



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE  
HELD IN ROUND TOWER CHAMBER, ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE  
ON MONDAY 9 JUNE 2025 AT 6.30 PM**

<b>In the Chair</b>	:	Alderman J Smyth
<b>Committee Members (In person)</b>	:	Aldermen – L Boyle, P Bradley and L Clarke Councillors – J Archibald-Brown, R Foster, J Gilmour, E McLaughlin, V McWilliam, L O'Hagan, M Stewart and S Ward
<b>Committee Members (Remote)</b>	:	Councillor A McAuley
<b>Non-Committee Members (In person)</b>	:	Councillor P Dunlop
<b>Non-Committee Members: (Remote)</b>	:	Alderman S Ross Councillors – B Webb and S Wilson
<b>In Attendance (In person)</b>	:	Mr Patrick Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Football Association Mr Graham Fitzgerald, Chief Operating Officer, Irish Football Association
<b>Officers Present</b>	:	Chief Executive – R Baker Director of Parks & Leisure Operations - M McDowell Director of Sustainability – M Lavery Head of Parks Operations - P Mawhinney Head of Waste Operations – D Purdy Head of Waste Strategy & Sustainability – L Daly Head of Leisure Operations – D O'Hagan Head of Environmental Health & Wellbeing – C Kelly ICT Systems Support Officer – C Bell Member Services Officer – C McIntyre

## CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the June Operations Committee meeting and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

### 1 APOLOGIES

Councillor N Kelly  
Councillor AM Logue

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

### 3 PRESENTATION

#### 3.1 L/LEI/00/008 IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION – MR PATRICK NELSON AND MR GRAHAM FITZGERALD

##### 1. Purpose

**Representatives from the Irish Football Association (IFA) were in attendance to deliver a statement and answer Members' queries in respect of its official withdrawal of interest in the proposed site for a National Football Training Centre at Birch Hill Road, Antrim.**

##### 2. Background

It had been agreed at a meeting of the Operations Committee on 6 January 2025, that the Chief Executive, Chair and President of the IFA be invited to attend a future Council meeting.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Patrick Nelson, Chief Executive and Mr Graham Fitzgerald, Chief Operating Officer of the Irish Football Association to the meeting.

Several Members expressed their disappointment with the outcome of the site selection process for the National Training Centre. Mr Nelson and Mr Fitzgerald thanked the Chairperson for the opportunity to address the Committee and explained that the newly proposed site would serve as a valuable asset for all of Northern Ireland, fulfilling the long-anticipated goal of establishing a National Football Training Centre.

They responded to a number of questions, including concerns about other potential sites that were reportedly unknown to Officers, particularly given that Birch Hill Road had been identified by the IFA as the preferred location. Members also raised queries regarding funding, specifically whether public funds would be used to support a project involving a private organisation. Further concerns were expressed about the absence of a clear alternative should planning or funding issues hinder progress at the proposed site. Finally, Members voiced disappointment over the missed opportunity for significant

community use, which they believed would have been better realised at the Birch Hill Road site.

The Chairperson thanked both representatives for their attendance and they left the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam  
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and agreed that

**the IFA's statement be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

#### **4 ITEMS FOR DECISION**

##### **4.1 PK/GEN/035/VOL5 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES SUB-GROUP MINUTES**

###### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the most recent Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 20 May 2025.**

###### **2. Summary**

At the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting on 20 May 2025, Members considered a detailed report which provided a range of updates from the Parks section. The minutes of the meeting were circulated for Members' consideration.

The Head of Parks Operations responded to a Member's query relating to the formation of a "Friends Of" Group for Rashee Cemetery.

Proposed by Councillor Stewart  
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

**the minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Group meeting held on 20 May 2025 be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations*

##### **4.2 PK/REG/022 PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS**

###### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the proposed amendments to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations.**

###### **2. Background**

Members are advised that Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations were last reviewed and approved in May 2024. Since then, cemetery staff had

continued to monitor compliance across all Council managed cemeteries.

A recent review of the Garden of Remembrance at Carnmoney Cemetery, prompted by a complaint regarding an unauthorised structure, had revealed widespread non-compliance with existing regulations. Most issues related to the size and style of memorial tablets, which differed from the standards previously agreed by Council.

To address these inconsistencies and ensure dignity, uniformity, and ease of maintenance, it was proposed that the permitted dimensions for memorial tablets be amended. These changes would support the long-term management of the site and reinforce adherence to Council regulations.

### 3. Proposed Amendments

An updated version of Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations was circulated for Members' consideration, with proposed amendments clearly highlighted.

The key change related to the Garden of Remembrance at Carnmoney Cemetery, where memorial tablets must now be made of natural dark grey or black polished stone and, including any border, must not exceed 60cm x 60cm. This updated the previous limit of 40cm x 40cm and permitted a decorative border with coloured stones.

The amendment aimed to improve uniformity, enhance the appearance of the site, and ensure all plots complied with Council-approved standards.

### 4. Ongoing Cemetery Improvements

As part of ongoing improvements to Council-managed cemeteries, resurfacing works at Carnmoney Cemetery had previously been approved, which would also include the paths within the Garden of Remembrance. These upgrades would provide safer, more accessible routes for all visitors, particularly those with mobility needs. Prior to the works, all plot holders would be contacted and asked to ensure their plots complied with current regulations. The works would be phased to minimise disruption and allow for effective site management.

Proposed by Councillor Archibald-Brown

Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the proposed amendments to Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Emma Thompson, Bereavement Services Manager*

## 4.3 EH/EHS/018 FOOD SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2025-2026

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to update Members on the Food Service Delivery Plan 2025-2026.**

## 2. Key Issues

The Council was required to produce an annual plan showing how it intended to fulfil its statutory duties and deliver Food Control services, a copy of which had been circulated for Members' information. A review of the Food Service Delivery Plan for 2024-2025 had been undertaken (circulated) and was also included for Members' information.

The Plan set out how Environmental Health would address both Council's statutory obligations.

## 3. Summary

Environmental Health had a key role in securing the safety of food processed, manufactured etc. in the Borough. The plan's key focus was to demonstrate how the Council would meet its statutory obligations and duties related to food safety for the year 2025-2026.

The Food Safety Service Delivery Plan outlined key objectives for the Food Safety section including:

- i. the implementation of a thorough inspection regime;
- ii. strategies for education and enforcement;
- iii. a detailed approach to achieving these objectives within the current resource levels.

