



6 June 2024

Committee Chairperson: Councillor A O'Lone

Committee Vice-Chairperson: Alderman L Boyle

Committee Members: Aldermen – P Bradley, L Clarke and J Smyth

Councillors – A Bennington, J Burbank, M Cooper, S Cosgrove, H Cushinan, A McAuley, E McLaughlin, V McWilliam, H Magill and L O'Hagan

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 11 June 2024** 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 & Newtownabbey Borough Council

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

For any queries please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

A G E N D A

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**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2024**

3 PRESENTATION

**3.1 FI/GEN/027 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE DIRECTORATE 2023/24
PERFORMANCE**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this presentation is to provide Members an update on the 23/24 performance within the Finance and Governance Directorate.

2. Introduction/Background

The Deputy Director of Finance, John Balmer and the Deputy Director of Governance will deliver a presentation on their section areas.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the presentation be noted.

Prepared and Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 HR/ER/002 LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION, CONSULTATION ON EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STRATEGY 2024-2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to approve the consultation response to the Local Government Staff Commission's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2024-2026.

2. Introduction

The regional Equality, Diversity Group, was established to prioritise and influence equality, good relations and diversity initiatives across local government.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out the direction and focus for Councils in Northern Ireland. First launched in 2011, the Strategy is updated every three to four years.

The Local Government Staff Commission have invited the Council, and other key stakeholders, for their feedback as part of the consultation process.

A copy of the draft Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2024-2026 is **enclosed**.

3. Consultation Response

Officers have reviewed the draft Strategy and are content that the three key objectives:-

- An Inclusive Organisational Culture
- Developing Capability and Leaders
- Measuring Performance, Impact and Legal Compliance

and the associated actions are in line with the Council's ambitions for equality and diversity.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the consultation response on the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2024-2026 be approved.

Prepared and Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

4.2 CCS/EDP/14 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT, EQUALITY COMMISSION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to approve the Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission (ECNI) for April 2023-March 2024.

2. Introduction/ Background

Members are reminded that Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities to have due regard for the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, men and women generally, persons with a disability and persons without and persons with dependants and persons without.

The Council's Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2023-2026, describes certain arrangements that as a public authority, the Council has set-up and is obliged to apply and follow as a means of fulfilling the duties imposed on it by Section 75(1) and (2) (i.e. the duties to have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations).

This includes arrangements for training staff, assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that have been adopted.

A copy of the Council's Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2023-2026 is **enclosed** at Appendix 1 for information, and is also available on the Council's website.

The Council must provide an Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission and outline how those arrangements have been applied and to assess how effective they have been in supporting the Council to comply with the Section 75 duties.

The Annual Progress report for April 2023 to March 2024 is **enclosed** at Appendix 2 for approval.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission (ECNI) April 2023-March 2024 be approved.

Prepared by: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

4.3 CCS/EDP/14 RURAL NEEDS ACT (NI) 2016 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2023/24

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to approve the Annual Rural Needs Monitoring report 2023-2024.

2. Introduction/ Background

Members are reminded that on 1 June 2017, the Rural Needs Act became operational for district councils and government departments.

The Rural Needs Act places a duty on public authorities and local councils, to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies, plans and when designing and delivering public services. It also requires public authorities to provide information to Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) on how they have fulfilled this duty on an annual basis and to collate this information in their annual report.

The Rural Needs Annual Monitoring report for 2023 to 2024 is **enclosed**.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Rural Needs Annual Monitoring report for 2023-2024 be approved.

Prepared by: Ellen Boyd, Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

4.4 HR/ER/002 LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION CONSULTATION ON DRAFT DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to approve the response to the Local Government Staff Commission's (LGSC) consultation on the Draft Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for Local Government Employees in Northern Ireland.

2. Introduction

The Department of Communities tasked the LGSC to develop a Draft Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for Local Government Employees in Northern Ireland. This policy will apply to all local government employees and will be used when disciplinary action is being considered against an employee.

The LGSC have invited the Council, and other key stakeholders, for their feedback as part of the consultation process.

A copy of the Draft LGSC Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for Local Government Employees in Northern Ireland is **enclosed** at Appendix 1.

3. Consultation Response

Officers have reviewed the draft policy and the response is **enclosed** at Appendix 2 for approval.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the consultation response on the Local Government Staff Commission, Draft Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for Local Government Employees in Northern Ireland be approved.

