, and the running will route will be along the Jordanstown and Hazelbank Shoreline.

Entries for the race are managed through Council's website. Other key partners for the event include PSNI, DfI Roads and local sports clubs.

In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Leisure agreed to clarify any costs for external agencies involved in the event.

Proposed by Councillor Ross

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the 2020 Shoreline Triathlon Event is held on Sunday 16th August, starting at 9.30am.

ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Head of Leisure

4 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

4.1 L/LEI/501 QUEST ACCREDITATION

Members were reminded that one of the Operational Improvement Indicators for the Leisure Service in 2019/20 was that all six Leisure Centres achieve Quest accreditation. Quest is a quality assurance scheme for leisure facilities throughout the UK, supported by Sport England, Sport Wales, Sport Scotland, and Sport Northern Ireland as well as organisations and professional bodies such as CIMPSA, ukactive, Chief Leisure Officer's Association, and SPORTA. It is a Continuous Improvement Tool designed to measure how effective organisations are at providing customer service.

In 2019, Antrim Forum and Crumlin Leisure Centre retained their existing accreditation, with Allen Park, Ballyearl, and Sixmile Leisure Centres achieving their first accreditation that year. In January 2020, the Valley Leisure Centre also achieved Quest accreditation for the first time in its operation. In addition to the achievement of Quest, the Valley Leisure Centre had also seen a significant improvement in operational performance in recent years across all metrics. This is best illustrated by the increase in usage of 33% between 2017/18 to 2018/19 and an increase in membership from circa 1,200 members to close to 3,000 since the inception of the More Membership Scheme in October 2017.

The Quest success had been possible because of the hard work and commitment of leisure staff across all centres. The Valley's success in achieving Quest had been complemented by its most recent mystery shopper score, December 2019, with a 20% year on year increase having been achieved. In line with other 5 centres, the Mayor had agreed to host a reception for staff at the Valley.

Members noted that in addition to the improvements which Quest brings to Council's leisure centres, feedback from customers is regarded as one of the most valuable management tools for all Centre Managers. As well as comment cards which are available in all six centres, the Listen 360 customer loyalty software provided very valuable information from customers, whereby a random selection of daily users are emailed seeking their views on their experience within the respective centre. Furthermore, there were bi-annual mystery shopper visits, with Council's info@ email address also providing an additional channel for customers to give feedback. To communicate feedback effectively from centre managers to leisure customers, Officers were currently developing a digital display solution which will include a 'You said... We did' section.

With all six Leisure Centres now accredited, it was proposed that all centres progress to 'Quest Plus' which involves a more extensive assessment over a two year period with an assessment in Year 1 and a review in Year 2.

In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Leisure indicated that budgetary provision was made for all centres in the 2020/2021 estimates.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington
Seconded by Councillor Montgomery and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.2 WM/COMMS/01 WASTE MANAGEMENT PROMOTIONS UPDATE REPORT Q3 2019-2020

A range of awareness and promotional activities continued to be undertaken to increase public participation in Council's recycling and environmental schemes. This included a variety of educational information/awareness

sessions to schools and various groups - youth, seniors, church and community on a variety of topics including waste reduction, reuse, recycling, plastics, litter and Fairtrade.

An update on activities in the last quarter (Oct – Dec 2019) was set out below and images of the events and samples of the awareness messages were circulated.

Education/Awareness sessions – Schools, Community Groups and Events

During the quarter, over 700 people were involved either in events, information sessions or fun days through schools, community groups, events, fun days, WI talks.

Schools, community and other groups are contacted each year in advance of the various campaigns which Council runs e.g. compost awareness week and recycle week. They were offered the opportunity for staff to come out to provide information/awareness sessions to pupils or group members.

In this quarter education/awareness sessions provided for churches and other groups were:

Newtownabbey Methodist Mission BB
Carnmoney Presbyterian Church BB
Church of the Ascension, Cloughfern Brownies
Randalstown Beaver Scouts Troup
Ballyhenry Women's Group – Ballyhenry Presbyterian Church
Templepatrick Horticultural Society
Ballyclare Women's Institute

In the same period education/awareness sessions were also provided in the following schools:

Ballynure Primary School
Doagh Primary School
Greystone Primary School
St Joseph's Primary School Crumlin
Hill Croft Special School
St James Primary School Newtownabbey
Mossley Nursery School
Templepatrick Primary School
St Bernards Primary School
Parkhall Primary School
Tildarg Primary School
Antrim Primary School
Rathcoole Primary School
Ashgrove Nursery School
Round Tower Integrated Primary School
Riverside Special School
Sixmile Integrated Primary School
Edmund Rice College

The Thompson Primary School
Abbotts Cross Primary School
Ballycraigy Primary School
Carnmoney Primary School
Crumlin Integrated Primary School
Loanends Primary School

Some activities were carried out in partnership with NI Water and the arc21 Education vehicle was also used during the period. Topics covered were recycling, litter, reuse, Fairtrade and correct water use. Further education/awareness sessions and/or visits from the waste education bus can be booked through the Waste Education and Awareness Officer.

