



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE CHAMBER, MOSSLEY MILL
ON MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2026 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Councillor S Wilson
- Committee Members (In person)** : Alderman – S Ross
Councillors – M Brady, S Cosgrove, P Dunlop,
J Gilmour, R Lynch, H Magill, T McGrann,
V McWilliam and M Stewart
- Committee Members (Remote)** : Alderman – J McGrath
Councillors - M Ní Chonghaile, A O'Lone
- Non-Committee Members (In person)** : Councillors – M Cooper and B Webb
- Non-Committee Members (Remote)** : Alderman – L Clarke
- In Attendance (In Person/Remote)** : Gerry Darby, Lough Neagh Partnership Manager
- Officers Present** : Director of Community and Culture – U Fay
Head of Community Development – R McKenna
Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism & Events – S Goldrick
Head of Finance – R Murray
Head of Marketing Communications and PR – J
McIntyre
IT Systems Support Officer – C Bell
Member Services Officer – S Fisher

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed Members to the January meeting of the Community Development Committee and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

1 APOLOGIES

Councillor J Burbank

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Items 3.2 and 4.1 – Councillor S Wilson
Item 4.1 – Councillor P Dunlop and Councillor R Lynch
Item 4.5 – Councillor J Gilmour
Item 4.8 – Councillor H Magill

3 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 FI/FIN/11 ESTIMATES UPDATE PRESENTATION

1. Purpose

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

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

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and agreed that

the presentation be noted.

NO ACTION

Councillor Dunlop left the Chamber during Item 3.2

3.2 AC/TOU/009 LOUGH NEAGH PARTNERSHIP

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

The Lough Neagh Partnership was a stakeholder organisation established in 2003 to help manage, protect and develop Lough Neagh. The Board of the partnership was composed of Elected Members, landowners, fishermen, farmers and local community representatives.

The Council's representatives on the Partnership Board were Councillor Dunlop, Councillor Cushinan, Councillor Wilson, Councillor Burbank and Councillor Lynch.

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

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

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

Mr Darby answered questions from Members and the Chair then thanked him for his presentation following which he left the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor McGrann
Seconded by Alderman Ross and agreed that

the presentation be noted.

NO ACTION

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 AC/TOU/009 LOUGH NEAGH PARTNERSHIP

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

The Lough Neagh Partnership was a stakeholder organisation established in 2003 to help manage, protect and develop Lough Neagh. The Board of the partnership was composed of Elected Members, landowners, fishermen, farmers, and local community representatives.

The Council's representatives on the Partnership Board were Councillor Dunlop, Councillor Cushman, Councillor Wilson, Councillor Burbank and Councillor Lynch.

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

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

4. Lough Neagh Partnership Service Level Agreement 2026/2027

Lough Neagh Partnership had requested that the Council provided funding of £24,200 towards their core operational costs for 2026/2027 and agreed to a draft Service Level Agreement for the same period, which outlined what services the Council would receive from the Partnership. The draft Service Level Agreement was circulated for Members' information.

A condition of the funding was the requirement for Lough Neagh Partnership Ltd to submit six-month and end-of-year progress reports for each year of the Agreement, showing progress against the targets and the plan for the year ahead. The progress report for April to September 2025 was circulated.

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

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

Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Conservation efforts focused on key environmental areas including Farr's Bay, Rea's Wood, and Ram's Island. Manage the Environmental Group Farm Scheme to encourage farmers

within the environmental designations of the Lough to implement environmentally friendly practices.

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

5. Financial Position/Implication

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

6. Summary

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

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

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

ACTION BY: Marie-Clare McGeachy, Tourism Officer

Councillor Dunlop returned to the Chamber.

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

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

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

3. The Memorial Quilts

Descriptions of the nine Memorial Quilts were as follows:

1. Your Legacy Lives On

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

2. A Patchwork of Innocents

This Memorial Quilt contained a centrepiece in the shape of a heart, to raise awareness of the cost of The Troubles upon young people and remembered the under 16s whose lives were lost. Those remembered came from across Northern Ireland.

3. Terrorism Knows No Borders

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

4. Uniting Innocent Victims

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

5. Brougher Mountain Innocents

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

6. Through Remembering, We Build Bridges

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

7. Lives that Mattered

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

8. Diversity in Life, Remembered in Unity

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

9. SEFF's Tree of Evolution

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

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

4. Financial Position/Implication

There were no financial implications to hosting this exhibition.