## 4. Financial Implications

The 2025/26 budget included financial provision to deliver the Food Service Delivery Plan.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

**(a) the Food Service Delivery Plan 2025-2026 be approved;**

**(b) the review of Food Service Delivery Plan 2024-2025 be noted.**

*ACTION BY: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health*

### **4.4 EH/EHS/LR/001 EL/219 APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF AN OCCASIONAL (OUTDOOR) ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of the report was to seek Members' approval for an Occasional Entertainment Licence for an outdoor event at Breckenhill, Outdoor Event Space, 45 Breckenhill Road, Ballyclare, BT39 0TB.**

## 2. Introduction

An application had been received for the grant of an Occasional Entertainment Licence for the following area.

<b>Licensee</b>	<b>Location of Premises</b>	<b>Type(s)and hours of entertainment</b>	<b>File Number</b>	<b>New Application or Renewal</b>
Mr David Reade	45 Breckenhill Road, Ballyclare, BT39 0TB	Singing, Music, Dancing or Entertainment of a like kind  Number of persons No greater than 600  Saturday 9 August 2025 10.00hrs to 23.00hrs	EL219	New Application

In line with the Council Protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, approved in December 2016, the application must be considered at the Operations Committee meeting.

Council could decide the following:

- i. Grant the licence;
- ii. Grant the licence with specific additional terms, conditions and restrictions;
- iii. Refuse the licence;
- iv. Defer an application for further consideration or to obtain further information.

If Council made a decision against an Officer's recommendation, then Members must state their reasons for doing so. In such circumstances, a recorded vote would be taken.

## 3. Main Report

An application had been received for the Grant of an Occasional Entertainment Licence (Outdoor) for the above premises. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was required on the granting of the licence.

The applicant currently held a licence for indoor entertainment at Breckenhill. This event, in partnership with the charity Beyond Skin, aimed to promote peace, equality, and intercultural understanding through the Arts. The event would feature live music, a craft fair, and food vendors.

The proposed days and hours would be as follows:

Saturday 9 August 2025, 10:00hrs - 23:00hrs

#### 4. Summary

An application for an Occasional (Outdoor) Entertainment Licence had been received from Mr David Reade, 45 Breckenhill Road, Ballyclare, BT39 0TB. In accordance with Council protocol for the hearing of Entertainment Licence applications, a decision by Members was required for the granting of the licence.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and agreed that

**an Entertainment Licence (Occasional Outdoor Licence) be granted to the applicant, Mr David Reade, 45 Breckenhill Road, Ballyclare, BT39 0TB with the following conditions:**

- **that all relevant licensing requirements are met; and**
- **that statutory consultees have no objections to approval.**

*ACTION BY: Jen McGrugan, Environmental Health Officer*

#### **4.5 EH/EHS/FC/021 APPROVAL OF PREMISES AS A COLDSTORE**

##### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the designation of Sysco Foods NI Ltd, located at 81 Nutts Corner Road, Crumlin, Co Antrim, BT29 4SJ, as an approved coldstore under Regulation (EC) 853/2004.**

##### **2. Introduction**

Since 1 June 2006, it had been a legislative requirement to approve product specific food establishments under regulation EC 853/2004.

All cold store premises which handled products of animal origin (including, meat, dairy and poultry products) required approval unless they operated in a way that was exempt under Regulation 853/2004.

##### **3. Key Issues**

An application for approval had been received from Sysco Foods NI Ltd, 81 Nutts Corner Road, Crumlin, Co Antrim, BT29 4SJ.

The Council's Environmental Health Section, as the relevant enforcing authority, had inspected the following premises in accordance with Regulation (EC) 853/2004 and other relevant regulations.

Premises	Address	Identification Number
Sysco Foods NI Ltd	81 Nutts Corner Road Crumlin Co Antrim BT29 4SJ	UK(NI) ZJ 027

The premises had been inspected and fully complied with current legislative requirements. Full approval of these premises was therefore deemed appropriate.

#### 4. Summary

Sysco Foods NI Ltd had submitted an application for approval as a cold store handling products of animal origin. Following inspection by the Council's Environmental Health Section, the premises were found to be compliant with relevant food safety legislation.

In response to a Member's query, the Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing confirmed that any impact in relation to noise would have been considered during the planning process.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

**Sysco Foods NI Ltd, 81 Nutts Corner Road, Crumlin, Co Antrim, BT29 4SJ be designated as a coldstore under current legislation.**

*ACTION BY: Lara Nelson, Environmental Health Manager (Food)*

## 4.6 **EH/EHS/011 HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2025-2026**

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to update Members on the Health and Safety Delivery Plan 2025-2026.**

### 2. Key Issues

Under Article 20 of the Health and Safety at Work Northern Ireland Order 1978 Council was required to set out a planned Health and Safety activity programme on an annual basis.

A copy of the Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan 2025-2026 and the Review of the Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan for 2024-2025 had both been circulated for Members' information.

### 3. Summary

Environmental Health played a crucial role in ensuring the safety of employees and the public in business workplaces for which Council had statutory



responsibility. The primary aim of the plan was to outline how Council would meet its statutory obligations and duties related to Health and Safety for the year 2025/2026.

The Health and Safety Service Plan detailed key objectives for the Health and Safety section including:

- I. the implementation of a comprehensive inspection regime;
- II. strategies for education and enforcement;
- III. a detailed approach to achieving these objectives within the current resource levels.

#### 4. Financial Implications

The 2025/2026 budget included financial provision to deliver the Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

**the Health and Safety Service Delivery Plan 2025-2026 be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health*

### **4.7 WM/WM/37/VOL2 REVIEW OF WASTE COLLECTION POLICY**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the Waste Collection Policy 2025.**

#### **2. Background**

The Waste Collection Policy (circulated) had been in place since February 2015 and was reviewed on an annual basis and updated as agreed. The Policy provided a framework for the collection of waste in the Borough and was required to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the service.

This year's review took account of the harmonisation of waste collection services and the changes to the policy had been highlighted and circulated for Members' information.

The main proposed changes were as follows:

- additional residual waste capacity would be in the form of two 180L bins;
- bins must not be lined with bin liners for health and safety reasons with recent examples of bin liners getting caught on lifters or causing the bin to detach from lifters;
- the Policy would reflect the new delivery method for caddy liners and bulky waste collections as per Council approval in December 2024.

The EQIA screening document and the Rural Needs Impact Assessment had

been reviewed and were circulated for approval.