Prepared and Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

4.5 CCS/GEN/011 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ASSOCIATED FRAMEWORK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to approve the Consultation & Engagement Strategy, and associated Framework.

2. Previous Decision of Council

A Communication and Consultation Strategy was approved by Council in January 2017.

3. Background

The Council is committed to listening to people in shaping the Borough and the services that they receive.

4. Consultation & Engagement Strategy and Framework

The Strategy has been updated and retitled to reflect best practice, and support changes in its consultation and engagement methodologies. It also builds upon the existing approaches and expertise that we have developed.

It enhances opportunities to engage, connect, and empower, recognising that meaningful consultation and engagement are crucial for effective shaping and improvement.

A copy of the Consultation & Engagement Strategy and Framework is **enclosed** at Appendix 1.

The Strategy and Framework sets out our vision for consultation and engagement and the principles and standards that we will strive to meet.

These will enable the public to become more involved in our consultations and engagements, to build trust and confidence in our systems, ensure understanding of why we are consulting and sets out what the public can expect from the Council.

5. Governance

The Strategy, approved in 2017, has been screened for Section 75 and a Rural Needs Impact Assessment has been carried out and is **enclosed** at Appendix 2.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Consultation & Engagement Strategy, and associated Framework, be approved.

Prepared by: James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

4.6 G/LEG/044 STANDING ORDERS WORKING GROUP MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval of the minutes as a true and accurate record of the third meeting of the Standing Orders Working Group on 25 April 2024.

2. Background

Following the decision to conduct a review of the Standing Orders at the December 2023 Policy and Governance Committee, Members agreed to the establishment of a Working Group (task and finish) to review Council's current Standing Orders.

The purpose of the Working Group, consisting of Members and relevant Officers, is to make recommendations, on a task and finish principle, to the Policy and Governance Committee in relation to the revision of the Council's Standing Orders to make them relevant to the current modern governance arrangements.

The third meeting of the group took place on 25 April 2024.

3. Outcome

A copy of the minutes of the third meeting of the Standing Orders Working Group is **enclosed** for Members' consideration.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the third meeting of the Standing Orders Working Group on 25 April 2024 be approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Prepared by: Liz Johnston, Deputy Director of Governance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

5.1 PT/CI/049 QUARTER 4 PROGRESS REPORTS, PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023/24

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to note the Quarter 4 Performance Progress reports for Finance and Governance, Organisation Development and Council.

2. Background

Members are reminded that Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 puts in place a framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services.

The Council's Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2023/24 was approved in June 2023. This set out a range of robust performance targets, along with six identified improvement objectives and a number of Statutory Performance Targets

3. Previous Decision of Council

As agreed at the August 2023 Council meeting, quarterly performance reports will be presented to the relevant Committee or Working Group.

4. Key Points

Quarter 4 performance progress reports are **enclosed** for Organisation Development (Appendix 1), Finance & Governance (Appendix 2) and overall Council (Appendix 3).

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 4 Performance and Improvement Plan 2023/24 Performance Progress Reports for Organisation Development, Finance & Governance, and overall Council, be noted.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed by: Katherine Young, Organisation Development & Employee Engagement Manager

Approved by: Helen Hall Director of Corporate Strategy

5.2 OD/OD/002 ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to note the minutes of the Elected Member Development Working Group meeting held on Monday 13 May 2024.

2. Summary

A copy of the minutes of the meeting are **enclosed**.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Elected Member Development Working Group meeting held on Monday 13 May 2024 be noted.

Prepared by: Sarah Fenton, Organisation Development Officer

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

5.3 CCS/CS/010 CUSTOMER SERVICES, QUARTER 4 2023/24

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Customer Service performance, Quarter 4, April 2023 to March 2024.

2. Introduction/Background

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2023/24 sets out the performance improvement target; 'we will achieve high levels of customer satisfaction', with four indicators set as measures of success.

The Customer Services report for Quarter 4 2023-24 (**enclosed**) provides an update on performance.

In addition, there is an update on key consultations during 2023-24 to serve the Plan, as well as the performance of the new Complaints Handling Procedure during January to March 2024.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Quarter 4 update on Customer Service performance, April 2023 to March 2024, be noted.

Prepared by: James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

5.4 G/GEN/020 LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to bring to Members attention the Local Government Commissioner for Standards 2022/23 Annual Report

2. Introduction

As part of the reform of Local Government in Northern Ireland and the transfer of powers and functions including planning to Councils, a new standards regime including a mandatory Code of Conduct for Councillors was introduced. The Code sets out standards of conduct and behaviour for Councillors with the aim of ensuring confidence in local democratic decision making.