5. Summary

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

Following a question from a Member, the Director confirmed that the exhibition would be promoted across Council's communication channels.

Proposed by Alderman Ross

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

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

ACTION BY: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

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

The main focus of the school was to deliver a curriculum which ensured all pupils (aged from 4 – 19) reached their maximum potential and that the class programmes ensured their academic, social, personal and emotional needs were met.

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

4. Request for Free Use

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

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

5. Financial Position/Implication

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

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

6. Summary

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

Proposed by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

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

ACTION BY: Katherine Gardiner, Arts and Theatres Manager

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

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

The proposed schedule of Public Holiday closures for Arts, Culture and Community Facilities in 2026/2027 was circulated.

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor McGrann and agreed that

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

ACTION BY: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events, and Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

4. Request for Free Use

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

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

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

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

5. Financial Position/Implication

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

6. Summary

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

Proposed by Councillor Brady

Seconded by Alderman Ross and agreed that

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

ACTION BY: Paul Townsend, Community Facilities Coordinator

4.6 CP/CP/007 A FAIRER PATHWAY TO SETTLEMENT

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction

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

3. Key Issues

Participation in the consultation would ensure that the Council had the opportunity to consider the proposals.

Key points include:

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

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

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

4. Summary

The Home Office had launched a consultation “A Fairer Pathway to Settlement” which proposed reform to the settlement system that may have implications for communities, services and integration at local level. Input

was welcomed from all interested parties. The consultation closed on 12 February 2026. Full details and documentation could be accessed via the Home Office website. Members were advised that they may wish to respond on a corporate, individual or party-political basis.

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop
Seconded by Alderman Ross and agreed that

Members respond on an individual basis.

ACTION BY: Conor Cunning, DEA Engagement Manager

4.7 CP/GEN/016 PSNI PROBLEM SOLVING AWARDS 2026

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

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

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

3. PSNI Problem Solving Awards Shortlist

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

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

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

The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Community Toolkit was launched by Antrim and Newtownabbey PCSP and PSNI to provide comprehensive, practical and accessible information for community-focused individuals and

organisations to recognise the signs of domestic and sexual abuse, respond appropriately and refer individuals to the necessary support and services.

4. PSNI Problem Solving Awards Ceremony

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

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

5. Financial Position/Implication

Members were advised that there was no cost for attendance at the Awards ceremony.

6. Summary

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

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

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

ACTION BY: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Development

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Background

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

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

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

4. Financial Implication

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

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

5. Summary

It was proposed to award 1 Small Grant to the successful applicant as outlined.

The Community Development Small Grants would remain open as a rolling programme with applications reported to the Community Development Committee on a quarterly basis.

Proposed by Alderman Ross
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove and agreed that

the Small Grant application requesting a total of £999.09 be approved.

ACTION BY: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

4.9 **COMD/MCPR/001 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction

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

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

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

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

3. Previous Decisions of the Council

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

4. Communications Strategy

The draft Communications Strategy was circulated for Members' information. It was a comprehensive and forward-looking communications strategy. The strategy set out what the Council wanted to achieve, how communications would support those outcomes and how success would be measured whilst aligning with the Council's vision, values and Corporate Plan.

5. Finance

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

6. Governance

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

7. Summary

The delivery of an effective communications strategy underpinned the success of the Council's Corporate Plan strategic themes and was vital to raising the Council profile and proactively engaging with citizens and

stakeholders. A Communications Strategy had been developed to ensure delivery of the Corporate Plan Profile aims and objectives.

In response to questions from Members, the Director of Community and Culture advised that communication methods were bespoke to the target audience and that once the draft Communication strategy was approved at Committee, Council would reach out to consult with all stakeholder groups.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

the draft Council Communications Strategy 2026 to 2030 be approved.

ACTION BY: Ursula Fay, Director of Community and Culture

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Background

The Good Relations Grant Programme provided financial assistance to groups within the Borough of up to £2,000 towards activities, events and programmes that aligned with the aims of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan. The Good Relations Grant Programme opened for applications on 1 April 2025 and closed on 31 December 2025.

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

3. Previous Decisions by Council

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

4. Key Issues

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

All proposed awards were subject to a signed disclosure from the group confirming that all appropriate supporting documentation was in place and could be provided on request or the offer of funding would be withdrawn.