In response to a Member's query on the stopping the use of bin liners, the Director of Sustainability confirmed that this was for health and safety reasons and there would be an awareness campaign to advise residents.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and agreed that

- (a) the revised Waste Collection Policy 2025 be approved.**
- (b) the outcome of the EQIA and Rural screening carried out for the Waste Collection Policy be noted.**

*ACTION BY: Leanne Smits, Waste Strategy and Sustainability Manager*

#### **4.8 WM/WM/49 REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

##### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was for Members to approve the reviewed Environmental Policy.**

##### **2. Background**

Council had successfully implemented an Environmental Management System (EMS) ISO14001 for its operations and facilities which had demonstrated Council's commitment to leading the way in environmental excellence.

##### **3. Key Issues**

Part of the requirement to hold EMS ISO14001 certification required that Council must review and up-date, where applicable, its Environmental Policy in line with improvements made. The Environmental Policy had been reviewed and no changes were required (circulated).

The Environmental Policy must follow a standard format and proposed that Council would:

- Develop and implement specific environmental objectives and targets to be reviewed annually;
- Comply fully and, where possible, exceed the requirements of applicable legislation and regulations to ensure prevention of pollution and continued environmental improvements;
- Review the Environmental Management System to ensure effectiveness and continued improvement.

The EQIA and Rural screening documents had been reviewed and were circulated.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

- (a) the revised Environmental Policy be approved; and
- (b) the outcome of the EQIA and Rural screening carried out for the Environmental Policy be noted.

*ACTION BY: Rebecca Clulow, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer*

#### **4.9 WM/WM/033 REQUEST FOR LIVE HERE LOVE HERE FUNDING**

##### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to set out Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful's request for financial support for the Live Here Love Here programme.**

##### **2. Background**

Correspondence (circulated) had been received from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) requesting financial support in the amount of £21,000, as was the request for the 2024-25 period, for the Live Here Love Here (LHLH) Programme for 2025-26.

KNIB was the environmental charity with the stated aim of making Northern Ireland a cleaner and more pleasant place in which to live. The LHLH Programme focused on improving the local environment and building a sense of pride in local communities.

LHLH also ran extensive advertising campaigns in the Borough and across Northern Ireland on issues like littering and dog fouling which raised public awareness, harmonising the message and supporting Council's cleansing operations.

##### **3. Financial Implication**

At least 50% of any financial contribution was available to support local environmental projects with 9 groups benefiting from the LHLH small grants scheme last year in the Borough. In addition, LHLH was able to use Council to bring in another £8,500 funding to the Borough.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour

Seconded by Alderman Boyle and agreed that

**financial support in the amount of £21,000 for 2025/26 be approved for the Live Here Love Here Programme.**

*ACTION BY: Leanne Smits, Waste Strategy and Sustainability Manager*

#### 4.10 L/SAP/005 ST JAMES ALDERGROVE GAC – LETTER OF SUPPORT

##### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval to provide a letter of support to St James Aldergrove Gaelic Athletic Club (GAC) for inclusion in the business case for the redevelopment of club facilities.**

##### 2. Introduction/Background

Correspondence (circulated) had been received from St James Aldergrove GAC requesting a letter of support from Council in relation to the redevelopment of their facilities in Crumlin. The proposed redevelopment included the construction of a new full-sized GAA pitch, a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), and the extension and refurbishment of the existing clubhouse.

##### 3. Letter of Support

As part of their redevelopment efforts, the Club was preparing a business case to support applications for potential funding. Letters of support from key stakeholders were an essential part of this process. Given Council's role as a key stakeholder, the Club had formally requested an official letter of support to strengthen the business case.

Proposed by Councillor McLaughlin  
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

**a letter of support to St James Aldergrove GAC for inclusion in the business case for the redevelopment of club facilities be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations*

#### 4.11 CP/PP/012 PEACEPLUS PROGRAMME

##### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to update Members on Programme 5: 'Our Active Borough'—one of the key programming elements of the PEACEPLUS Action Plan to be delivered by Parks and Leisure Directorate over the next three years—and to seek approval for the next steps in the delivery process, including entering into a Service Level Agreement with the PEACEPLUS Partnership.**

##### 2. Introduction/Background

The PEACEPLUS Programme was a €1.1bn cross-border funding programme created to strengthen peace and prosperity within and between the border counties of Ireland and Northern Ireland. PEACEPLUS was the successor programme to both Peace IV and INTERREG VA. The Council was one of 17 Peace Partnerships across Northern Ireland and the Border Counties.

The aim of Theme 1 'Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities', was to unite communities and help them rebuild and learn from a difficult past. Under Theme 1 and Investment Area 1.1 'Co-designed Local Community Action Plans', Local Councils across Northern Ireland and the Border Counties were invited to submit applications to the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) to secure funding to deliver against the actions identified in each Local Community Action Plan.

The Council had secured £4.4m to deliver programmes and projects in the Borough until December 2028. Delivery of the Antrim and Newtownabbey PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan was being managed by the Community Development Directorate within Council, with the Delivery Plan circulated.

### 3. Previous Decision of Council

It had been reported to the February 2025 Community Development Committee that Council had received a Letter of Offer from the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) offering €5,103,757 (approximately £4.4m) towards delivery of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Co-designed PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan.

### 4. Key Issues

Within the Local Community Action Plan, Programme 5, 'Our Active Borough' was to be delivered by the Parks & Leisure Directorate.

This programme would consist of:

#### a) Mainstream Sport:

- Inclusive football, rugby, GAA, cricket
- Club/School engagement, volunteer upskilling

Objectives: To deliver introductory sessions across a range of mainstream sports, with progression to team formation and participation in competitive events. A strong focus would be placed on building sustainable links between schools and clubs and supporting capacity building, particularly through volunteer development.

Outputs/Outcomes: Increased participation in mainstream sports within schools and clubs; every school engaging with at least one local club; and enhanced volunteer capability through educational workshops.

#### b) Alternative Sport:

- Urban and open water sports
- "Our Space Our Place" summer scheme
- PEACE Activation Events

Objectives: To run quarterly PEACE Activation Events (e.g. Skate Jams at V36

and Antrim Skate Park) and deliver the *Our Space Our Place* summer scheme, which promoted inclusive family participation in outdoor activities such as climbing, archery, and water sports.

Outputs/Outcomes: Inclusive, cross-community events that increased participation in outdoor/adventure sports, fostered community cohesion, encouraged use of shared spaces, and promoted wellbeing through accessible family-friendly initiatives.

c) Recreational Activities:

- Arts, yoga, walking, health outreach
- Notable: Healthy Kids, Teen Fitness, Farms for Foodbanks

Objectives: To engage residents in a variety of recreational activities, including arts, drama, music, crafts, yoga, and walking. *Farms for Foodbanks* supports sustainability and wellbeing by growing produce for foodbanks. *Teen Fitness* delivered tailored fitness classes for 12–16 year-olds. *Healthy Kids* offered school-based workshops on nutrition, mental health, physical activity, and emotional literacy.