Social Media and Press

In the run up to Christmas, it was particularly busy from a waste communications perspective with social media posts, press releases and Borough Life articles including:

- waste reduction and Christmas Recycling messages advertised in bus shelters and on billboards throughout the Borough
- food and plastic communications via social media and billboards
- dedicated food waste videos highlighting Christmas food waste or the composting process were on social media channels and appeared in local cinemas over the three busy Christmas weeks.
(<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/bins-recycling/what-can-be-recycled/irecyclerright-1/>)

All posts, videos and articles were designed to reach the maximum number of residents to help to increase the collection of recyclables and food waste, over the busy Christmas period.

European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR)

The annual European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR) was marked by a focus on the ability to reduce waste. Officers developed a week of events and promotions, including the Repair Café launch, Refillution promotion (for water bottles and coffee cups) and the launch of the Wheelie Big challenge. The highlight of the week was the dedicated Waste Reduction Event held at Antrim Castle Gardens. The event covered various aspects of waste prevention, waste reduction, self-sufficiency, reuse, repair, donation to charities, repurposing, upcycling and recycling. There was a selection of stalls representing organisations including charities, Fareshare, NI Nappy Library, Habitat for Humanity, Repair Café, Men's Shed, Friends of Antrim Castle Gardens and Purple Earth shop, along with Northern Ireland Water and the arc21 Education Officer.

The event attracted over 200 people and feedback from the stall holders was positive with some indicating how useful it was to be able to make connections with other charities and volunteers and the ability to promote

and sell products to help in reduction of waste. Generally, the importance of Council supporting the issue of waste reduction was very well received.

Introduction of Recycling

Officers had started the rollout of recycling and composting kerbside collection services to non-standard housing such as sheltered accommodations, multiple occupancy premises and folds. Individual premises have customised operational arrangements in place and have received educational leaflets and talks to assist in successful implementation. Officers were continuing to roll out these services to any areas who currently have no means to recycle. If Members were aware of such areas, they can discuss with officers or provide details through the waste management email address, waste@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk.

Proposed by Councillor Bennington
Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.3 PK/GEN/107 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DAERA): ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE COMPETITION – CALL FOR FURTHER EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Background

Members were reminded that further to the call from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) call for applications to an Environmental Challenge Competition, applications for four Council projects were successful:

- Threemilewater Park (Phase 1) – towards new woodland trail scheme
- New Mossley Active Route – towards local linkage with Newtownabbey Way
- Rea's Wood – formalising access to the shoreline
- Crumlin Glen – widening of footbridge over river

These projects were currently being progressed and funding is to be spent by end of March 2020.

Further Call for Expressions of Interest

DAERA had now invited submission of further Expressions of Interest for outdoor recreation capital schemes. The request came at short notice with a closing date of 17th January 2020, not permitting Officers in sufficient time to report to Committee. Therefore, a small number of projects were submitted - as this is an Expression of Interest only, should DAERA launch this capital funding programme a report on proposed projects will be brought to Committee as appropriate.

| Project Title | Estimated Total Cost* |
|---|------------------------------|
| Threemilewater Park – Phase 2 | £250,000 |
| Valley Park Accessibility Trails – Phase 2 | £40,000 |
| Rea's Wood Improved Access – Phase 2 | £30,000 |
| Crumlin Glen – riverbank restoration and path surfacing | £50,000 |
| Gideon's Green – Bird Reserve (fencing, improved access and bank works) | £50,000 |

**it was anticipated that DAERA will fund up to 50% of total project costs*

Proposed by Councillor Ross
 Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

The Chair advised that Any Other Business would be taken at this point of the meeting.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A Member raised the issue of dog fouling and a number of Members joined in the discussion. While they acknowledged that the Council was proactive in dealing with this issue in terms of enforcement, education and awareness, provision of bins, dog bags and signage, the problem of irresponsible dog owners still persisted.

The Head of Environmental Health confirmed that there was zero tolerance to dog fouling where owners were apprehended. He indicated that a media campaign was being finalised which would focus on an anti dog fouling message across the Borough. He also confirmed that reporting of individuals who allow their dogs to foul on a regular basis is encouraged and each report is followed up.

He advised that Council Officers regularly attend meetings with community groups and that information is available on the website.

In addition, concerns were raised about broken glass on paths, particularly on weekend nights and the need to ensure swift sweeping of town centre areas.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
 Seconded by Councillor Montgomery and agreed that

Officers review the current approach to dealing with dog fouling including the feasibility of additional Enforcement Officers, that the zero tolerance

approach to irresponsible dog owners continues and that fines are issued in every case.

ACTION BY: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

In response to a query from a Member regarding the Gateway Centre shower area, the Director of Operations undertook to raise the matter with the Director of Community Planning.

ACTION BY: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Alderman Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Montgomery and agreed that

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

5. ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

5.1 IN CONFIDENCE WM/arc21/4 arc21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS

As agreed at the November (2015) meeting of Council, the papers for the arc21 Joint Committee Meeting were circulated for:

- January 2020

Members were reminded that these documents are confidential and may be legally privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure so therefore Members should not disclose this information to any third party and the information must be kept secure.

In response to a query from a Member, the Director of Operations undertook to follow up with arc21 with regard to a presentation to the Committee and detail on expenditure.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Bennington and agreed that

the papers 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 audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further committee business, the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting concluded at 6.55 pm.

MAYOR