5. Financial Position/Implication

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

6. Summary

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

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

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and agreed that

the Good Relations Grant award for £2,000 as detailed be approved.

ACTION BY: Amy Gribbon, Good Relations Officer

The Chair advised that the following supplementary report would be taken at this point of the meeting.

4.11 AC/THB/008 FREE USE OF LINEN SUITE MOSSLEY MILL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval for the free use of the Linen Suite in Mossley Mill by the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA) for their Northern Ireland Engagement Day in April 2026 with a suitable date to be confirmed.

2. Introduction/Background

Correspondence was circulated that had been received from RFCA asking if the Council would consider hosting a Northern Ireland Engagement Day at Mossley Mill in April 2026. The purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for a mixture of NI employers and partners to find more out about the Armed Forces Covenant and wider employer engagement with the defence sector.

3. Previous Decision of Council

It was approved at the Community Development Committee in June 2025, as part of a revision to the Community Development Pricing Policy, that all requests for free use must be taken to the Committee for approval.

The signing of the Armed Forces Covenant by the Council was approved by the Committee in November 2023.

4. Financial Position/Implication

The event was planned for 10am to 2pm and the potential fee for use of the Linen Suite for a full day would be £395. There were no direct costs to the Council for facilitating this event.

5. Summary

Correspondence had been received from RFCA asking if the Council would consider hosting a Northern Ireland Engagement Day at Mossley Mill in April 2026, including providing use of the Linen Suite at no cost. The purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for a mixture of NI employers and partners to find more out about the Armed Forces Covenant and wider employer engagement with the defence sector.

Proposed by Councillor Brady

Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

the request from RFCA to use the Linen Suite at Mossley Mill for a NI Engagement Day at a date yet to be confirmed in April 2026 be approved.

ACTION BY: Jenna Collier, Theatre Bookings and Events Manager

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Background

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

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

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded that outline proposals for the EVAWG Momentum Fund which had to be delivered by the end of March 2025 were approved

at the Community Development Committee in December 2024. Proposals included both the above projects.

4. Correspondence from the First and Deputy First Ministers

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

Correspondence had been received (circulated) from the First and Deputy First Ministers which confirmed that they would like to host both projects at an exhibition in the Long Gallery Stormont. Officers would work with officials from the EVAWG team to plan the event and exhibition.

5. Finance

There were no costs associated with this activity.

6. Summary

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

Proposed by Councillor Brady

Seconded by Councillor Lynch and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

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

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction/Background

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

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

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

3. Previous Decision of Council

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

Members were reminded that the Ulster Scots Leid Week programme overview had been noted at the September 2025 Community Development Committee.

4. Leid Week 2025

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

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

Promotion included a co-ordinated social media campaign, event advertising, and a photo call with the Mayor and Ulster-Scots Agency. A press release and photography support were arranged in partnership with the Council's Communications Team. The Yarns Book Launch welcomed the newly appointed Commissioner for the Ulster Scots and the Ulster British tradition, Lee Reynolds and featured on BBC Kintra and NTV

Programme Highlights included:

- OCN Level 1 Ulster-Scots Awareness Training: Delivered in partnership with the Ulster-Scots Community Network in advance of Leid Week. 19 participants completed the course on Ulster-Scots heritage, culture and language, with certificates presented at the *Yarns* launch event.
- Antrim Ulster-Scots Walking Tour: A guided heritage tour exploring Antrim's Ulster-Scots legacy, including key historical sites and local language insights.

- Leid and Lairn Language Workshop: An introductory Ulster-Scots language session delivered by Dr Dayna Jost, focusing on everyday vocabulary, pronunciation and conversational use.
- Launch of Yarns Poetry Collection: Delivered in partnership with the Ulster-Scots Agency. The event featured readings, music and dance, with the Commissioner for the Ulster Scots and the Ulster-British Tradition, Lee Reynolds, addressed attendees and presented OCN certificates.
- South Antrim Poetry Workshop: A creative writing workshop led by Dr Frank Ferguson, of Ulster University, which introduced pupils to the South Antrim poetry tradition.
- More than a Birler for Burns- Seamus Heaney's Ulster-Scots Poetry: A public talk by Dr Frank Ferguson exploring Heaney's engagement with Scots and Ulster-Scots literary traditions.
- Children's Ulster-Scots Workshop: Four school classes participated in language, craft, song and storytelling activities led by Shirlie Gregg from the Ulster Scot Agency.
- Bards and Bachles: My Journey in Ulster Scots: A talk by historian Dr. David Hume, followed by a guided tour of Sentry Hill, exploring Ulster-Scots identity and heritage.