Outputs/Outcomes: Measured by participant numbers, sessions delivered, produce donated, and outreach conducted across these three initiatives.

d) Environmental Activities:

- Nature trails, Nordic walking, eco-events
- Included: Explore Parks, Green Sports, Our Place Our Planet

Objectives: To provide a range of nature-based activities, including summer schemes blending environmental education with the arts, a seasonal schools programme on biodiversity, a Green Sports initiative promoting sustainability within clubs, and Nordic walking sessions aligned with the Council's broader health agenda.

Outputs/Outcomes: Participation levels, delivery of nature-based activities, and enhanced biodiversity and environmental stewardship across the Borough.

e) Intergenerational Forest School:

- Children and seniors sharing skills in nature
- Storytelling, crafts, environmental learning

Objectives: To deliver intergenerational forest school activities that would bring together early years children and older adults to foster physical activity, environmental learning, and social connection through crafts, storytelling, and shared outdoor experiences.

Outputs/Outcomes: Increased intergenerational engagement, skills transfer, participation rates, and community involvement from previously isolated

groups.

Next steps in the process are:

Procurement would be led by the Council's Procurement Manager in line with the Council's Financial Regulations and PEACEPLUS Programme Rules. Opportunities would be advertised and/or signposted on eSourcingNI, eTendersNI and eTendersIE to attract a wide pool of potential suppliers.

Supplier engagement events would be held by the PEACEPLUS Team in late August/early September 2025 to raise awareness of opportunities and encourage collaboration among businesses interested in supporting programme delivery.

#### 5. Financial Implication

The total budget for Programme 5: *Our Active Borough* was €450,000 (£391,304). Costs would be based on actuals relating to staffing, administration, external expertise and services, travel, accommodation, and equipment. No additional financial contribution was anticipated from Council.

#### 6. Section 75 Equality and Rural Needs Screening

As part of the Council's responsibilities under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which required the identification and addressing of potential implications while promoting equality of opportunity and good relations, the PEACEPLUS Programme had undergone Section 75 Equality Screening. Following this process, it was determined that an EQIA was not necessary. Additionally, a Rural Needs Screening had been completed. A copy of both the Section 75 Equality Screening Form and the Rural Needs Screening document had been circulated for Members' attention.

#### 7. Governance

Programme 5 would be managed and delivered by Parks and Leisure Services through a Service Level Agreement with the PEACEPLUS Partnership. Regular updates would be reported to the Operations Committee.

#### 8. Summary

The Parks and Leisure Directorate would lead on delivery of Programme 5: *Our Active Borough* as part of the PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan, supported by a budget of €450,000 (£391,304). Delivery would be formalised via a Service Level Agreement with the PEACEPLUS Partnership, and progress would be reported to the Operations Committee.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

**the update on Programme 5: 'Our Active Borough' be noted and delegated authority to Officers to enter into a Service Level Agreement with the PEACEPLUS**

**Partnership be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Kevin Madden, Sport and Physical Activity Manager and Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager*

## **5 ITEMS FOR NOTING**

### **5.1 PT/CI/060 PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024/25 PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT QUARTER 4 - OPERATIONS**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members that the Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Performance Progress Report Quarter 4 for Parks, Leisure & Estate Services and Sustainability be noted.**

#### **2. Background**

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 had put in place a framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services.

The Council's Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 was approved in June 2024. This set out a range of robust performance targets, along with 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 would be presented to the relevant committee.

#### **4. Key Points**

Fourth Quarter performance progress reports for Parks, Leisure and Estate Services, and Sustainability had been circulated for Members' information.

#### **5. Summary**

The main points to highlight were:

- Achievement of highest number of Green Flags (29) across all Councils in Northern Ireland
- 110,000 more visits to Council's leisure centres than in 2023/24, however below the 2024/25 target
- Leisure Memberships at their highest level of 14,359
- 5% reduction in energy consumption against 2023/24
- Projected that the 60% recycling rate target would be achieved;
- Significant reduction in the cost of service per household for Waste Management and Environmental Health and Wellbeing services;
- Overall customer satisfaction with Council's Waste and Recycling Service had been missed due to poor Q3 results likely due to publicity regarding the proposed wheelie bin service.



The Director of Parks and Leisure Operations and Head of Leisure Operations responded to a Member's query concerning current capacity at Leisure Centres to meet demand.

The Director of Parks and Leisure Operations undertook to review opportunities to benchmark the data against other organisations.

Proposed by Councillor Foster  
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

**the Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Performance Progress Report Quarter 4 - Operations be noted.**

*ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations*

## **5.2 PT/CI/065 DIRECTORATE BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25 PERFORMANCE PROGRESS BI-ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT**

### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to recommend to Members that the Directorate Business Plans Performance Progress Bi-Annual Report be noted.**

### **2. Background**

Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 put in place a framework to support the continuous improvement of Council services.

The Council's Directorate Business Plans 2024/25 were approved in March 2024. These set out the key actions and objectives of the Directorate which informed how the wide remit of services would be delivered in 2024/25. The Plan also summarised the operational context within which actions would be delivered in terms of staff and financial resources, risks and historical performance.

### **3. Previous Decision of Council**

Annual Directorate Business Plans were agreed at the March 2024 Council meeting. It was agreed that bi-annual Directorate performance progress reports would be presented to the relevant committee.

### **4. Key Points**

The bi-annual performance progress reports for Sustainability and Parks, Leisure and Estate Services had been circulated for Members' information.

Proposed by Councillor Foster  
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**the Directorate Business Plans 2024/25 Performance Progress Bi-Annual Report be noted.**

NO ACTION

### 5.3 EH/PHWB/017 HEALTH AND WELLBEING OUTCOME-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT 2024/25

#### 1. Purpose

**This report provided Members with an overview of the activities and achievements of the Health and Wellbeing Team during the 2024/25 financial year.**

#### 2. Background

The Environmental Health's Health and Wellbeing Team delivered support to residents across a variety of areas, including Age-Friendly initiatives, Energy Efficiency, Home Accident Prevention, Nutrition, and challenges related to the current economic environment. The circulated Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) report provided a summary of the team's activities and achievements in 2024/ 2025. The report outlined a number of projects delivered by the team over the year, focused on supporting health and wellbeing and responding to changing needs within the community. These activities reflected the team's ongoing efforts to provide practical and accessible support for residents.

Some of the highlights from the OBA report included;

- £134,500 oil stamps sold across the Borough
- 287 Home Safety checks and 1,475 Home Safety equipment items issued to over 65s, 1,890 Home Safety equipment items issued to families with under 5s
- 13 Food Programme sessions
- 1,622 Winter Woollies donations distributed to 10 organisations
- 4 Editions of Age Friendly "News for You" distributed.