The Local Government Commissioner for Standards provides guidance to assist Councillors ensure they understand and comply with the Code with the aim of improving ethical standards at a Local Government level.

3. Key Matters

A copy of the Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards Annual Report, along with the supporting letter to the Chief Executive is **enclosed** for Members attention.

The report covers both the investigation and adjudication functions of the Commissioner's Office during the 2022/23 year.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Liz Johnston, Deputy Director of Governance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5.5 FC/FA/8 ANNUAL REVIEW OF PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS & TREASURY MANAGEMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a review of the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management activities for the 2023/24 financial year for noting.

2 Introduction

Members are reminded that the Council measures and manages its capital expenditure, borrowings and investment activities with reference to the CIPFA Prudential Code. This report provides an update on these activities that took place during the 2023/24 financial year.

3 Previous Decisions of Council

Council approved the Prudential Indicators for 2023/24 to 2025/2026 and the Treasury Management Strategies for 2023/24 in February 2023.

Under the Prudential Code and the Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services the Council is required to monitor and review its prudential indicators. The key objective of which is to ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the Council are affordable, prudent and sustainable and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice.

The Council's Treasury Management Policy requires mid-year and annual reports on treasury management activities.

This report compares the approved Prudential Indicators with the outturn position for 2023/24 and the annual report on the Council's borrowing and investment activities for 2023/24.

A copy of the annual report is **enclosed** for Members' information.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Richard Murray, Head of Finance

Agreed by: John Balmer, Deputy Director of Finance

Approved by: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance & Governance

5.6 PT/CI/062 CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2030 (DRAFT) CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to note the consultation feedback on the Corporate Plan 2024-2030.

2. Previous Decision of Council

Council agreed in February 2024 to a twelve week public consultation on the Corporate Plan 2024-2030 (draft for consultation).

3. Consultation

On 3 March 2024 a twelve week public consultation commenced to derive feedback from residents, stakeholders, and local businesses, statutory and community planning partners and other bodies with which collaborative working is taking place.

The public consultation closed on 26 May 2024 and 56 responses were received following a campaign which included emails to stakeholders, promotion on social media, face-to-face with residents and publication in the Borough Life Magazine.

The consultation feedback is **enclosed** for information, and this feedback will be considered in the preparation of the Corporate Plan.

The final Corporate Plan 2024-2030 will be brought to Council in June 2024 for approval.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Draft Corporate Plan 2024-2030 consultation feedback be noted.

Prepared by: James Porter, Customer Services Manager

Approved by: Helen Hall, Director of Corporate Strategy

5.7 PT/CI/060 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024/25, CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to note the consultation feedback on the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25.

2. Background

Members are reminded that Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 puts in place a framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services.

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan sets out a range of robust performance targets, along with six identified improvement objectives and a number of Statutory Performance Targets.

3. Previous Decision of Council

In January 2024, Council approved the draft Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25, subject to consultation.

4. Consultation

On 5 February 2024 a twelve week public consultation commenced to derive feedback from residents, stakeholders, local businesses, statutory and community planning partners, and other bodies with which collaborative working is taking place or planned.

An online questionnaire on the Council's corporate website / consultation hub enabled the Council to seek opinions on the key objectives identified within the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan.

The consultation feedback is **enclosed** for information, and will be considered for incorporation into the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25.

The final Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 will be brought to Council in June 2024 for approval.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the consultation feedback on the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 be noted.

Prepared by: Allen Templeton Performance Improvement Officer

Agreed by: Katherine Young Organisation Development & Employee
Engagement Manager

Approved by: Helen Hall Director of Corporate Strategy

5.8 G-LEG-325/28 DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE - THE PRIVATE STREETS (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1980 – DEVELOPMENT AT GREENACRE MEWS, NEWTOWNABBEY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to notify Members that the Department for Infrastructure have adopted a street at Greenacre Mews, Newtownabbey.

2. Background

The Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980 (the Order) provides the statutory basis for the adoption of roads by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

When DfI issue correspondence to Council, it notifies Members that a street has met the required standard, as set out in the Order, and will be maintained by DfI.

Hence, correspondence has been received from the DfI advising that streets at the above development have now been adopted by DfI Roads (copy correspondence **enclosed**).

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the correspondence be noted.

Prepared by: Deirdre Nelson, Paralegal

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