Some photographs were circulated for Members' information.

5. Financial Position/Implication

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

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

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

7. Summary

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

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

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

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

NO ACTION

5.3 CP/CP/007 COMMUNITY PHARMACY PALLIATIVE CARE NETWORK

1. Purpose

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

2. Introduction

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

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

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

3. Key issues

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

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

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

- Improve patient care at the end of life;

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

The launch of this Network marked an important step in strengthening palliative care provision across Northern Ireland. Initially, the service would operate through 60 pharmacies across Northern Ireland, ensuring regional coverage. A factsheet was circulated for Members' information.

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

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

4. Summary

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

Proposed by Councillor Magill
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

that the report be noted.

NO ACTION

The Chair advised that the following supplementary report would be taken at this point of the meeting.

5.4 CP/GR/200 DISTRICT COUNCIL GOOD RELATIONS PROGRAMME 2025-26

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the Letter of Variance that had been received from The Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the 2025/26 District Council Good Relations Programme.

2. Introduction/Background

Members were reminded that since 1998, all Northern Ireland public bodies have a legal duty to promote good relations between people from different community, religious and racial backgrounds. In 2013, the Northern Ireland Executive furthered their commitment to good relations with the release of Together Building A United Community (T-BUC) strategy to improve community relations and continue the journey towards a more united and shared society.

The Council's Good Relations Programme aimed to improve day to day relationships by reducing all forms of prejudice, promoting equality and encouraging a society in which different cultures and traditions were understood, respected and accepted.

The Good Relations Action Plan reflected the aims and objectives of the central T-BUC strategy. It outlined how government, stakeholders, community and individuals would work together to achieve change against the following key priorities:

1. Our Children and Young People;
2. Our Shared Community;
3. Our Safe Community; and
4. Our Cultural Expression.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded that The Executive Office (TEO) District Council Good Relations Programme funding 2025/26 of £108,562.50 and the Good Relations Action Plan 2025/26 were approved at the May 2025 Community Development Committee.

Members were reminded that a letter of variance totalling £128,562,50 had been received from The Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the 2025/26 District Council Good Relations Programme. This had been noted at the September 2025 Community Development Committee.

Members were reminded that a further letter of variance totalling £158,562.50 had been received from The Executive Office (TEO) in relation to the 2025/26 District Council Good Relations Programme. This had been noted at the November 2025 Community Development Committee.

4. Key Issues

Members were now advised that correspondence (circulated) had been received from TEO offering financial assistance totalling £171,262.50 towards The District Council Good Relations Programme for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

The additional £12,700 on the previous funding offer was designated to support activities which were aligned with the Good Relations Action Plan

and T: BUC Priorities. No additional match funding was required from the Council.

Members were advised that this offer of funding had been accepted by TEO's deadline of 11 December 2025.

5. Financial Implication

The Executive Office required match funding of a minimum of 25% from local Councils towards the overall Good Relations budget. The Council's contribution of £36,187.50 towards the overall Good Relations budget was included within the approved 2025/26 Council estimates for the delivery of the plan.

The additional funding allocation of £12,700 did not require any additional match funding from Council resources.

6. Equality and/or Rural Screening Requirements

The 2025/26 Good Relations Action Plan had been subject to Section 75 Equality Screening and had been screened out for the need of an Equality Impact Assessment.

In addition, a Rural Needs screening exercise had been completed.

7. Summary

The Council had received a revised offer for funding of £171,262.50 from TEO for the costs associated with the District Council Good Relations Programme for 2025/26. No additional match funding was required.

The additional £12,700 was designated to support activities which were aligned with the Good Relations Action Plan and T: BUC Priorities.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Marketing, Communications and PR confirmed that the communications plan for Holocaust activity would be circulated to Members.

Proposed by Councillor Lynch
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the offer of District Council Good Relations Programme funding from The Executive Office of £171,262.50 be noted.

ACTION BY: Jeanette McIntyre, Head of Marketing, Communications and PR

6 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

There was no other relevant business raised.