#### 3. Summary

The report summarised the Environmental Health - Health and Wellbeing Team's work during 2024/25, with a focus on key projects supporting residents' health and wellbeing. It reflected the team's continued efforts to respond to local needs through a range of initiatives.

In response to Members' queries in relation to additional publicity, including targeting the rural community, the Director of Sustainability undertook to further raise awareness of the activities currently provided by the Health and Wellbeing Team.

Proposed by Councillor Foster  
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*ACTION BY: Colin Kelly, Head of Environmental Health and Wellbeing*

## 5.4 CCS/EDP/007 SECTION 75 EQUALITY SCREENING

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to note the Section 75 Equality Screening process relating to the reports referenced:**

**L/GEN/056** Facility closures and opening hours- Leisure Services

**L/GEN/005/VOL2, PK/GEN/180** Schedule of Charges and Pricing Policies, Parks and Leisure 2024/25

**L/GEN/005/VOL2, PK/GEN/180** Schedule of Charges and Pricing Policies, Parks and Leisure 2025/26

**PK/REG/022** Updated Cemeteries Rules and Regulations

**PK/GEN/180** Proposed Changes to Bereavement Services Charges 2025/26

**L/LEI/002/VOL3** Leisure Grant Aid Programme

**FI/PRO/TEN/324** Ballyearl Car Parking Resurfacing

**L/GEN/005/VOL2** Discount to 3G Pitch Training Rate

**L/LEI/VLC/010, L/LEI/CLC/002** Valley Leisure Centre & Crumlin Leisure Centre – Replacement of Fitness Equipment

**PK/GEN/219** Ballyearl Leisure Centre – Driving Range Drainage Works

**L/GEN/005/VOL2** Proposed Changes to Leisure Services Charges 2025/26

**L/LEI/629 VOL2** Ballyclare Rugby Club – The Cloughan Project

**EH/PHWB/012** Take a Seat Initiative

**WM/RC/001** Van Booking System at Household Recycling Centres

### 2. Introduction/Background

As part of the Council's responsibilities to identify and address potential implications and promote equality of opportunity and good relations, as required by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the reports referenced above had been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening (forms circulated) and screened out for the need of an equality impact assessment (EQIA).

In addition, the Rural Needs Act placed 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. A Rural Needs screening exercise (circulated) was

applicable for the Leisure Grant Aid Programme and the 'Take a Seat' initiative.

Proposed by Councillor McLaughlin  
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

NO ACTION

## **5.5 EH/EHS/LR/007 REVIEW OF LEGACY COUNCIL DOG CONTROL ORDERS**

### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to update Members on the outcome of the review of the existing Legacy Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Dog Control Orders, undertaken in conjunction with Legal Services and in line with Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) guidance.**

### **2. Background**

It had been agreed at the September 2023 Operations Committee that Legacy Antrim Borough Council and Legacy Newtownabbey Borough Council Dog Control Orders would be reviewed.

This review had since been completed in conjunction with the Legal Services Department, and in line with the guidance issued by DEARA (formerly the Department of the Environment) <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-district-councils-dog-control-orders>. The aim was to ensure a balance had been achieved between the interests of dog owners and those impacted by dog related activities.

### **3. Key Issues**

It was proposed that the eight existing legacy Council Dog Control Orders would be aligned, with some minor adjustments making four new Dog Control Orders which would provide uniformity and consistency throughout the Borough. A copy of the current Dog Control Areas could be found at: <https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/dogs/dog-control/dog-control-orders/>.

The minor adjustments to the Dog Control Orders were as follows:

- a) Length of lead was stipulated in legacy Antrim Dog Control Order but not in Legacy Newtownabbey Dog Control Order. Proposal was to not stipulate a lead length in the new aligned Order
- b) A and B Roads had been listed in Legacy Newtownabbey Dog Control Orders but not in Legacy Antrim Dog Control Orders. Proposal would be to remove all A and B roads and not include them in the new aligned Order as it was not efficient to monitor and enforce.
- c) A list of new Dog Control Areas had been circulated. These had been introduced as they were not in operation during the legacy council period.

These included the crematorium, allotments, sensory gardens and the Platinum Jubilee and Coronation Gardens.

- d) Previously the cemeteries and burial grounds were named in the legacy Antrim Orders and it was proposed to standardise this and state “all cemeteries and burial grounds” were designated as “Dogs on Leads” areas as per the legacy Newtownabbey Orders.

#### 4. Governance

Prior to these Orders coming into force, the following statutory steps needed to be taken:

- a) Public Consultation at least one month prior to formal application to Committee for approval including notice of intention in two local newspapers; copy of proposed DCO's (circulated) be placed in Council buildings and on website along with associated maps;
- b) Report provided with any objections for Committee for consideration;
- c) Public Notice would be placed in Press (not less than 7 days before the day on which the Order is to come into operation);
- d) DCO's come into effect.

Under the legislation new signage would be required in the parks and other areas where the new Dog Control Orders come into force. This work was currently under review.

The consultation would commence on 4 July 2025.

Following this consultation period Officers would consider any responses received and return the matter to the Committee for final resolution.

#### 5. Summary

This report updated Members on the review of legacy Dog Control Orders from the former Antrim and Newtownabbey Councils. The review, conducted with Legal Services, and in line with DAERA guidance, proposed minor amendments to the current Dog Control Areas which would lead to a consistent approach across the Borough. The process was now moving to public consultation before final implementation.

Proposed by Councillor O'Hagan  
Seconded by Alderman Boyle and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*NO ACTION*

## **6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

- 6.1** In response to a Member's concern, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations undertook to speak to Contractors regarding the standard of works completed in Allen Park female toilets.

*ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations*

- 6.2** In response to a Member's query, the Director of Sustainability undertook to provide detailed notifications to residents in the Ballyclare area concerning changes to bin collection dates.

*ACTION BY: Michael Laverty, Director of Sustainability*

- 6.3** Members commended the recent achievements of FC Antrim and Sixmile Athletic Football Clubs, both based at Antrim Forum pitches, on winning their respective leagues in the Ballymena Saturday Morning League.

- 6.4** Officers undertook to contact Phoenix Natural Gas relating to the poor standard that public areas were left in following their work at Loughshore Park, Merville and the Memorial Park at Whiteabbey.

*ACTION BY: David Blair, Head of Estate Services*

- 6.5** The Head of Estate Services responded to a Member's concern relating to vandalism at Mallusk Play Park.

*ACTION BY: David Blair, Head of Estate Services*

### **PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'**

Proposed by Councillor McLaughlin  
Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed

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

## **7 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE**

### **7.1 IN CONFIDENCE PK/GEN/197 CEMETERY BURIAL CAPACITY UPDATE**

#### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to provide an update on the burial capacity within Council's cemeteries.**

#### **2. Background**

Quarterly updates were provided to the Operations Committee relating to the current burial capacity within Council owned cemeteries.

### 3. Current Position

As of 30 April 2025, the burial capacity within the Council's Cemeteries and Gardens of Remembrance was reported as follows:

<b>Cemetery</b>	<b>No. of plots remaining</b>	<b>Current Average no. of plots sold PER YEAR (based on 3yr average)</b>	<b>Estimated remaining burial capacity (years)</b>
Ballyclare	512	100	5
Rashee	343*	10	34
Sixmile	2062	80	25
Crumlin	670	26	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3587</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>89</b>

<b>Garden of Remembrance Plots (for burial of ashes only)</b>	<b>No. of plots remaining</b>	<b>Average no. of plots sold (based on 3 year average)</b>	<b>Estimated remaining burial capacity (years)</b>
Carnmoney	34	55	0.6
Ballyclare	118	117	5
Mallusk	15	15	0

Members were previously advised of potential capacity constraints at Crumlin Cemetery. A recent mapping exercise had now been completed, providing updated figures on available burial plots. As of the last review (covering capacity up to February 2025), 400 plots had been identified, with 256 available for immediate use. The remaining 144 plots had since been verified and were now confirmed for future use as required. In addition, two further areas within Crumlin Cemetery had been assessed, yielding an additional 270 plots. This brought the total confirmed capacity at Crumlin Cemetery, as of 30 April, to 670 burial plots.

Rashee Cemetery remained under review. Council Officers continued to engage with the Historic Environment Division (HED) to explore viable options following the discovery of a souterrain at the site. This process was ongoing, and a detailed report (including any recommendations or findings), would be brought to Council in due course.

Separately, Officers were developing a Strategic Outline Case for the development of a new cemetery in Newtownabbey. This would be presented to Council for consideration and approval in due course.

A Member requested that future reports include an additional column presenting comparative data from the previous report.

In response to a query, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations provided an update on the proposed Garden of Remembrance at Sixmile Cemetery, Antrim and undertook to bring further information to a future Operations Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Foster  
Seconded by Alderman Clarke and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations*

## **7.2 IN CONFIDENCE FI/GEN/028 PROPOSED ESTATES LIFECYCLE PROJECT 2025/26**

### **1. Purpose**

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the proposed Estate Lifecycle Projects for the 2025/26 financial year, subject to the relevant business cases, and final investment decision.**

### **2. Background**

Lifecycle projects focused on maintaining and improving the condition of existing Council assets to ensure they continued to serve their purpose effectively over time. This involved planned works such as repairs, replacements, and general upkeep, for example, resurfacing a car park, to keep assets in good working order.

Regular investment in maintenance helped extend the life of these assets and reduced the need for major and more costly repairs in the future. It also ensured that facilities remain safe, functional, and fit for use by the community.

The Council's commitment to lifecycle projects began in 2024/2025, following a review of the Capital Programme. In that year, a provisional budget of £1,000,000 was approved to fund high-priority maintenance works across the Council's estate. These projects were at various stages of delivery, with some already completed, some commenced, and others scheduled to commence in the coming months.

### **3. Proposed Projects 2025/26**

The table below outlined the projects under consideration for the 2025/2026 financial year, along with the reasons they had been prioritised. This list had been informed by condition surveys, input from facility managers, clearly identified needs, and customer feedback. Where required, business cases would be developed for approval, with all projects subject to a final investment decision by the Council.

ESTATE SERVICES LIFECYCLE PROJECTS	25/26 Est Cost	PRIORITY REASON
Swimming pool media filter replacement at Antrim Forum Leisure Centre		Health & Safety



Sauna/steam room replacement at Sixmile Leisure Centre and Antrim Forum	██████	Service Disruption
HVAC upgrade work at Antrim Forum and Crumlin Leisure Centre.	██████	Service Disruption
Fire alarm replacement at Antrim Forum	██████	Health & Safety
Public convenience refurbishment at Jordanstown Loughshore Park	██████	Service Disruption
Refresh of changing facilities at Ballyearl Leisure Centre	██████	Service Disruption
Antrim Forum Spa flooring Replacement	██████	Health & Safety
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,000,000</b>	

In response to several Members' queries about how projects are prioritised, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations outlined the prioritisation process.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**Estate Lifecycle Projects for the 2025/26 financial year be approved, subject to the relevant business cases, and final investment decision.**

*ACTION BY: David Blair, Head of Estate Services*

### 7.3 **IN CONFIDENCE** WM/arc21/4/VOL2 arc21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS

#### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to update Members on the April and May Joint Committee meetings.**

#### 2. Introduction

The arc21 Joint Committee met on a monthly basis and each month the papers were reviewed by the Operations Committee.

#### 3. Previous Decisions of Council

All previous papers had been noted.

#### 4. Main Report

The meeting in April was cancelled as the quorum required had not been met.

The papers for the arc21 Joint Committee Meeting had been circulated for Members' information:

- 29 May 2025

Members were reminded that these documents were 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.

## 5. Summary

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Councillor Foster  
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

NO ACTION

## 7.4 **IN CONFIDENCE** PBS/PS/026 DEVELOPMENT OF AN URBAN SKATE PARK AT ANTRIM FORUM

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval to place the development of an Urban Skate Park at Antrim Forum on the Council's Capital programme, and to commence the first stage of the 4-stage Capital Project Management process.**

### 2. Introduction/Background

Council's *PEACEPLUS* Local Community Action Plan included a proposal for the development of an Urban Skate Park at the Antrim Forum. The proposal fell under Theme 1 of the Plan: *Local Community Regeneration and Transformation*. Programme 2 – *Our Active Borough* – and highlighted the need for secure, inclusive, safe, and shared spaces that could be used by individuals and community groups across the Borough.

The existing play park at the Antrim Forum was located on the proposed site for the new Urban Skate Park. According to a recent audit, this play park had been recommended for replacement, as its equipment had reached the end of its usable life. In addition, a large and modern play park was located nearby at Antrim Loughshore, which was opened seven years ago. The development of an Urban Skate Park would introduce a unique and complementary

recreational facility to the area, appealing to a broader age range and encouraging greater participation from older children and adults than traditional play parks typically attract.