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Cosgrove
Seconded by Councillor Lynch and agreed that

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

7 ITEM IN CONFIDENCE

7.1 IN CONFIDENCE CP/CD/278 SECTION 76 - MONKSTOWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Members' approval regarding the remaining funds available under the Planning Agreement between the Council and the developer Mr Paul Frazer, arising from a social housing development in Monkstown.

2. Introduction/Background

In March 2022 the Planning Committee approved the planning application by Mr Paul Frazer for a social housing development comprising 37 no units (14 no semi-detached, 11 no townhouses, 3 no detached wheelchair accessible bungalows, 1 no detached and 8 no apartments), associated open space, landscaping, access from Doagh Road including reconfigured access to Aspen View, public footpath to Monkstown Road, car parking, foul pumping station and all ancillary site works.

As the development would lead to a loss of open space the developer had to provide the Council with a proposal which would make the loss of open space acceptable under planning policy. If planning permission had been approved the proposal would form part of a legally binding Planning Agreement (as per section 76 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011).

In this regard the developer agreed to pay for and complete the following works:

- (1) a complete LED lighting refit to Monkstown Pavilion – pitch and premises, including outdoor phone charging stations and,
- (2) a complete lighting upgrade for Monkstown Jubilee Centre and Jubilee Gardens.

This was deemed acceptable to allow planning permission to be approved.

Most of the works were completed by the developer, however, works to the pitch at Monkstown could not be completed as the work had been procured as a full contract for pitch and lighting and it was not feasible for the developer to deliver the lights element alone. The approximate value of this work was £[REDACTED].

Therefore, to satisfy the terms of the Section 76 Planning Agreement the developer could pay the Council the monetary value of the works of £ [REDACTED] or undertake to do alternative works elsewhere in the local area. To comply with the Section 76 Planning Agreement the works or money can only be directed to be used for the enhancement to an existing area of recreational use or open space owned by the Council in the Threemilewater District Electoral Area.

At the time, the DEA Members suggested that some of the £ [REDACTED] be used to undertake lighting works at the Holocaust Memorial at Monkstown Jubilee Community Centre, and Officers would bring a report back to Members seeking instructions regarding the remaining sum.

Since this decision had been taken, Officers had been advised by the developer that works amounting to the sum of £ [REDACTED] (nett) had been undertaken. The remaining balance of funds was therefore £ [REDACTED].

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members were reminded that in December 2024 the Council agreed that the necessary amount required of the £ [REDACTED] be used to undertake lighting works at the Holocaust Memorial at Monkstown Jubilee Centre.

Members were reminded that it was approved at the July 2025 Council Meeting that the remaining funds of £ [REDACTED] be transferred to the Council and that the Community Development Team prepared a proposal for how the remaining funding be best utilised, with a further report to be brought back to the Community Development Committee for consideration.

4. Proposal

It was proposed that a new tarmac path would be installed at the Jubilee Garden, Jubilee Centre, Monkstown and new IT equipment and furniture would be purchased for this Centre, as follows:

- Installation of a new 2-metre-wide tarmac path, with a length of approximately 35 metres at the Jubilee Garden, Jubilee Centre Monkstown, at a cost of £ [REDACTED]
 - Purchase of an interactive Digital IT Screen and associated software to allow for remote access to online engagements and meetings at a cost of £ [REDACTED]
 - Purchase of Back Office Furniture at a cost of £ [REDACTED]
 - Purchase of Tables and Chairs at a cost of £ [REDACTED]
- Total: £ [REDACTED]

5. Financial Position/Implication

The remaining sum of £ [REDACTED] was held by the Council for the planned purchases. There would be no cost to the Council towards the purchases.

6. Summary

This report sought approval to use the remaining £[REDACTED] from a Section 76 Planning Agreement for improvements at the Jubilee Centre in Monkstown, following partial completion of the developer's original obligations. It proposed that the funds would be spent on a new tarmac path, IT equipment and furniture for the Centre at no cost to the Council.

Proposed by Councillor Brady
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the proposed work and equipment purchase for The Jubilee Centre, Monkstown at a total cost £[REDACTED] as part of a Section 76 Planning Agreement be approved.

ACTION BY: Paul Townsend, Community Facilities Coordinator

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Dunlop
Seconded by Councillor Cosgrove 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 7.28pm.

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.