### 3. Financial Implications

It was proposed that the development of the Urban Skate Park at Antrim Forum would be fully funded through PEACEPLUS funding, with an indicative cost of £[REDACTED]

### 4. Next Steps

In line with the Council's Capital Project Management process, the Project Initiation Document (PID) (circulated) would also serve as the Strategic Outline Case. Subject to approval, this would enable the project to progress to Stage 1 of the Capital Programme, which involved the development of an Outline Business Case and concept designs.

It was also proposed that consultation would be carried out with Members of the public and other key stakeholders to help inform the design of the Urban Skate Park.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke  
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**installation of an Urban Skate Park at Antrim Forum be added to Council's Capital programme and commencement of the first stage of the 4-stage Capital Project Management Process be approved.**

*ACTION BY: David Blair, Head of Estate Services*

## 7.5 **IN CONFIDENCE** L/LEI/AP/008 ANTRIM ROVERS – REQUEST FOR LEASE EXTENSION

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for a ten-year extension to the lease agreement with Antrim Rovers Football Club (FC) for the use of two grass pitches at Allen Park.**

### 2. Introduction/Background

In February 2022, the Council approved a ten-year lease of two grass pitches at Allen Park to Antrim Rovers FC. Subsequently, in October 2022, the Council granted a five-year extension to the lease. An addendum was added at that time to enable the Club to meet eligibility criteria for funding opportunities aimed at facility improvements, including the installation of perimeter fencing.

### 3. Proposal

Antrim Rovers FC had recently contacted Council Officers to request a further

ten-year extension to the lease (correspondence circulated).

The proposed extension would provide the Club with the long-term security required to apply for substantial capital grants. These grants would support the enhancement of the pitches and assist the Club in realising its long-term goals, which included the development of a dedicated clubhouse and changing facilities.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and agreed that

**a ten-year extension to the lease agreement with Antrim Rovers FC for the two grass pitches at Allen Park be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Glenda James, Parks and Leisure Administration Manager*

## **7.6 IN CONFIDENCE L/LEI/OO/008 MOSSLEY PARK - GRASS PITCHES DRAINAGE REPLACEMENT**

### **1. Purpose**

**Having identified the preferred option for the Mossley Pitch Drainage Project, Option 4 – Full Drainage Network Replacement for both pitches had been selected. This option was expected to effectively resolve the ongoing drainage issues affecting both football pitches. The estimated Gross CAPEX was £[REDACTED] with an anticipated annual revenue impact of £[REDACTED]. The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval to progress the project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme.**

### **2. Introduction and Background**

Both grass playing pitches at Mossley Park had experienced persistent drainage problems in recent years. These issues had resulted in frequent waterlogging, regular cancellation of matches, and a general decline in pitch quality.

In early 2025, a specialist consultant carried out a comprehensive drainage assessment and produced a condition report. The findings confirmed that the existing drainage system was significantly underperforming and beyond practical repair. The report highlighted several contributing factors, including ineffective drainage design, soil compaction, and a high-water table. An options appraisal had also been included to inform the development of a future business case for Council consideration. The report was circulated for Members' reference.

In 2023, a business case had been approved for the development of a 3G pitch and the upgrading of changing facilities at the site. However, this project had not progressed due to the prioritisation of Council's Capital Programme and the development of a 3G pitch at the nearby Abbey College by the Education Authority now progressing on site.

Following recent consultation with the local football club that used the pitches,

there was now a preference to retain the grass pitch and proceed with the necessary drainage improvements. The development of a smaller 3G training pitch may be considered as a future scheme, subject to the availability of external funding and the requisite Council approvals.

### 3. Proposed Project

A business case had been developed based on the findings of the consultant's report (circulated). The preferred option identified within the business case was Option 4 – full replacement of the drainage network across both pitches. This option offered the most sustainable solution, ensuring long-term viability, enhanced playability, and reduced ongoing maintenance and operational costs.

### 4. Financial Implications

The total estimated cost for delivering Option 4 would be £[REDACTED]

### 5. Other Considerations

The project would require a temporary closure of the pitches during the construction period. It was anticipated that the works, including the time required for surface regrowth, would take approximately 16 weeks to complete.

The Director of Parks and Leisure Operations responded to a Member's query in relation to pitch provision for users during anticipated works.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

**(a) following completion of the Outline Business Case process, the preferred option 4 for the Mossley Pitch Drainage Project be approved, (Full Drainage Network Replacement of both pitches) at an estimated Gross CAPEX of £[REDACTED]. The annual revenue consequence was £[REDACTED]**

**(b) progression of the project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital programme, to commence and complete Final Business Case (including detailed design), Planning and Procurement be approved.**

**(c) authorisation for the appointment of an Integrated Consultant Team (ICT) and other associated costs at £[REDACTED]. Includes cost authorisation of the ICT/other fees associated with the stage 2 activities be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations*

## **7.7 IN CONFIDENCE L/GEN/079 ABBEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE 3G PITCH AND CHANGING FACILITIES**

### 1. Purpose

**Having identified Option 3 — the development of changing facilities, fencing, and floodlighting — as the preferred option for the Abbey College 3G project,**

**with an estimated gross capital expenditure (CAPEX) of £[REDACTED] and an annual revenue consequence of £[REDACTED], the purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval to progress the project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme.**

## 2. Introduction/Background

Council had previously approved the sale of land at Threemilewater Playing Pitches to the Education Authority for £1.1 million, facilitating the development of the new Abbey Community College campus. The sale was completed on 1 April 2025.

To offset the loss of playing facilities, it was agreed that the 3G pitch within the new campus would be available for Council use outside school hours. Council also retained adjacent land for dedicated changing facilities. As floodlighting was not included in the Education Authority's plans (due to school use being limited to daylight hours), Council would need to install lighting for evening use.

Officers had identified an opportunity to upgrade the facility to Intermediate Football standard with modest design enhancements, particularly to changing room size, pitch access, and fencing. It was noted that the Irish Football Association (IFA) was currently reviewing the criteria for Intermediate Football, which may change.

In April 2025 Council approved:

- Progression to Stage 1 of the Capital Programme, including development of an Outline Business Case (OBC); and
- An allocation of £[REDACTED] for design services, integrated with the Education Authority's construction process.

## 3. Outline Business Case

As required at Stage 1 of the Council's Capital Project Management process, an Outline Business Case (OBC) had been developed, assessing three options. Option 3 had been identified as the preferred option, which included the development of changing facilities, installation of floodlighting, and enhancements to changing room size, pitch access, and fencing to meet IFA Intermediate Football standards. The OBC and Section 75 Equality Screening Form had been circulated.

## 4. Financial Implications

The total estimated project cost would be £[REDACTED]. An application had been submitted to the "Your School, Your Club" programme, an external fund supporting community use of school facilities outside school hours, for 100% funding. The application had successfully progressed to Stage 2.

## 5. Next Steps

Subject to approval of the OBC, the Education Authority's Integrated Consultant Team would complete a detailed design before receiving a

quotation for the works from their appointed contractor. This would inform the Final Business Case and investment decision which would return to Council for approval before any works commence.

The Director of Parks and Leisure Operations responded to several queries and agreed to consider including additional costings in the final business case, reflecting potential changes to Intermediate Football ground criteria proposed by the IFA.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

- (a) following completion of the Outline Business Case process, Option 3 be approved — the development of changing facilities, fencing, and floodlighting — as the preferred option for the Abbey College 3G project. This option having an estimated gross capital expenditure (CAPEX) of £[REDACTED] and an annual revenue consequence of £[REDACTED].**
- (b) progression to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital Programme, which would include the development and completion of the Final Business Case, detailed design, planning, and procurement, be approved.**

*ACTION BY: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations*

#### **7.8 IN CONFIDENCE WM/WM/037 HARMONISATION OF WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES UPDATE**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Councillor Foster  
Seconded by Councillor O'Hagan and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*ACTION BY: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability*



## 7.9 **IN CONFIDENCE** PK/PG/005 PLAY PARK REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME - UPDATE

### 1. Purpose

**The purpose of this report was to provide Members with an update on Council's Play Park Refurbishment Programme.**

### 2. Introduction/Background

In May 2025, Council approved a tender for the refurbishment of 29 play parks across the Borough at a cost of £[REDACTED]. In April 2025, Council approved a tender for the full replacement of two play parks at Kings Park and The Diamond, Rathcoole, with a total cost of £[REDACTED]. A new play park had also recently been completed and opened to the public in Mallusk, costing £[REDACTED]

Following extensive vandalism, Steeple Play Park had recently received refurbishment works totalling £[REDACTED]

In total, this represented an approved investment of almost £1.9 million in play park provision across the Borough.

### 3. Play Park Refurbishment

Following the approval of the tender and the appointment of a contractor for the refurbishment of 27 play parks, Officers had been working closely with the contractor to develop a programme of works. Play parks had been prioritised based on their current condition, with those in the poorest state scheduled first. Any immediate health and safety concerns were being addressed on an ongoing basis by the Council's play technicians.

A priority list (circulated) had been established, detailing the estimated start month and allocated budget for each play park. Varying lead times for some equipment may impact the projected schedule.

Although Hazelbank Play Park was included in the priority list, its refurbishment may instead be delivered as part of the wider Hazelbank Park Capital Project as a new play park. This would be subject to Council approval of the updated business case in the coming months.

### 4. Play Park Replacement

As previously noted, Council had approved the full replacement of two play parks at Kings Park and The Diamond, Rathcoole. Works were scheduled to commence in July and mid-August, respectively.

Antrim Peace Park (located at Antrim Forum) had been identified as the proposed site for a new urban sports park, as part of the Peace Plus Action Plan. The project had a budget allocation of £[REDACTED]. A Project Initiation Document had been prepared for Council consideration, which, if approved,

would enable the project to advance through the stages of the Council's Capital Programme.

Both the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations and Head of Estate Services provided updates on various projects within the Programme. The Director also agreed to supply an itemised breakdown of works for each play park by DEA and to circulate this information to Members.

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and agreed that

**the report be noted.**

*ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations*

## **7.10 IN CONFIDENCE PBS/PS/016 INSTALLATION OF SOLAR ARRAY AT MOSSLEY MILL**

### **1. Purpose**

**Having identified Option 2 as the preferred option for the installation of a solar array at Mossley Mill, i.e. a solar array on the roof of the North Wing at Mossley Mill at an estimated Gross CAPEX of £■■■■, and an annual revenue consequence of £■■■, the purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval to progress the project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital programme.**

### **2. Introduction/Background**

In April 2025, Council approved a number of energy-related projects, including the installation of wind turbines, air source heat pumps, and solar arrays.

Solar arrays, also known as photovoltaic arrays, consist of multiple solar panels connected together to generate electricity from sunlight. These panels produced direct current (DC) electricity, which was then converted into alternating current (AC) via an inverter, making it suitable for use in homes or businesses.

In recent years, the Council had installed solar arrays at seven locations across the Borough, supplying clean, renewable electricity to facilities such as Mossley Pavilion and Sixmile Leisure Centre.

### **3. Mossley Mill Proposal**

Consultants had recently evaluated the potential for installing solar arrays on the roofs of Mossley Mill and The Theatre at The Mill. Their assessments helped shape the business case, leading to the identification of the preferred option as Option 2, which offered the best balance of energy output and financial investment. This option involved the installation of a 54kWp solar array on the North Wing of Mossley Mill and covered an area of 240m<sup>2</sup>. The full business case was circulated for Members' reference.

The installation of a solar array would support the Council's efforts to reduce

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by harnessing a renewable energy source. It would also help lower costs by reducing reliance on electricity from the National Grid.

#### 4. Financial Implications

The total cost of the solar array installation was estimated at £[REDACTED]. It was expected to generate approximately 8% of the electrical energy required at the Mossley Mill site, with a projected payback period of 8 to 9 years. The array was anticipated to deliver annual savings of approximately £8,500.

#### 4. Next Steps

Due to the nature of the works, Officers had consulted the Council's Planning Section and the Historic Environment Division of the Department for Communities, given the project's potential visual impact on the surrounding area.

No issues had been raised to date, but all necessary formal approvals would be obtained before works commenced.

The Head of Estate Services undertook to investigate further sites for similar installations alongside possibilities for residual storage capacity.

Proposed by Alderman Boyle

Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

- (a) **following completion of the Outline Business Case process, the preferred Option for the Installation of a solar array at Mossley Mill is that Option 2 be approved, the installation of a solar array on the roof of the North Wing at an estimated Gross CAPEX of £[REDACTED] and an annual revenue consequence of £[REDACTED]**
- (b) **progression of the project to Stage 2 of the Council's Capital programme, to commence and complete the Final Business Case including detailed design, G99 licence, Planning permission, Building Control approval, Historic Environment Division approval and procurement be approved.**

*ACTION BY: David Blair, Head of Estate Services*

#### **PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'**

Proposed by Alderman Clarke

Seconded by Alderman Boyle 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 and the meeting concluded at 8.06pm.

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**MAYOR**

***Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation, and legal advice.***